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14. ABSTRACT The future joint force will engage in an operating environment that is a complex mixture of uncertainty, change, and conflict. This paper analyzes a newly developed paradigm governing future joint operations which the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) describes in the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO). The CJCS promotes the concept of Globally Integrated Operations (GIO) as the model upon which the future joint force should be grounded. Global agility is identified as a critical element of GIO, and is the central focus. The Unified Command Plan (UCP) is the governing document that describes the way the US military is organized to fight and sets forth basic guidance to all Geographic and Functional Combatant Commanders (CCDRs). This paper will focus on the UCP history, provide a better understanding of global agility, and argue why the UCP and its imposed geographic boundaries impede global agility. It will also highlight some challenges that inhibit progress for the future joint force such as parochialism between the services, ambiguity surrounding the global agility concept, and problems in the UCP adjudication process. Finally, this paper will propose potential solutions to deal with the challenges the future joint force will face.					
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The Unified Command Plan:
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Executive Summary

Title: The Unified Command Plan: Does it Impede Global Agility?

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Thesis: The Unified Command Plan (UCP) and its imposed geographical boundaries impede global agility. In a world of globalization, volatility, and constrained budgets, the US should consider making drastic changes to this Plan to maintain its global superiority.

Discussion: The future joint force will engage in an operating environment that is a complex mixture of uncertainty, change, and conflict. This paper analyzes a newly developed paradigm governing future joint operations which the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) describes in the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (CCJO). The CJCS promotes the concept of Globally Integrated Operations (GIO) as the model upon which the future joint force should be grounded. Global agility is identified as a critical element of GIO, and will be of central focus.

The UCP is the governing document that describes the way the United States military is organized to fight. Many view the UCP as the “Constitution” of the joint military organization which sets forth basic guidance to all Geographic and Functional Combatant Commanders (CCDRs).

This paper will focus on the history of the UCP, provide a better understanding of global agility, and makes an argument for why the UCP and its imposed geographic boundaries impede global agility. It will also highlight some challenges that inhibit progress for the future joint force such as parochialism between the services, ambiguity surrounding the global agility concept, and problems in the UCP adjudication process. Finally, this paper will propose some potential solutions to deal with the challenges the future joint force will face.

Conclusion: Military leaders should carefully examine the existing security environment and truly understand global agility in order to recognize that the current construct of the Unified Command Plan impedes the joint force’s ability to achieve global agility. The intent is not for leadership to adopt whole cloth the changes recommend in this paper, but to challenge leaders to reflect on where the US military has been, and where they are being asked to go; to grasp the fact that the UCP as currently constructed may not be sufficient to meet the demands placed upon the joint force. Leadership should remain unprejudiced in their approach to solving this issue incrementally.

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Preface

I had the opportunity to serve at the Joint Staff (JS) J7 from 2012 to 2015. While there, I learned firsthand about future joint force development initiatives. I learned how concepts influence doctrine at the service and joint level. The frustrating part of my experience was how vague or broad in scope I thought joint concepts were. About a year into my tour, I was chosen to be part of a new division being formed to conduct joint wargames on the Chairman's *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (CCJO). The more wed I became to the document, the more frustrated I felt. We were being asked to operationalize a concept that was not truly understood. Today's field grade officers are the future senior leaders and need to understand what existing leadership is asking them to accomplish in order to shape the future joint force. Superfluous writing is not the answer. At its essence, the CCJO concept is asking the US military to be prepared to respond faster, across regions, and accomplish more with less. The CJCS described globally integrated operations (GIO) as the way the joint force will address these challenges. As we examined inhibitors to conducting GIO, the Unified Command Plan (UCP) stuck in my mind as something that is forged in our minds that cannot change rapidly, but bears the potential to vastly improve current conditions that I believe impede global agility. This paper will examine some of the UCP history and the origins of global agility, and will challenge leaders to think more globally in their approach to incrementally solving this issue.

I would like to thank the multiple peers and mentors used throughout the development of my paper. I would also like to extend my thanks to Mrs. Christi Bayha and the rest of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College faculty for providing outstanding support and learning opportunities while at the school. Additionally, I am greatly indebted to Dr. McKenna for his mentorship, sage council, and guidance, which allowed me to hone and clarify my thoughts into a

presentable product. Finally, I would like to especially thank my wife, Tana, and children for supporting me during this long year.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Orientation

The Unified Command Plan (UCP) is a classified document prepared by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). The unified command structure generated by the UCP is flexible and changes as required to accommodate evolving United States (US) national security needs. Title 10 US Code 161 tasks the CJCS to conduct a UCP review “not less often than every two years” and submit recommended changes to the President, through the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF).¹ Among other things, the UCP provides the Combatant Commands (CCMDs) their assigned missions and geographic areas of responsibilities (AOR). Over time, the CCMDs and geographic AORs have seen many changes. The US must determine whether the UCP and its imposed geographical boundaries are sufficient, especially with growing concern over challenges such as globalization, growing global conflicts, and constrained budgets. It is common to focus on force posture, logistics, and transportation as leaders attempt to develop solutions. This paper recognizes the importance of each; however, the focus of this paper will be on whether the existing UCP’s geographic boundaries enhance global agility and what options are available in relation to those boundaries to make the future joint force more responsive.

Thesis Statement

This paper posits that the UCP, and its imposed geographic boundaries, impedes global agility; in a world of globalization, volatility, and constrained budgets, the US should consider making drastic changes to this Plan to maintain its global superiority.

Methodology

The intent of this paper is to build an argument for why the UCP and its imposed geographic boundaries impede global agility, and to provide leadership considerations for potential solutions

to make the UCP and global agility more compatible. This will be accomplished by conducting a brief historical review of the UCP and examine what has driven the changes within the Plan over the years since its inception. It will further explain a new developing paradigm to govern future joint operations, which the CJCS describes in the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020 (CCJO)* as Globally Integrated Operations (GIO).² Global agility is identified as one of the eight key elements of GIO and will be highlighted throughout this paper as an important standard the joint force must achieve. The paper will explain the origins of this concept and describe global agility, as best defined to date. Having a better understanding of how the UCP and global agility are related will assist in assessing whether the UCP, as constructed today, enhances or impedes global agility. The paper will then highlight some of the existing and future challenges military leaders face as they attempt to achieve global agility. Upon demonstrating the complexity surrounding this topic, the paper will focus on potential solutions to improve upon the existing definition of global agility and develop some proposed key elements as a framework. It will then recommend a change in geographical boundaries in an effort to enhance global agility.

SECTION 2: UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN

UCP Origins

The inception of the UCP dates back to the World War II era, created as a result of a push for joint operations from US military leaders. The essence of joint operations is arguably traced back as far as the War of 1812; however, the first joint board wasn't established until 1903 and had little influence because its charter gave no authority to enforce decisions. The existing paradigm that governed the organization of the US military for so many years worked largely because the two departments were simply split by the land (Army) and sea (Navy). The developing

technology of the airplane added an extra domain and threatened to reverse the paradigm's priorities.³ Both World War I and World War II highlighted the importance of a unified military effort, but despite many attempts to revitalize the Joint Board, it was disbanded in 1947 because it was not influential.⁴ The need, however, for a formal joint command structure never disappeared, and the Services recognized the importance of unity of military effort achieved through the unified command of US forces.⁵ Despite desiring unity of effort, there was still a great deal of inter-service rivalry during this period that was developing into a fight for survival. The Army was the primary proponent for unification of the Services, while the Navy and the Marine Corps pushed for service autonomy. The Air Force was emerging as a separate service, but was still subservient to the Army. Nevertheless, Congress opposed the unification effort despite the support it received from the President Harry Truman, a former Army officer.⁶

National Security Act of 1947

Finally, the wartime Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) offered a workable model in the form of the National Security Act of 1947. It created the National Military Establishment, which consisted of three separately administered military departments, with the position of the SECDEF for civilian oversight, and a new National Security Council (NSC).⁷ The Act also made the Military Secretaries members of the NSC— A step that emasculated the Unified Commands.⁸ The Act gave the power over budgets to the Services.

Among other provisions, this legislation established the Unified Combatant Command (UCC) system, and the statutory definition has not changed since. The term combatant command (CCMD) means a unified or specified command. This UCC system defined each unified command as having: (1) forces from at least two military services, (2) a continuing, broad mission, and (3) either a functional or geographic responsibility under a single commander. A

Specified Combatant Command is defined as having a broad, continuing mission and is largely composed of a single service.⁹ CCMDs are organized in one of two ways: by geography or function.¹⁰ Today it is common to hear geographic or functional CCMDs rather than unified commands. The Act also permanently established the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and laid the foundation for today's defense organization.¹¹ The UCC system stemmed from the belief that the US had global responsibilities that required standing tasking for the armed forces.¹² Military and civilian leadership viewed the National Security Act as a step in the right direction, but did not solve all the issues surrounding the loosely joined military services, such as administrative issues, being unable to agree upon a fiscally constrained strategy, allocation of resources, communication systems, refueling, and procurement. Services were modernizing, while the UCCs were underrepresented.¹³

The governing document for the UCC system is the Unified Command Plan (UCP); it sets forth basic guidance to all Combatant Commanders (CCDRs). Some view the UCP as the “Constitution” of the joint military organization that defines the military command framework.¹⁴ It establishes CCMD missions, responsibilities, and force structure; delineates geographic AORs for Geographic CCDRs; and specifies functional responsibilities for Functional CCDRs. The first version of the UCP was approved in 1946 by President Truman, shortly before the actual signing of the National Security Act. Sentiments lingered over whether the services should be combined despite the National Security Act signing, this time in the form of a decision between specified or geographical combatant commands (GCC).

The first version of the UCP favored GCCs, but sought to appease both the Army and the Navy by drawing a line between Pacific Command (PACOM), a geographic command, and Far East Command (FECOM), a specified command. The battle over specified versus geographic

commands continued, but following the conclusion of the Korean War and a signed peace treaty with Japan, FECOM was disestablished in 1956 despite protests from the Army. The Army continued to advocate for the establishment of another specified command throughout the Vietnam War, but the SECDEF decided to preserve PACOM.¹⁵ Specified commands did not entirely disappear, but the debate over whether to consolidate the military seemed to have been resolved by this time. The focus of the debate predominately shifted from specified versus geographic, to functional versus geographic, but inter-service rivalry remained at the heart of it all. Services do, however, continue searching for ways to dominate positions of authority within these newly established CCMDs. Still, the US military pushed for more “jointness,” and an initiative was underway to improve upon the existing architecture.

Effects of Goldwater Nichols Act

Following some flawed “joint” missions such as the failed US hostage rescue in Iran and the Grenada invasion in the early 1980s, the change military leaders were hoping for came in the form of the 1986 Department of Defense Reorganization Act (also known as the Goldwater-Nichols Act).¹⁶ It was the most significant reorganization the Department of Defense (DoD) had seen. Among many provisions, this legislation refined the responsibilities of the Commander in Chief and the relationships in the DoD chain of command.¹⁷ The Goldwater-Nichols Act designated a Chairman to the JCS (CJCS), made him the primary military advisor to the President and SECDEF, and provided him with a larger staff. Most importantly for this paper, the Goldwater-Nichols Act provided significant power, access, and authority to the Geographic CCDRs.¹⁸ Since the unified commands had felt underrepresented up until this point, this Act cleared up the responsibility of the Geographic CCDRs to the President and SECDEF for executing policy within their AOR, gave them the statutory authority to operate independently,

and gave them control of assigned forces, taking control away from the services.¹⁹ Some suggest the Geographic CCDRs now have a disproportionate amount of power when compared to the ambassador or other interagency players in the same region.²⁰ Overall, the joint community viewed the Goldwater-Nichols Act as a success, and the CCDRs received the authority they were searching for.

UCP Changes

As one examines the UCP changes, it is again important to highlight that inter-service disputes primarily drove the early changes. The disputes stemmed from a push by the Army to re-orient to functional commands, advocating for stronger centralized control, while the Navy insisted upon geographic commands in an effort to preserve Service autonomy. It became a battle of “jointness” versus Service prerogatives, functional versus geographic command.

The first version of the UCP, as depicted in Figure 1, was published in 1946 and called for the eventual establishment of seven unified commands: FECOM, PACOM, Alaskan Command (ALCOM), Northeast Command (NECOM), Atlantic Command (LANTCOM), Caribbean Command (CARIBCOM), and European Command (EUCOM).²¹ Although functional commands were later established, geography primarily influenced the SECDEF’s early decisions. Strategic Air Command (SAC), established in 1949, became the first Functional Combatant Command (FCC) responsible for strategic air operations in support of the other GCCs, as directed by the JCS.²² This was the first CCMD assembled to specifically deal with the threat of nuclear weapons.

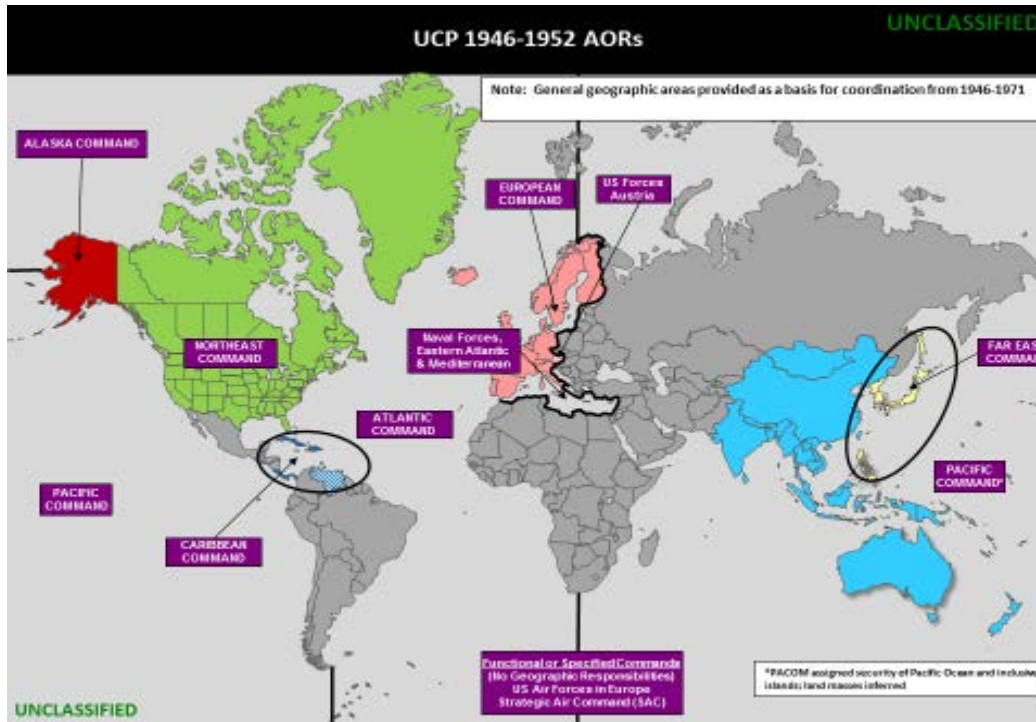


Figure 1. Unified Command Plan 1946-1952 AORs. Source - Joint Staff, J-5/DDJSP Strategic Alignment Division

The struggle over functional versus geographic commands continued as time progressed. The UCP has seen the likes of FCCs such as SAC, Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD)²³, US Space Command (USSPACECOM)²⁴, US Strike Command (USSTRICOM) and Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) come and go, while GCCs such as LANTCOM, CARIBCOM, NECOM, have also come and gone. For brevity's sake, this paper will not explore all the missions of each of these commands. The Cold War and nuclear weapons influenced many of the changes made to the UCP, but specified missions have changed and established geographic boundaries morphed over the years to reflect changes in the DoD structure and the existing strategic threat assessments.²⁵ There have been 26 UCPs and numerous interim adjustments since its inception.²⁶ Debates over functional or geographical CCMDs continue to this day.

The UCP has also seen specified commands such as US Naval Forces Eastern Atlantic Mediterranean (NELM), US Air Forces, Europe (USAFE), Aerospace Defense Command (ADCOM), the Military Airlift Command (MAC), and Forces Command (FORSCOM) come and

go.²⁷ The last specified command, FORSCOM, was dis-established in 1993. Specified commands no longer exist, but the option is still available.

Today there are six GCCs: (Northern Command [NORTHCOM], European Command [EUCOM], Central Command [CENTCOM], Africa Command [AFRICOM], Southern Command [SOUTHCOM], and Pacific Command [PACOM]); and three FCCs: (Strategic Command [STRATCOM], Transportation Command [TRANSOM], and Special Operations Command [SOC]), as depicted in Figure 2.

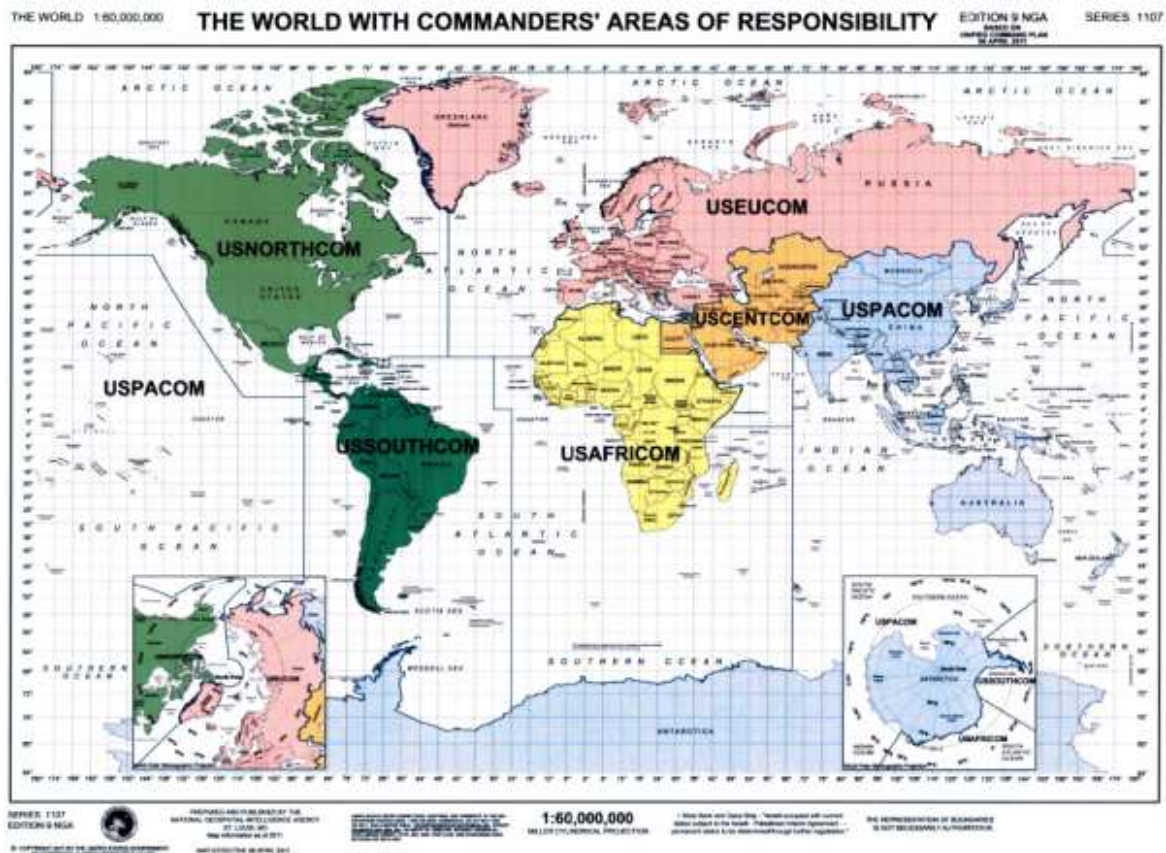


Figure 2. Unified Combatant Commands 06 APRIL 2011. EDITION 9 NGA

SECTION 3: GLOBAL AGILITY

In order to understand whether the UCP enhances global agility, one must first understand its definition. Merriam-Webster defines agility as the “ready ability to move with quick easy grace; a

quick resourceful and adaptable character.”²⁸ A study conducted by the Command and Control Research Program for the DoD on the future of command and control, defines agility as the capability to successfully cope with changes in circumstances.²⁹ Military leaders commonly think of logistics when they think of global agility. Mobility is key to global agility, but should not constrain thought patterns.³⁰ This paper will recognize the importance of mobility, but it will not be the focus. This section will describe the concept of global agility and explain the strategic importance civilian and military leadership places on ensuring the future joint force is globally agile.

Conception and Definition

Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Martin Dempsey, describes his approach to globally integrated operations (GIO) in the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations: Joint Force 2020* (CCJO) as the way the joint force will address the complex, transregional, rapidly changing, and increasingly transparent security environment it will soon face. GIO requires an agile joint force capable of projecting power wherever needed to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, achieving superiority in multiple domains simultaneously. The future joint force requires supporting systems that provide decision makers the ability to decide, direct, and resource those decisions at a speed and tempo the adversaries cannot match, especially as conflicts play out across multiple regions and domains.³¹

These new GIO buzzwords left leaders searching for ways to operationalize the concept. As a result, the CJCS tasked Joint Staff (JS) J7 to conduct a wargame to explore options of how to operationalize this concept. The Future Joint Force Development (FJFD) Directorate stood up a new division, Joint Wargaming Division (JWD), and tasked them with executing the wargame. JWD examined the eight key elements of GIO and received further guidance from the CJCS,

which scoped the inaugural wargame to examining the element of global agility and flexible command and control (C2), since it was viewed as a critical enabler for GIO. JWD conducted the wargame, Iron Crucible 14 (IC 14), in March of 2014. The results of IC 14 suggested that global agility was the central element of GIO. JWD attempted to define and provide potential elements of global agility following IC 14, but was never able to obtain sufficient agreement to provide any official supporting publication. The recommended definition of global agility was as follows: “the ability of a globally postured Joint Force to responsively project military power and effectively employ the force across multiple theaters and domains to accomplish missions throughout the range of military operations.”³² The proposed elements included strategic decision making, global posture, force preparation, force projection, command and collaborative relationships, ISR, presence, aggregation, force generation, and transition.

Intrigued by this new concept of global agility in the CCJO, Dr. Mark Brown, a Senior Operations Research Analyst at USSTRATCOM, conducted a case study and published the results in a September 2014 *Phalanx* article. He defined agility as “the ability to successfully effect, cope with, and/or exploit changes in circumstances.” In this article, he argues that agility deserves further consideration since it is used frequently used as a metric for evaluating decision making. He further attempts to propose some elements of agility as responsiveness, adaptability, resilience, versatility, flexibility, and innovativeness.

JS J7’s Joint Concepts Division continued to expound upon global agility in the *Joint Concept for Rapid Aggregation* (JCRA), a supporting concept to the CCJO signed by the CJCS in May 2015. This concept uses Merriam-Webster Dictionary’s literal interpretation of “agile” to define global agility. JCRA further examined how the future force will form operationally coherent joint forces in conjunction with mission partners, out to 2020 and beyond, with the agility necessary to

match the tempo of GIO.³³ JCRA identified rapid aggregation as an integral component of global agility. The CCJO explains that global agility provides the underpinnings for swift and adaptable military responses. It calls for smarter positioning of forces, as well as greater use of prepositioned stocks and rapid expeditionary basing, to increase overall operational reach. Both the CCJO and the JCRA agree that global agility is enabled by nimble command and control, which allows resources to be allocated, shifted, and de-conflicted more fluidly among CCDRs as strategic priorities evolve.³⁴ The intended result is a more agile joint force able to aggregate, reconfigure, and disaggregate as required.³⁵

Nesting of Global Agility within National Security

The *National Military Strategy* (NMS) is the document issued by the CJCS to the SECDEF that outlines the strategic aims of the US military and identifies the ways in which it will accomplish its National Military Objectives. The *National Security Strategy* (NSS), signed by the President, is the NMS's guiding source document. To emphasize the importance of being able to operationalize the CCJO concept, the recently published 2015 NMS references GIO as a necessary enabler to future joint force deployment.³⁶ It describes how the joint force will combine its people, processes, and programs to execute GIO; such processes include promoting greater interoperability with joint, interagency, and international partners while encouraging action through decentralized execution. The NMS describes global agility as one of the means to accomplish the US's strategic objectives. It further describes the essence of global agility as "the ability to quickly aggregate and disaggregate forces anywhere in the world."³⁷ The CJCS explains how the military is improving campaign planning, sustaining a resilient global posture, implementing more dynamic force management processes capable of adjusting presence in

anticipation of events, and conducting more force sharing among Combatant Commands to address cross-regional threats, to demonstrate how the military is increasing global agility.³⁸

Having reviewed some of the UCP history and establishing a better understanding of the vision for the future joint force, it is next important to examine whether the UCP and global agility complement each other. It is important for this paper to highlight a theme of rapid response to cross-regional threats throughout all these documents, which naturally requires cross-regional coordination and response. Perhaps the most important question is whether the UCP enables global agility. To answer this, one must first identify some of the challenges of the existing system to understand whether it simply needs minor tweaking or whether it requires a major overhaul.

SECTION 4: THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE JOINT FORCE ACHIEVING GLOBAL AGILITY

The US has been actively engaged in major contingencies abroad for over a decade. As this era of major conflict draws to a close, the nation's civilian and military leadership must determine an appropriate, affordable force structure by which the US will prepare itself for an uncertain future in its role as a world leader. There are multiple issues that impede the US military's ability to be globally agile as leaders face an increasingly global, volatile, and fiscally constrained environment. This section will examine the future operating environment, the current political environment, challenges with the UCP adjudication process, the problem UCP geographic boundaries create, the ambiguity surrounding the definition of global agility, and the effects each of these challenges has on the future joint force.

The Future Operating Environment

The CCJO recognizes that the future joint force will face an “increasingly complex, uncertain, competitive, rapidly changing, and transparent operating environment characterized by security challenges that cross borders,” and that armed conflicts will be inevitable in such an environment. The accelerated rates of change will require greater speed in planning and conducting military operations. The accelerated proliferation of weapons will mean more actors will have access to destructive technologies. Although broad trends in warfare are semi-predictable, it will be impossible to predict with certainty when, where, and for what purpose joint forces will operate.³⁹ Time sensitive crises and trans-national problems will place a premium on multi-CCMD responses and flexible C2. This environment will demand a joint force capable of coping with greater uncertainty with respect to how and against whom they fight.⁴⁰

Political Environment and Outlook

The current US political environment demands the US military to do more with less. Resource constraints have produced substantial reductions to military budgets, end strength, acquisition programs, etc., necessitating a more economical approach to global agility. The outlook is not much better, as the 2015 NSS calls for a smaller military that must build a versatile and responsive force prepared for a more diverse set of contingencies yet remain dominant in every domain.⁴¹ The NSS has become so broad and encompassing that it is impossible to do everything right, for to protect everywhere is to protect nowhere. The US is increasingly being asked to respond to global conflicts and disaster reliefs as the global superpower, but may not be able to sustain the necessary operational tempo with decreasing budgets. Nevertheless, when the nation calls, the US military rises to the occasion and improvises to accomplish the mission. In order to

sustain this high operational tempo and meet the demands of the NSS, the US must find innovative ways to accomplish the missions and set conditions for success.

The effects of globalization are also significant in the political realm and recognized in the CCJO. The CCJO describes a new global political environment characterized “by digital networks and worldwide flows of capital, material, people, and information.” It predicts that while security challenges will generally remain regionally rooted, transnational dynamics will drive many. Adversaries will become increasingly capable of lateral conflict escalation in a world widely connected to the internet with fragile critical infrastructure. Sabotage and terrorism will have profound effects in such a world. Critically important, the CCJO explains that the “dimensions of any particular security challenge may not align with existing boundaries or command structures.”⁴² This means that most adversaries will act irrespective of boundaries, and the future joint force must be able to react in like manner.

UCP Geographic Boundaries

To accomplish global agility means that the future joint force will have to operate seamlessly across boundaries. The UCP was undoubtedly developed with great intentions and carried the US through uncertain times, and the US military has reaped significant benefits, such as becoming more joint and devoting attention where it was needed to deal with the existing strategic threat assessments. However, perhaps it is time for leadership to ask whether the UCP is agile enough to support the growing demands for rapid response to cross-regional threats as this country proceeds into a new era. One could argue that the UCP has inadvertently created bureaucratic processes, large staffs, and natural seams which now impede the ability to achieve global agility. In a world of globalization, volatility, and fiscal despair, geographic boundaries may no longer be the most effective solution. With the increased demand for multi-CCMD responses and more flexible C2 in

the future operating environment, the UCC regional boundaries inhibit the decision making process. It is important to have regional touch, but these boundaries serve as barriers to global agility.

Boundaries create natural seams between the CCMDs, which slow down the decision making process when dealing with cross-regional threats. CCDRs possess many of the authorities necessary to take action within their AOR. The challenge that impedes global agility presents itself when more than one CCDR is involved in decision making. Issues are often resolved at the lower levels, especially when dealing with contingency planning, but allocation decisions during a crisis may require adjudication at the highest level. Take for example any location on the map where a potential cross-regional threat could evolve in the form of a real crisis—when decisions have to be made swiftly about resource allocation. Allocation decisions are no longer as simple as shifting of forces or resources when not all of the resources required to accomplish the mission are the responsibility of a single CCDR. The request for forces (RFF), or force allocation decisions, are vetted through the JS via the Global Force Management (GFM) process (which provides the CJCS a recommendation to the SECDEF, who ultimately retains authority for force deployment decisions). Meanwhile, decisions such as high demand, low density (HDLD) asset allocation get vetted through TRANSCOM, the JS, and in some cases make their way up to the SECDEF for adjudication. Conflicts of personalities or interests presented at the GCC level may also require decisions to be made at the highest levels. For example, if the preponderance of a conflict effects one CCDR's AOR, but impacts another CCDR, the supporting CCDR may make the argument that giving up certain HDLD resources impacts his ability to successfully carry out contingency operations in his AOR. At that point, the strategic decision is all about risk management, and resource allocation decisions may require SECDEF adjudication. Although this

process can move quickly via vocal commands, more often than not strategic decision making becomes bureaucratic and slows down the process.

The challenge is not about whether to be joint, it is about being able to rapidly respond when called upon and bringing to bear the best combination of resources that the services together bring to the table. Despite leadership's best efforts, and with a rapidly changing environment, it is imperative to change the paradigm by which military leaders view the world, namely, globally instead of regionally.

The UCP Adjudication Process

The process to adjudicate UCP changes has been overhauled numerous times in an effort to reflect changes in DoD structure and adapt to the existing strategic threat assessments. The first version of the UCP remained unchanged for seven years while the CCMDs were stood up. The first revision came in 1953 to account for the disestablishment of FECOM and the unforeseen issues regarding AORs and responsibilities. The UCP became more of a living document that changed as the national strategic interests shifted; seven revisions were made over the next decade. In January of 1979, the requirement for a biennial review was approved.⁴³ Over time, the process to make changes to the UCP has become more bureaucratic, making it difficult to come to a consensus. It took six years of inter-service squabbling before TRANSCOM was established as a FCC in 1987. The process to update the 2008 UCP commenced in July 2007 and didn't conclude till December 2008.⁴⁴ It took fourteen OPSDEPs and JCS decision tanks, six formal rounds of general and flag officer coordination, and informal coordination with OSD to build consensus. In August of 2009, JS J5 action officers attempted to streamline the process and proposed a new approach for the 2010 UCP. The review began in September 2009 and the proposed process anticipated a September 2010 signing by the President. Despite their best

efforts, disagreements among the Service Chiefs and coordination at the CCMD level slowed down the document, and the new UCP was not signed till April 2011.⁴⁵

The UCP has brought the US military a long way from where it was at the Plan's inception. However, it has come at a cost—bureaucracy now runs rampant. Military leaders must break down the Service leadership's parochial perspectives if they are going to overcome the challenges they will face in this future environment characterized by globalization, volatility, and fiscal despair. As the previous examples suggest, the UCP adjudication process takes entirely too long to gain consensus and impedes US military's ability to accomplish global agility.

Ambiguity surrounding the definition of Global Agility

Finally, if global agility is a standard the joint force is being asked to uphold, it is important that military leaders are provided clarity on exactly what it is. The CCJO describes the conditions that need to be met in order to enable global agility, and the NMS reaffirms its importance and describes its essence, but nothing truly defines it. One could argue that despite the attempts to characterize global agility, from the initial introduction of global agility in the CCJO through JS J7's follow-on efforts in the IC 14 wargame and JCRA, and Dr. Brown's insights, nothing provides leaders an understanding of how to operationalize the concept. The NMS even lists some ways that the US military is improving global agility.⁴⁶ The results of each of these initiatives reveal great perspective and share similar insights on global agility, but have different perspectives on ways to accomplish it. Leaders are left wondering whether they have accomplished global agility, and how to measure it. One could posit that there is no way to measure success without further guidance that specifically provides an accepted definition and framework for evaluation.

SECTION 5: RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

Future operating and political environments demand cross-regional coordination and response. It is important that military leaders do not constrain themselves to existing paradigms created by the UCP as they attempt to develop solutions for these challenges. There is no perfect solution, but the ultimate goal is to have a more agile joint force. For the sake of time, this paper will focus on two potential solutions, with the intention that the conditions outlined will suggest possible resolution to some challenges, while the second and third order effects of these conditions will reduce the impact of other previously listed challenges.

The first portion of this section will focus on developing a potential solution for the challenges leaders face when trying to operationalize the concept of global agility without a full grasp of what it is. Simply having a codified definition of global agility can serve to help leaders better understand what it is they are trying to implement. Perhaps by proposing a refined definition and detailing some key elements of global agility, some incremental changes can be made to improve upon the existing framework and clear up some of the confusion surrounding it. The second portion of this section will focus on a recommendation to re-structure the UCP in such a way that reduces the seams between GCCs, which in reality impede global agility, especially when dealing with cross-regional threats.

Proposed Definition for Global Agility

This portion of the paper will not focus on developing an absolute definition for global agility, for that would require extensive research and development at the JS level with CJCS guidance and input. However, it will attempt to build upon the existing body of work begun by the CJCS, JS J7, and Dr. Brown, in an effort to develop a common lexicon. It will propose a potential

definition based upon the existing documentation and provide a manageable framework in the form of some key elements for further development.

This paper posits that global agility can be defined as the ability of the joint force to rapidly project military power and shift resources to be effectively employed across the globe to accomplish missions throughout the range of military operations. Much of this proposed definition is similar to the aforementioned JS J7 definition; however, this version is more concise and free of extraneous language. The key to this proposed definition is that it will require a more global perspective vice today's more regional perspective imposed by the UCP. It should imply that leaders need to think globally, yet act locally. Having a global mindset may also serve to break down some of the service parochial mindsets that impede global agility.

Proposed Global Agility Framework

The challenge leaders face when trying to comprehend whether they have developed global agility and, if so, how to measure it, is a legitimate one. In developing key elements of global agility, it is important to consider building measures of performance into the framework to assist leaders in understanding whether they are meeting the intent. The primary measurement of global agility during crisis response would obviously be the time it takes to respond. Since global agility is all about swift response, every identified element should serve to support a timely response. Measures of performance in steady state would have to expand to things like force readiness and global posture. Only so many things can be measured. Others are less tangible and require innovative mindsets, such as unity of command and effort, an anticipatory mindset, and flexible C2. Other intangibles such as strategic decision making, global posture, flexible C2, and mobility, enable global agility.

Considering all of this, along with the previous works accomplished by JS J7 and Dr. Brown, the proposed key elements of global agility for this paper include strategic decision making, global posture, force readiness, unity of command and effort, mobility, and flexible C2. The following paragraphs will attempt to provide some context and potential areas for improvement within each element to enhance global agility.

Trends in the security environment demand accelerated decision making. Strategic decision making as an element of global agility should address adaptation of existing processes such as Global Force Management and HDLD asset allocation to support more rapid decision making and resourcing at the CCMD and above. IC 14 concluded that the current practice of global synchronization is insufficient for the joint force to conduct globally integrated operations in a crisis. One insight suggested that enhancing the global synchronizer role beyond planning, namely, adding authorities to control execution may improve global agility.⁴⁷ The UCP currently designates global synchronizers for several functions. These synchronizers are responsible for establishing a framework for CCMDs to use in planning to develop and assess objectives, but the CCMDs currently synchronize execution. In a future GIO environment with cross-regional resourcing issues, there may be a requirement for the synchronizers to play an increased directive role during the execution of operations. While the SECDEF retains authority for force deployment, global agility may also be enabled by delegating some of the authorities for employment, under specified conditions.

Global posture as an element of global agility deals with changes pertaining to force structure, force footprint, and agreements. Global agility will require balancing tradeoffs between presence, posture, and prepositioning. Presence includes both assigned and allocated forces in a GCCs AOR—a dynamic combination of forward, rotational, and mobile forces—combined with posture

that includes prepositioned stocks and basing. The DoD must efficiently manage a smaller footprint of joint forces and optimize the use of the remaining forward-deployed bases and forces. Therefore, future plans should account for anticipated shifts in the US global defense posture due to budgetary constraints, such as the redeployment of forward-based forces and base closures. Posture adjustments should accommodate a global outlook that demonstrates the ability to access vital regions on a consistent basis. Adjustments may include rotational forces, multipurpose use pre-positioned stocks in anticipated areas of operation, and development of contingency locations and infrastructure, along with contracted support to decrease response times. The use of low signature SOF and conventional forces should continue to yield high payoff through strategic presence and persistent engagement. Expeditionary forces transiting through AORs should be used to enable force projection and develop a force structure that meets the crisis response demands of the GCC. Assured access to vital regions during crisis will be at a premium and require early and sustained partner engagement during steady-state to develop agreements. The goal is to develop an adaptive operational stance aligned with national security interests for engagement, deterrence, and crisis response - a stance from which to rapidly shift and de-conflict forces between CCMDs when security interests are threatened.

Force readiness as an element of global agility is critical and applies to the total force— Active and Reserve Components. This element should address preparatory actions such as planning and training to decrease response times and improve interoperability. Readiness is perishable, thus it must be sustained across the pool of response forces. Readiness cannot be instantly surged, and a lack of readiness can slow crisis response times. Time delays associated with generating readiness impede global agility and elevate risk. Integrated cross-AOR and cross-domain planning should aid the future joint force to mitigate potential gaps and vulnerabilities when addressing trans-

regional issues. Readiness can also strengthen through habitual relationships forged through training and exercises to build trust and knowledge in an operational theater.

Unity of command and effort as an element of global agility should develop clearly understood relationships and responsibilities among all inter-organizational and multi-national partners, and create effective structures to facilitate these relationships in order to aid in the employment of capabilities. Joint Publication 5-0 states that unity of effort emphasizes common objectives and shared interests as well as mutual support and respect.⁴⁸ The future operating environment demands the DoD become increasingly reliant upon inter-agency and multi-national responses to handle cross-regional threats. The future joint force must accomplish this through the development of broader, deeper, working relationships with organizations representing the other instruments of US national power and with other inter-organizational partners.

Strategic mobility as an element of global agility is the key element for power projection. It focuses on swift employment of essential and relevant forces. Strategic mobility will require adequate transportation and distribution capabilities and capacities, commercial transportation providers, strategic pre-positioning of logistics stocks and other logistics preparations, and assured access.⁴⁹ The DoD should consider adopting best business practices from the commercial sector to put the DoD supply chain on the leading edge of global logistics. The ability to quickly develop sea and air port capabilities in or near the operational area can also facilitate global agility, thus, advanced port opening teams may be necessary.

Flexible C2 is the final proposed element of global agility. Global agility is orchestrated through flexible C2—the ability to design, employ, and adapt C2 constructs to achieve unified action across domains, enable transitions, and accomplish the mission during changing conditions or unforeseen situations. Mission Command is integral to and underpins flexible C2. Flexible C2

applies to all echelons, from the strategic to the tactical level. Flexible C2 is also coupled with unity of effort relationships with mission partners to effectively support achievement of national objectives - this requires collaboration, coordination, and cooperation. Furthermore, today's "battle space" is larger than any single AOR and includes all domains - air, land, maritime, cyber, and space, with the human dimension pervading each of them. The increasingly uncertain operating environment, which frequently involves trans-regional challenges, necessitates increased mutual support between CCMDs to enhance flexibility - by enabling a command to access forces and capabilities from another command without the need for ownership (e.g. ISR, Cyber, Space, and Global Strike). Mission requirements ultimately drive the design of C2 constructs and determine force and capability mix, but it is important to ensure all of these considerations equate into the C2 construct.

These proposed elements of global agility seek to minimize the difficulties of operating in an increasingly complex operating environment, but they do not address the problem of eliminating much of the natural friction created by the UCP in the form of regional boundaries. The future joint force must take careful consideration of whether the UCP, as currently constructed, enables global agility.

Reduction in the number of GCCs

If the UCP were still the living document it once was and had not become so difficult and time consuming to change, there may not be as many challenges with achieving global agility. The fact is that today's military leaders need to have a more global perspective, and the current UCP framework tends to make one think regionally. The new CJCS, General Dunford, wants to ensure that the US military has the right framework within which to make recommendations and to have a debate. He recognizes that the CCMDs and the JS do not have to exist in their current form. The

CJCS recently remarked at the Center for a New American Security Inaugural National Security Forum that UCP changes can be made. He commented that he doesn't want to "just take the last 14 years and say, this is what they've been doing for the last 14 years, so automatically that's what they'll be doing over the next 15 to 20 years."⁵⁰ Chairman Dunford recognizes that innovation needs to occur in this arena and is encouraging the military to examine this issue.

Perhaps it is time to heed his guidance and consider a re-structure that reduces the seams between CCMDs by reducing the number of GCCs. To prevent completely changing the UCP paradigm, and for practicality reasons, the recommended solution is not to entirely eliminate boundaries and make an uber global response force aligned by functions, but fewer GCCs could reduce the natural friction created by boundaries. The true proposal is to drastically reduce the number of seams, giving fewer GCCs a greater AOR. Eliminating seams between GCCs could also reduce staff overhead and decentralize control by providing the CCDR authorities over a larger AOR, or greater span of control. For example, instead of needing the SECDEF or President to adjudicate HDLD assets allocation between CCDRs, the Geographic CCDR would now possess the authority to make more decisions because he would own more territory and resources in a given region.

To offer an example, Figure 3 depicts a fictitious UCC, which serves as a model for how one might change the geographic boundaries. In this example, there are only three GCCs: AMERICOM, EASTCOM, and WESTCOM. AMERICOM would encompass all of the Americas and subsume NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM as sub-unified commands. EASTCOM would encompass all of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, and subsume EUCOM, AFRICOM, and CENTCOM as sub-unified commands. WESTCOM would essentially remain the same as the

current PACOM. The three existing FCCs would remain the same and maintain their global mission.

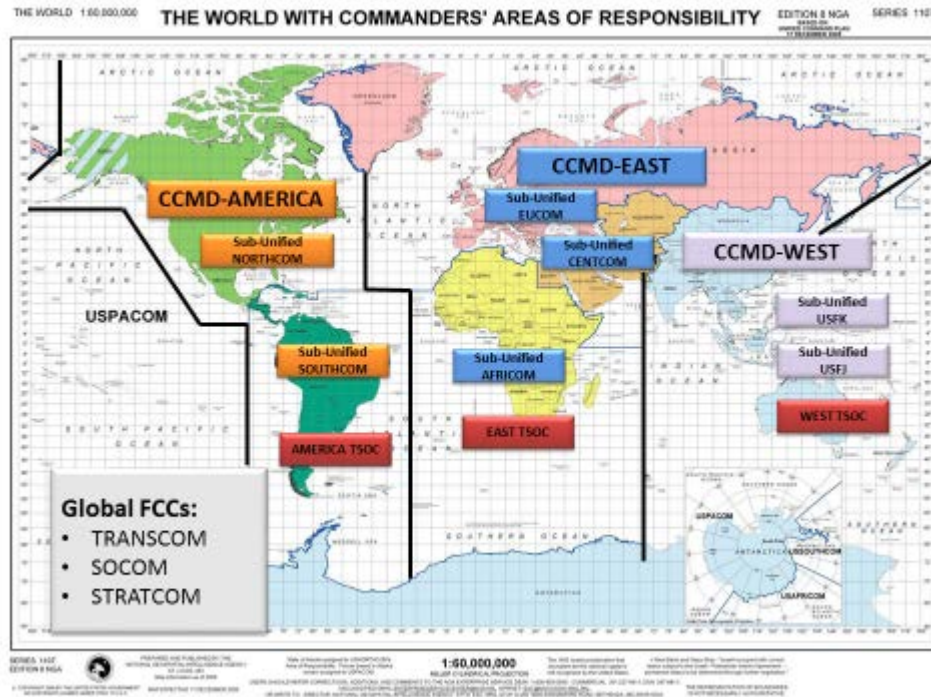


Figure 3. Fictional Unified Combatant Commands

This fictitious UCC provides the GCC with a larger AOR and enables the CCDR to make more decisions that currently require adjudication when dealing with cross-regional issues. One has every right to believe that taking away the majority of the UCP boundaries speeds up the decision making cycle. For example, consider a potential cross-regional crisis involving the current CENTCOM and EUCOM AORs. This fictitious UCC makes these commands Sub-Unified CMDs under EASTCOM, enabling the EASTCOM CCDR to make the resource allocation decisions which would have required higher level adjudication under the existing UCP.

Counterarguments

Many feared the CCDRs would have too much power following the signing of the Goldwater Nichols Act. Viewing this retrospectively, some believe that this came to fruition, while others viewed the increased power as necessary progress. Many might fear that implementing

recommendations such as those aforementioned may empower the CCDRs even more. While it would certainly provide the CCDR with more authorities and increased span of control, the CCDR's responsibilities would remain the same, and he would still be accountable to civilian leadership for the decisions that he makes. The solution to lessen the impact would be the creation of sub-unified commands to decentralize decision making within a greater AOR.

One could make the argument that in order to be more agile, the military needs to organize functionally for crisis response rather than geographically. This may be viable in the distant future with technological advances, but it is impractical to expect the joint force to make such a monumental shift in the near future. One also risks losing regional relationships built through the existing GCCs if the plan includes reducing force posture, which a re-organization of these sorts would almost certainly have to do. As mentioned earlier, forward posture and presence is necessary to achieve global agility. Any adjustments to forward posture and presence could send a negative message to those nations that believe they are being abandoned. It is imperative to maintain those relationships via Theater Security Cooperation, Security Force Assistance, information sharing, multi-national training and exercises, and access agreements, among others, and organizing forces functionally rather than geographically would make this more challenging.

Some may say that eliminating geographic AORs would be counterintuitive and would damage the existing relationships established within each region. That might be accurate if the recommendation was to abolish GCCs. There is value in having a senior official assigned to a geographical AOR to build partnerships and trust, but there are too many seams between the GCCs to be successful in a future world characterized by globalization, volatility, and adversaries acting irrespective of boundaries. To prevent losing the regional touch, many of the existing GCCs could become sub-unified commands. For example, CENTCOM, EUCOM, and

AFRICOM could all become sub-unified commands under a Combatant Command East, much like the existing relationship between PACOM with US Forces, Japan, and US Forces, Korea, falling under them.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSION

Over time, the US has developed the joint force into the finest fighting force in the world. The growing number of conflicts and threats know no boundaries; to continue operating under the existing UCP paradigm means to risk mission success because we are sacrificing speed for centralized control.

To maintain global superiority, military leaders should carefully examine the existing security environment and truly understand global agility in order to recognize that the current construct of the UCP impedes the joint force's ability to achieve global agility. UCP changes made over the years occurred for various reasons. It is imperative that military leaders realize the impact on global agility while the US military shrinks the force and makes budgetary cuts. One must honestly assess whether the existing CCMD structure enhances or hinders global agility. The problem is not about whether to be joint, it is about being able to rapidly respond when called upon and bringing to bear the combined arms that the collective services possess in a synergistic way. Despite the best efforts of military leadership, and with the rapid change in the environment, it is imperative to change the paradigm by which military leaders view the world—to be more agile in a world of globalization, volatility, and constrained budgets.

The recommended solutions presented in this paper are merely designed to serve as potential starting points to encourage more thought. The intent is not for leadership to adopt whole cloth the changes recommended in this paper, but to challenge leaders to reflect upon where the US

military has been, where they are being asked to go, and to grasp the fact that the UCP, as currently constructed, may not be sufficient to meet the demands placed upon the joint force. Leadership should remain unprejudiced in their approach to incrementally solving this issue.

NOTES

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