Weekly Report

National Security Division

Week ending 14 Feb, 2020

National Security Strategy:

1. **Protect the homeland, the American people, and the American way of life**
2. **Promote American prosperity**
3. **Preserve peace through strength**
4. **Advance American influence**

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National Defense Strategy:

1. **Rebuilding military readiness as we build a more lethal Joint Force**
2. **Strengthening alliances as we attract new partners**
3. **Reforming the Department's business practices for greater performance and affordability**

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February 2020 Recovery & Investigation Missions

Indo-Pacific Directorate:

There are a total of four Organic Missions deployed:

- 64 personnel in Laos comprising 3 Recovery Teams
- 19 personnel in Cambodia comprising 1 Recovery Team and 1 Investigation Team
- 15 personnel in Myanmar comprising 1 Recovery Team
- 91 personnel in Vietnam comprising 2 Recovery Teams, 1 Underwater Recovery Team, and 1 Investigation Team

Disinterment:

In-stride with Phase 2 of our Korean War Disinterment Plan, we are planning to disinter 16 Unknowns from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Partnership Missions:

There are a total of five Partnership Missions deployed:

- 1 History Flight Recovery Mission in Kiribati (Tarawa)
- 1 Recovery Team, partnered with the University of Illinois at Chicago, in the Philippines
- 1 Investigation Team, partnered with the University of Illinois at Chicago, in the Philippines
- I Investigation Team, partnered with the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, in Vietnam
- 1 Investigation Team, partnered with the University of Illinois at Chicago, in Laos

Euro-Mediterranean Directorate:

There are a total of two Organic Missions deployed:

- 1 individual in Poland comprising 1 Research Investigation Team
- 2 personnel in Great Britain comprising 1 Research Investigation Team

On 6 February, 5 personnel in Panama completed site survey operations.

Partnership Missions:

In partnership with Lund University, an Underwater Investigation Team is set to deploy to Sweden.

February 2020 Mission Executive Summaries

Philippines 20-1PH: From 8 to 27 January 2020, DPAA conducted Joint Field Activity 20-1PH in the Philippines. Five personnel from Hawaii disinterred Unknown individuals from 15 graves at the Manila American Cemetery associated with World War II losses. On 19 January, the team transitioned into a Recovery Team and excavated a reported burial site possibly associated with the Bataan Death March. The team recovered possible human remains which will be examined by a Joint Forensic Review before being repatriated to the United States.

A DPAA Disinterment Team works with local workers at the Manila American Cemetery.

China Reports nearly 100 deaths in a single day from Coronavirus

The total number of dead since the spread of this deadly virus has reached as many as 909 with 40,235 confirmed cases. Some experts believe this is just the tip of the ice burg. There have been 300 confirmed cases worldwide since the start of this virus, with one confirmed death outside China.

"The detection of a small number of cases may indicate more widespread transmission in other countries; in short, we may only be seeing the tip of the iceberg," he wrote, adding, "Containment remains our objective, but all countries must use the window of opportunity created by the containment strategy to prepare for the virus' possible arrival."

Although the mortality rate is far lower than the SARS outbreak the Coronavirus has killed so far 200 more people. This leaving a lasting effect and a panic in mainland China and a perception that the rest of the world is unresponsive. In one editorial headlined "Is sympathy too much to ask from the Western media?" author Wang Wenwen writes: "Reading through some Western media reports on China's fight against the outbreak, I could not find many encouraging and inspiring ones. Instead, I discovered discrimination and gloating." Time will continue to tell if the situation on the ground will resolve itself.

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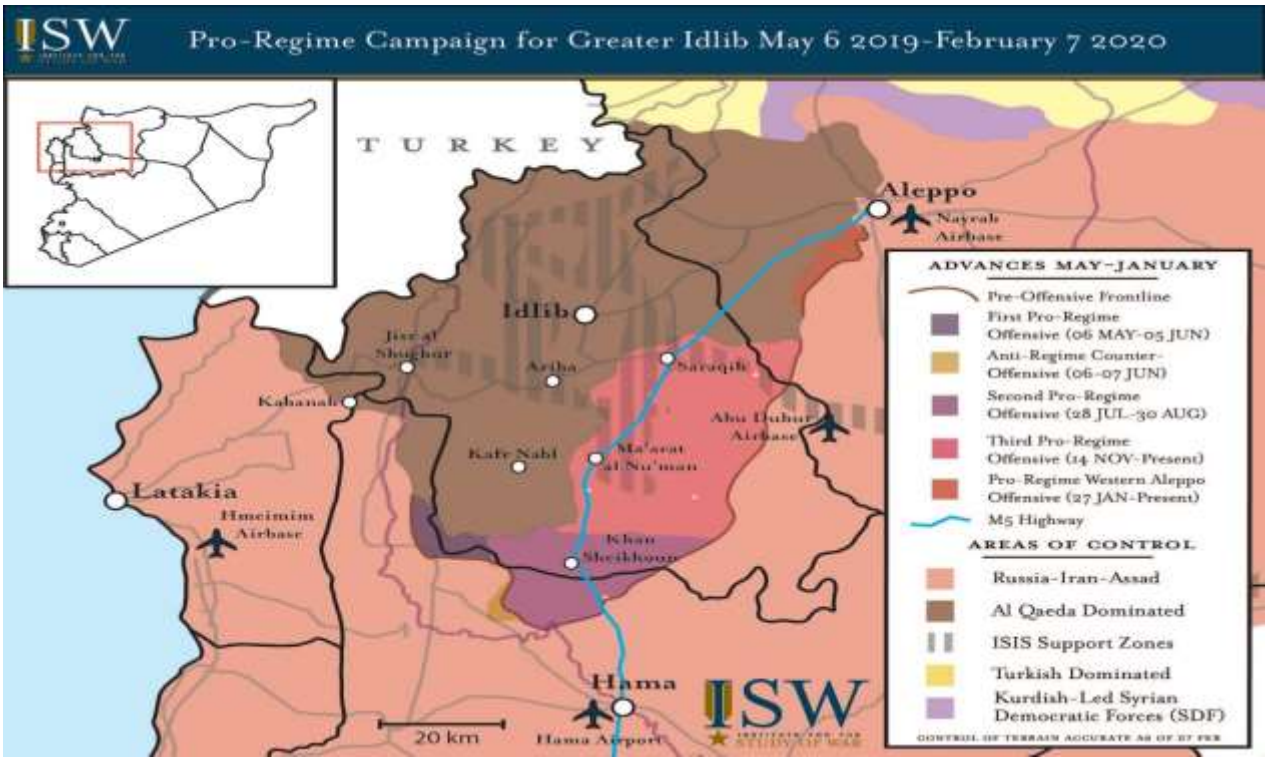
Russia Enables New Syrian Regime Offensive in Idlib

Syria’s northwest region has become dynamic and has the potential to escalate dramatically. A Russian-backed military campaign has begun to size territory for the Assad regime, which has since evolved into a major undertaking within the Syrian conflict.



Vladimir Putin has long engaged in a series of parallel strategic endeavors aimed at expanding Russian influence and power in the middle east. Russian first intervened in Syria in 2015 to preserve a Russian-amenable regime that allows Russia to use Syria for military basing that supports these goals. Russia, Iran, and the Assad regime have undertaken a series of operations to seize terrain and rebuild the Syrian state under Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad.

Michael Land accounts the key takeaways: The pro-regime coalition is poised to make further gains in Greater Idlib Province, adding on to already substantial territorial advances. Russia will govern the speed at which these advances happen based on its political calculus, both in Syria and elsewhere. The conflict has the potential to escalate dramatically, posing a risk to the U.S. and its allies.

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Philippines says it will end U.S. security agreement

President Rodrigo Duterte has refused a security pact that would allow American forces to train there. Duterte's foreign secretary, Teodoro Locsin Jr. tweeted Tuesday that the visiting forces agreement with the U.S. would be terminated. This move could prove to be disastrous to the counterinsurgency against the Islamic extremists in the south.

@DFAPHL The Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of the United States has received the notice of termination of the Visiting Forces Agreement. As a diplomatic courtesy there will be no further factual announcements following this self-explanatory development.

— Teddy Locsin Jr. (@teddyboylocsin) February 11, 2020

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POW/MIA Update

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. Click on the links to read more:

News Releases

February 11, 2020

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Harris, D.)

Soldier Accounted For From World War II (Cansler, J.)

Soldier Accounted For From World War II (White, J.)

February 13, 2020

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Wasielewski, E.)

USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Corn, R.)

Staff Activity:

- Staff attended a Military Housing Roundtable, to discuss the landscape and current needs of the military family and housing issues. Topics included hazardous living conditions, such as mold and led poisoning and steps taken to bring awareness. This included on and off base housing locations on military installations.

Rhonda Powell, Director, National Security Division