

# Military Operations Other Than War and International Security Cooperation<sup>\*</sup>

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IN RESPONSE to new developments in international situations and profound changes in the world economy, there have been an increasing number of military operations other than war (MOOTW). These mainly address nontraditional security threats and are one of the major tasks for which the armed forces are used. As an important part of international military conflict and an effective means to promote international security cooperation, they cover a number of sectors in international security cooperation, exerting a direct and profound influence on global security. In 2011, as the world entered a crucial period of adjustment and transformation, there was further diversification in the forms of international security cooperation featuring MOOTW. Consequently, MOOTW now plays an increasingly important role and is showing new development trends.

## I. MOOTW AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION IN 2011

MOOTW REFERS to military operations other than war conducted by countries (political groups) to achieve certain political purposes

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through the non-violent or limited-violent use of military forces. MOOTW is a historical phenomenon that appeared when military struggles developed to a certain stage. It was understood and examined on a strategic level in the early 1990s. In 1993, the United States Army devoted a special section to discuss the theory of non-war military operations in the *U.S. Army Field Manual* (FM100-5 Operations), stressing that the U.S. Army must possess all-dimensional combat capabilities by “employing all means available to accomplish any given mission decisively and at the least cost—across the full range of possible operations in war and in operations other than war.”<sup>1</sup> Since then, the armed forces of other major countries, including China, have also paid great attention to MOOTW, and strengthened the non-war uses of military forces for safeguarding national security and in international security cooperation. From the start of the 21st century, MOOTW has attracted universal attention throughout the world as a result of the changing international situation and prominent nontraditional security threats. The scope of MOOTW has extended, its forms have gradually diversified and its role has been further strengthened, making such non-war military operations into regular military actions to protect national interests and achieve national political and diplomatic goals.

In 2011, the world’s major powers carried out large numbers of MOOTW, which can be summarized as follows:

**1. Unprecedented evacuation of nationals from Libya.** Due to the escalating conflict in Libya, large-scale overseas evacuations of nationals were conducted by countries concerned, and the armed forces of some of these countries were involved. The British frigate HMS *Cumberland* and two C-130 Hercules were used to carry the Special Boat Service (SBS) that secretly penetrated into Libyan deserts to evacuate British nationals who could not reach sea ports or airports.<sup>2</sup> Germany employed the frigate *Rheinland Pfalz*, the supply ship *Berlin* and one C-130 Hercules; Canada used a C-17 military transport plane; and Russia dispatched an Il-76 transport plane.<sup>3</sup> For the first time, Chinese troops participated in an overseas evacuation. The guided missile frigate *Xuzhou*, then on an escort mission in the Gulf of Aden, sailed toward the Mediterranean to

offer protection to Chinese evacuation ships. Four Chinese air force transport planes carried 5,000 Chinese nationals back home by flying across five countries' territorial air space; the distance of each flight was approximately 9,500 km.<sup>4</sup>

**2. Marked increase in international joint military exercises.**

An international joint military exercise is neither a war operation nor a simple joint training; it can be regarded as a form of non-war military operation. In 2011, numerous international joint military exercises on different scales and in different forms were held, among which the most representative were those conducted between the United States military and some other countries, including the U.S.-led Cobra Gold joint military exercise with Thailand in February, which was the largest in Southeast Asia; the U.S.-ROK Key Resolve and Foal Eagle joint military exercises through March and April; the ten-day U.S.-Philippine Shoulder to Shoulder joint military exercise in April and the joint naval exercise in June; the U.S.-ROK Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercise in August; and the U.S.-Japan-ROK joint counter-proliferation exercise in October.

In 2011, China held a series of joint military exercises with other countries, including joint training with Pakistani land and air forces; the first army special forces joint training with Indonesia; parachute troop training Fast Eagle 2011 with Belarus; joint parachute troop training for urban counter-terrorism with Venezuela; and Cooperation Spirit 2011 with Australia, a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercise. The Chinese navy's eighth batch of escort flotillas took part in the Peace 2011 joint naval exercise conducted by the United States, France, Australia and Pakistan.

**3. Ongoing international peacekeeping operations.** In 2011, the United Nations carried out peacekeeping operations in 15 mission areas, including South Sudan, Lebanon, Western Sahara, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Darfur, the Golan Heights in Syria, Cyprus, Abyei, Cote d'Ivoire, Kosovo, Liberia and East Timor. A total of 82,729 military personnel from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Greece, India, Jordan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, the ROK, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and China participated in these operations.<sup>5</sup> China is still involved in

the UN peacekeeping missions in such African countries as Sudan, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and dispatched the fourth and fifth batches of peacekeeping troops to Sudan's Darfur, the seventh and eighth batches to South Sudan's Wau, the 11th and 12th batches to Liberia, and the 12th and 13th batches to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**4. Increasing scope of international relief operations.** The year 2011 was marked by many earthquakes and other disasters, among which the most destructive was the severe earthquake in Japan. After the earthquake struck Japan, the U.S. military launched a humanitarian relief aid operation codenamed Operation Tomodachi, with 14 naval vessels including a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier and cruiser, and over 100 aircraft, such as C-130 transport planes, CH-46 transport helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), as well as 18,000 personnel from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps active-duty forces, as well as the National Guard and other reserve forces. The U.S. military operation was a rare, large-scale joint disaster relief effort for an ally, representing both a humanitarian move and a show of strength, as well as an important step to consolidate the alliance between the two countries. Other than the U.S., military forces from some other countries also took part in the relief efforts in Japan.

In 2011, China's armed forces also took an active part in humanitarian relief work. In February, it dispatched a rescue and relief team to New Zealand's earthquake-hit Christchurch,<sup>6</sup> followed by the dispatching of 50 medical staff to flood-stricken Pakistan. In September, the Chinese air force airdropped 7,000 tents to Pakistan. In October, a Chinese hospital ship visited Cuba and other nations, offering humanitarian aid.<sup>7</sup> In November, China also sent relief ships to Thailand's flood-stricken areas.

**5. Successful performance of escort missions in the Gulf of Aden.** In 2011, the naval forces of a number of countries continued to carry out escort missions in the Gulf of Aden. The Chinese navy dispatched its eighth, ninth and tenth escort taskforces to perform missions in the Gulf and Somali waters, with the eighth taskforce alone completing escort missions for 44 batches of 488 Chinese and foreign ships. By December 24, 2011, the Chinese navy had

performed escort missions for three years in a row. During the last three years, China sent, in succession, ten escort taskforces with 25 warships and 22 helicopters, escorting 403 batches of 4,383 Chinese and foreign ships, rescuing 51 and helping four foreign ships. China set a 100-percent safety record for both the escorted ships and the Chinese naval vessels.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, the Chinese navy strengthened exchanges and cooperation with other countries' navies, effectively safeguarded navigation security for Chinese and foreign ships in the Gulf of Aden and Somali waters, and thus made its due contribution to the maintenance of world peace and regional stability.

## II. MAIN FORMS OF MOOTW

THE FOCUS of attention is different for MOOTW carried out by the military forces of different countries at different stages. As the situation changes, some forms of MOOTW may be abandoned while new ones emerge. Generally speaking, the common forms of MOOTW in international security cooperation are as follows:

### **1. International peacekeeping operations**

INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING operations are to dispatch military observers and peacekeeping troops to disputed territories or conflict zones according to UN Security Council resolutions, agreements made by regional organizations and inter-state agreements. This will eventually create the conditions needed for the political solution of disputes and conflicts by supervising the implementation of ceasefire agreements and controlling conflicts or chaos caused by war. From the perspective of future development, although the international situation in general will remain stable, regional and local conflicts and chaos are hard to eliminate, and will continue to threaten international security and regional stability. This necessitates a rise in the number of international peacekeeping missions within the UN framework. So far, the peacekeeping operations undertaken by armed forces of different countries include: supervising ceasefires, restoring order in conflict zones, sweeping mines, building roads, and providing medical treatment

in war-torn areas. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China will take a more active part in the UN peacekeeping operations, and undertake more responsibilities and obligations in international affairs as its national power rises.

## **2. Disaster relief operations**

DISASTER RELIEF operations refer to emergency rescue and relief operations conducted by military forces during major natural disasters, serious accidents and widespread public health hazards. The armed forces boast a high degree of combat readiness, are able to take swift action, are well-organized and professionally capable, and thus are used as assault forces in disaster relief work. The specific tasks they might be assigned include: (1) to rescue, transfer and evacuate trapped people; (2) to protect major targets; (3) to evacuate and transport important goods and materials; (4) to take part in professional relief, such as emergency repairs of roads (bridges and tunnels), maritime search and rescue missions, nuclear, chemical and biological disaster relief, epidemic control and medical treatment; and (5) to handle or control other critically dangerous situations and disasters.

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Undertaking rescue and relief missions during major natural disasters is a common practice adopted by the armed forces of all countries. In 1986, the Soviet military forces took part in rescue work during the Chernobyl nuclear accident; and in 2005, the U.S. armed forces participated in the relief effort during Hurricane Katrina. In March 2011, when an earthquake struck Japan, the country's self-defense

forces rapidly mobilized a total of 100,000 personnel, as well as 300 aircraft and 20 naval vessels, setting a record in the JSDF's military projection.<sup>9</sup>

Since 1949, the Chinese People's Liberation Army has played a major role in a large number of disaster relief missions, including those for the Tangshan Earthquake of 1976, the forest fire in the

Greater Hinggan Mountains in 1987, the disastrous floods in 1998, the southern China snow and sleet disaster as well as the Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan Province in 2008, the Yushu earthquake in Qinghai Province in 2010, and the Zhouqu landslide in Gansu Province in 2010. These large-scale disaster relief efforts protected people's lives and property, strengthened their confidence in coping with disasters, consolidated the ties between the army and the people, and those between the military and the government, as well as testing and training the troops.

### **3. International rescue and relief operations**

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE and relief operations refer to humanitarian rescue missions conducted by the military forces of some countries in accordance with relevant resolutions adopted by the UN or other international organizations or requests from countries where natural disasters, accidents and public health hazards occur. Such operations mainly include personnel search and rescue, engineering rescue, medical aid, and emergency food and material aid, in addition to other forms of special aid. Such relief efforts are policy-oriented, wide-ranging and highly sensitive, and take place under severe time pressure and in areas far away from home. Therefore, to improve the effectiveness of the operations, personnel with profound professional knowledge, scientific planning, joint action and rapid response are all required. In recent years, the U.S. military have frequently participated in overseas relief efforts; following the Indonesian tsunami in 2004, the South Asian earthquakes in 2005, the mud-rock flow in the Philippines in 2006, Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, the Haiti earthquake in 2010 and the earthquake in Japan in 2010, the U.S. military deployed strong relief forces to conduct relief operations in the countries affected by these disasters.

Since 2002, the Chinese People's Liberation Army has provided emergency disaster relief aid to Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Iran, the Maldives, Kenya, Somalia, the U.S., Pakistan and other countries.<sup>10</sup> Chinese military personnel worked hard at the front line of disaster relief, mobilizing and distributing great quantities of relief goods and materials and thereby winning international acclaim. In March 2011, after the earthquake hit Japan, at the

request of the Japanese government, the Chinese government sent an international rescue team of 15 experts from the PLA to provide humanitarian aid in line with the needs of the disaster-hit areas.

#### **4. Escort missions to protect maritime transportation**

ESCORT MISSIONS to protect maritime transportation are to offer protection to maritime routes, strategic passages and important ships against attacks by hostile states, terrorists and organized criminals, thus ensuring smooth navigation and the safety of the vessels. On some major sea routes and passages, terrorist and pirate attacks frequently occur, posing a serious threat to international shipping safety. Escort missions mainly include sea patrol, escort operations against specific threats, and operations demonstrating the influence

and control of these missions in major straits. To address international terrorist and pirate threats, more international joint operations are required in terms of intelligence, command and logistical support. In recent years, the Gulf of Aden, long frequented by pirates, has been listed by the International Maritime Bureau as one of the most dangerous sea areas in the world. In June 2008, the UN Security Council passed a resolution authorizing foreign military forces to enter Somali waters to stop piracy and armed robbery, with the

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approval of the Somali transitional government. In 2011, the U.S., Russia, the EU, India and other countries continued to dispatch warships to undertake escort missions through Somali waters.

Alongside its rapid economic development, China has witnessed a fast growth in its foreign trade and a huge increase in its maritime traffic. As a result, the safety of maritime strategic passages and maritime transportation has become increasingly important, and escort missions to protect maritime traffic have become a major task for the Chinese navy in the present era.



### **5. Overseas evacuation operations**

OVERSEAS EVACUATION operations use the armed forces or adopt certain military means to evacuate or move staff in overseas embassies or consulates, as well as visiting nationals who are under serious threat, to their homelands or to other safe areas. This occurs in the cases of relatively large-scale armed conflict or war, serious domestic turmoil or natural disasters abroad. Overseas evacuation is a limited military operation conducted on the territory of other countries and thus requires their collaboration. It is necessary to fully consult with the countries concerned through diplomatic channels, make careful plans and organize these operations cautiously. After the uprising took place in Libya in February 2011, the armed forces of some countries participated in large-scale evacuation operations.

### **6. International joint military exercises**

AN INTERNATIONAL joint military exercise is a military cooperation exercise, which is conducted according to bilateral or multilateral military cooperation agreements. International joint military exercises constitute an important means for training troops and improving their combat effectiveness in peacetime. They are also a major part of inter-state and inter-military exchanges, which aim to strengthen mutual trust in military affairs, and thus have considerable political and strategic implications.<sup>11</sup> Joint military exercises conducted by Western developed countries are carried out quite regularly. For example, in 2011, in the Asia-Pacific region, the United States military held the Key Resolve, Foal Eagle and Ulchi Freedom Guardian joint military exercises with the ROK, the Shoulder to Shoulder joint military exercise with the Philippines, the Cobra Gold joint military exercise with Thailand and the South China Sea joint military exercise with Australia. These joint military exercises were all relatively large in scale, involved many countries, and for the most part, exerted an important influence on the regional situation.

The joint exercises conducted by the Chinese military with foreign military forces adhere to the principles of non-alignment and non-confrontation and are not targeted at any third party,

as well as adhere to the principles of strategically mutual benefit, equal participation and reciprocal implementation. By December 2010, a total of 44 joint exercises and training sessions with foreign militaries had been conducted, playing an important role in promoting mutual trust and cooperation, allowing China to gain useful experience and strengthen its military modernization.

### **7. Counter-terrorism operations**

COUNTER-TERRORISM operation is a general term covering a range of missions to deter and crack down on terrorist activities and eliminate terrorists through the use of military power. Such operations mainly include: surveillance, deterrence, defense, attack, disposal, rescue and relief. These actions can be categorized into preventative missions and strike missions, depending on the nature of the given action. The former refers to measures taken before the occurrence of terrorist activities, including preventative and protective measures against terrorist plots, such as intelligence collection on terrorist organizations, formulation and improvement of counter-terrorism operation plans, strengthening the protection of important targets, formulation of post-terrorist attack relief plans, and carrying out the relevant counter-terrorist exercises and training. The latter refers to military strike operations of various scales and forms against terrorists, including pursuing, encircling and eliminating terrorists, attacking terrorist camps, seizing terrorist-occupied targets and rescuing hostages.

### III. STRATEGIC VALUE OF MOOTW IN PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION

HISTORY SHOWS that military forces have had dual functions since their very inception: their uses in war and uses other than war. Throughout history, the focus of the armed forces has been on war, while their non-war uses have remained quite weak. With the passing of time and the progress of society, although war remains the primary function of the military forces, this has been subject to an increasing number of restraints, while military operations other than war are being increasingly strengthened. In this era of political

multipolarization, economic globalization, social informationization and military high technologization, MOOTW have become both a focus of international attention and a major part of international military exchanges. This is due to their increasingly important strategic value in maintaining social stability and promoting international security cooperation.

### **1. Creating a peaceful international environment**

IN AN ERA of peace and development, the international community and major countries all focus on economic development and hope to maintain a peaceful and stable international environment. Therefore, less intense, more flexible and less risky MOOTW often become a primary means to maintain stability and security.

Generally speaking, there are three means to foster a peaceful international environment. The first of these is political, economic and diplomatic means other than war, which can be employed to achieve peace through strengthened exchanges and cooperation. This is the fundamental means to create a peaceful international environment. The second is war. War can both destroy and foster a peaceful environment—temporary destruction of this environment is for the sake of permanent peaceful environment in the long term. In this era of peace and development, war is subject to many restraints and it is regarded as the last resort in a specific situation. The third is non-war military means. When security threats and conflicts have not intensified to the point that war has to be initiated, a large number of non-war military means can be used, albeit flexibly, to create peace. Although military power is employed, the ways this military power is used are different from that of war. Such means can prove to be more adaptable, and more effective in certain conditions. John Shalikashvili, former chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, pointed out in JPS-07 *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War* that “participation in military operations other than war is critical in the changing international security environment.”<sup>12</sup> For example, international peacekeeping operations, international joint military exercises and international rescue and relief missions and the like

are all non-war military actions and ideal instruments for fostering a peaceful environment.

## **2. Preventing international conflict and war**

WAR IS an instrument of force adopted to resolve once and for all contradictions and conflicts among countries which have escalated to the point that they cannot be resolved by political and diplomatic means. To deter war, it is necessary to attempt every possible means

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to reduce conflicts and ease tension. MOOTW can play a unique role in preventing war. First, it can bolster trust and reduce conflicts. International rescue and relief efforts, and international joint military exercises can not only fulfill the mission of military diplomacy, they can also improve the political and military relations among countries and strengthen their mutual trust, so as to prevent war, reduce the possibility of war or delay war. Second, it can resolve crises and prevent war. War usually stems from a crisis. The use of MOOTW can help to avoid crises, and avert trends of development that lead to crises, thus reducing the possibility of war. Third, it can directly prevent war. For example, international peacekeeping operations can mediate and monitor the two belligerents, avoiding or reducing the possibility of conflicts.

## **3. Intensifying international security cooperation**

IN THIS ERA of economic globalization, economic ties among countries have been growing ever closer, while all countries have had to face an increasing number of common security problems. Given that interdependence among countries has greatly increased, strengthening cooperation has become an important means to maintain security and development. Generally speaking, interstate cooperation covers mainly political, economic and military cooperation. Military cooperation is politically sensitive and strategically important, and can promote and strengthen political and economic cooperation, thus receiving widespread attention in all countries. A large part of essential military cooperation is MOOTW, such as international peacekeeping missions, rescue and

relief efforts, joint military exercises and maritime escort operations. These operations have a unique role in establishing national image and strengthening friendship between the countries concerned. Hence, MOOTW is also regarded a state diplomatic means and an important instrument for enhancing international cooperation.

In the new historical situation, there are many security problems that are common to all countries, such as terrorist threats and natural disasters. These security problems are trans-national and trans-regional in nature and cannot be addressed by any one country alone. They demand the collaboration of many countries, to achieve security based on collective strength. MOOTW is a new method that every country in the world can accept in this era of peace and development. As a bond to strengthen military cooperation among countries, it plays an irreplaceable role in protecting regional stability and world peace.

#### **4. Improving military cooperation capability**

MANY INTERNATIONAL MOOTW require effective cooperation among the military forces of many countries. For example, the escort missions in the Gulf of Aden, UN peacekeeping operations, international relief operations and international joint military exercises all call for close collaboration among the armed forces of countries concerned. Meanwhile, in executing the MOOTW, the capabilities of the military forces will be strengthened, and so will their capabilities of military cooperation. Obviously, the conducting of MOOTW can produce dual results: carrying out the missions and protecting national security and world peace can help to achieve political goals; and at the same time, these operations can broaden the vision of military personnel taking part, test their abilities and improve their overall skills.

The military forces of China have had their strength tested in a number of non-war military operations, including the fight against the serious floods in 1998, the snow and sleet disaster in 2008 and rescue work following the Wenchuan earthquake. These operations have trained the troops, cultivated their spirit of sacrifice and will to fight, and improved their overall combat capabilities. The U.S. military argues that participation in disaster

relief can improve the overall combat readiness of the troops and offer real-life opportunities for both commanders and soldiers to practice fighting and try out new tactics. Disaster relief efforts thus provide a platform to train the troops and improve their combat capabilities.<sup>13</sup> Upon receiving an order to join the earthquake relief effort in Japan, the commander of the U.S. Navy's USS Ronald Reagan carrier strike group said that this relief operation was more important for training his troops than a joint exercise with the ROK, and was the best chance to put U.S.-Japan joint operations to the test. With the rise of nontraditional security threats, the military forces of major global powers have attached great importance to the implementation of different forms of MOOTW, devoting great attention to improving their combat capabilities and their capacity for military cooperation.

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