Interview with Conventional Force Civil Affairs team, USEMB Abidjan, March 12, 2025

We have been more focused at the operational strategic level. We are the 2nd full time 9 month team on the ground. We are starting our relief in place next week.

We have been developing the CA mission here by creating an assistant partner force curriculum.

* For the Armed Forces Academy.
  + Advising on CMO Curriculum
  + Building trust is the number two on country priorities behind the CT mission
  + Collaborating on curriculum based on FM 3-57, which is translated into French
  + Deputy armed forces commander, Gen Mouho is the DCG of land forces
  + SOF and conventional CA teams doing separate operations.
  + We deal with Mouho who was at the Armed forces Academy. His new replacement is COL Ouattara
  + Mouho was the force behind the CA training, he is a pioneer
  + Right now CA is not an identifier or MOS for the force. African armies will often point guns at civilians so civilians are scared of the military. There has been bad rapport right now so this is why relationships are important.
* Another initiative is planned G39 trainiung initiative. Mobile training teams doing the training. It is part of a G39 element that speaks French and are CA. The training will be with 28 army personnel, 5 of which are females. It is a train the trainer model so they will be future instructors of the force. They hail from the 14 land force battalions.
* CMO Curriculdum. No agreement yet on how to be implemented. I am a lead planner. Sept 24 they did signing of the agreement.
  + Need to request the Bilateral Cooperation Plan or BCAP. The CA team was the lead for the building trust initiative
* ISG or Institutional Security governance.
  + Doctrine strategy high level of civ-mil relationship. Chief of defense talking with the mayor. They had 12-15 LTC on how to implement doctrine. There is a lack of a national defense strategy or national mission strategy and the army is working to create all of these at once (rather than creating the higher level document and then nesting on below). “it is like your building your ship while your driving it.”
* We completed the admin necessities, next team will start doing tactical civil affairs
* G39 from STAF and the Mobile training team
  + Four phases with two completed. Will do third and fourth phase; each phase two weeks each.
  + Instructors, once trained, will train battalions.
  + Goal: end of day they will be more professional and competent when dealing with the locals. Need to develop a refugee management plan. Goal for soldiers to be professional information gatherers
* Lots of security issues in Comeo National Forest. Illegal forestry, resource snatching like cattle, they steal cattle from Cot, sell them in Ghana and then the Ghanians sell back to the herders. Cot army says they have forest secured but only a mile in.
* The Genderme have a bad reputation. The military is much better. The genderme for example does illegal pullovers. Poor relations with local population.
  + Note that one Gendarme officer in cot castigated Paul and I for talking in English
  + Previous CT coordinator tight with national police but he was cut and it is presumed that his staff, guys who worked with him, are all gone. Check with Greg Palladino the ARSO
* COMMS/messaging
  + Soldiers will be more competent in civmil. Gather information. AILCT the anti terror training center) have information getters on the ground, the trained ca folks will provide sitrep to higher where gets converted to intel report
* MIST one captain. The mist sofle. Two month ago only 8 dod perssons, now it is 120.
* Civil affairs messaging
  + We try to do that with PD, send the storyboard to the DAT and he sends to the PD but that is not working so well presumably bc the DAT is so busy.
  + Would be better to have a PAO officer at the embassy who can work this; in previous assignment in Honduras the soldier said they had a PAO officer and things worked well. So here it is “getting lost”
  + Combat camera? No though one was sent for Flintlock
* Institutional barriers. Under DOD hopefully escallate authorities. We are under 321 and 312
  + Need more authorities so we can directly train Cot army. SETAF has increased authorities. We can talk with counterparts but once we teach we are violating authorities.
  + New team will be able to do CA mission but not training.
  + Can send pictures of events to SETAF and they can release.
* The next team will be rockstars bc we did all the work. There are other teams in

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