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Recommended Citation

Naval War College, The U.S., "CIWAG - Annual Symposium Report - 2012" (2012). *CIWAG Events*. 4.
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Center on Irregular Warfare & Armed Groups

CIWAG

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FIRST LOOK

“In the 21st century, intelligence sharing is a new form of currency.”

Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn, Assistant Director of National Intelligence

“How does a regular navy fight irregular warfare on the ground?”

Adm. Roberto García Márquez, Commander, Colombian Naval Forces

“What we need now are hybrid approaches to counter hybrid threats.”

Richard Deasy, US Immigrations and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations

The Center for Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups at the US Naval War College presented its fourth annual symposium, “Exploiting Seams and Closing Gaps,” on June 26-27, 2012. Over 60 US and international academics, practitioners, and operators attended to discuss the strategic and operational challenges associated with irregular warfare and armed groups. Attendees also included members from DHS, DIA, NCIS, the intelligence community, and Special Operations Forces.

NWC President Rear Adm. John N. Christenson opened the conference, and Lt. Gen. Michael T. Flynn, Assistant Director of National Intelligence, gave the keynote address. The symposium focused on how armed groups and states exploit the seams in their opponents’ strategies and institutions, and how states have closed those gaps.

Highlighted Panel: Exploiting Seams and Closing Gaps—Lessons from Mumbai and Beyond: Dr. Andrea Dew

Key Findings:

- ⇒ Irregular armed groups move fluidly across state and other boundaries, using gaps in coverage to their own benefit.
- ⇒ The LeT used the division of responsibility for the coastal Indian maritime environment to their advantage.
- ⇒ States must examine their own environmental and geographic, political and diplomatic, institutional, and cognitive seams and gaps and work to close them
- ⇒ States should examine weak spots in their opponents’ coverage of these areas and exploit them.

Panels included:

- ◇ **Defeating the FARC—Evaluating Colombia’s Whole of Government Approach:** Adm. Garcia (Colombia), Adm. (ret.) Barrera (Colombia)
- ◇ **Exploiting the Maritime and Military Instruments of Power—The Sri Lankan Perspective:** Rear Adm. RC Wijegunaratne (Sri Lanka), Paul Povlock (NWC)
- ◇ **Countering Iran’s Irregular Warfare Maritime Strategy:** Frank Hoffman (NDU)
- ◇ **The Exploitation of Transnational Networks by Armed Groups:** Rick Deasy (ICE), Michael Moss
- ◇ **The Utility of Economic Warfare in the 21st Century:** Kevin Freeman (Freeman Global Investment Counsel)
- ◇ **The Role of Irregular Warfare in the Quadrennial Defense Review:** Rear Adm. Luke McCollum (USN—NECC), Jim Warner (US Army QDR Office)
- ◇ **TE Lawrence in the 21st Century?:** Lee Johnson (US Navy Foreign Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Office)