



# UNITED STATES INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND COUNTER-LAWFARE CENTER

Preserving legitimacy and building legal consensus while exposing and opposing misuse of the law for coercive ends that threaten the freedom, security, and prosperity of all States.

## WHAT IS LAWFARE?

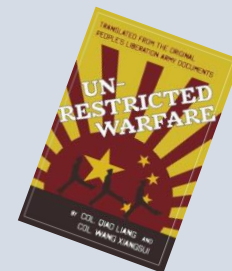
Lawfare is the use—or misuse—of law as a means to achieve a strategic, operational, or tactical objective. May also be used to create false legitimacy for unlawful national/military objectives or coercive actions.

## Example: China's "Legal Warfare"

Method of warfare used to create a veneer of legitimacy to justify the China's unlawful actions. China seeks to gain "legal principle superiority" as a tool for coercion or pretext to justify/legitimize aggression.

China's coercive lawfare leverages:

- ❑ Information → false/misleading legal positions;
- ❑ Battlefield exploitation → "gray zone" operations to exploit lawfulness of others;
- ❑ Institutions → domestic laws and co-opted institutions lending veneer of legitimacy;
- ❑ Instruments → broad/ambiguous assertions of enforcement jurisdiction/sovereignty rights;
- ❑ Proxies → legal action through 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to achieve coercive ends.



## INDOPACOM'S COUNTER-LAWFARE PROGRAM: A RESPONSE TO COERCIVE MISUSE OF LAW

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's (INDOPACOM) Counter-Lawfare program supports a free and open Indo-Pacific by exposing and opposing the misuse and misrepresentation of law through legal vigilance, legal diplomacy, and support to operations in the information environment.

Counter-lawfare contributes to deterrence by denying competitors the ability to use legal warfare as a tool for coercion and a pretext for aggression.

**Objective:** INDOPACOM's Counter-Lawfare program seeks to build legitimacy through consensus and deny potential adversaries from gaining legal superiority.

**Method:** INDOPACOM's Counter-Lawfare program focuses on three approaches:

- Legal Vigilance...closely monitor competitor actions in the legal domain to identify misuse of the law and mobilize partners to respond.
- Legal Diplomacy...integrate with partner nation legal offices and academia on efforts to promote and uphold rules/norms (i.e. build consensus via partnership).
- Counter-Lawfare – Support to Information Environment...use routine updates and legal analysis to emphasize INDOPACOM's respect for international rules, laws, and norms and expose adversary actions that undermine a free and open Indo-Pacific (e.g. Legal Vigilance Dispatch, Tactical Aids aka "TACAIDS").

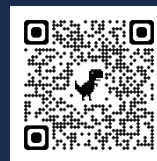
**Desired Outcome:** Deter potential adversaries from undermining security and prosperity of all States, thereby preserving a free and open region.

*"Let's be direct about our challenges. Nations' assertive behavior threatens regional stability and international norms...It's not about choosing sides; it's about building a region where all nations exercise sovereign rights without intimidation and where dialogue resolves disputes."*

Admiral Paparo, Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command



**Stay informed** – scan this QR code to learn more about Counter-Lawfare and find INDOPACOM's Counter-Lawfare materials.



**Stay vigilant** – contact the INDOPACOM Counter-Lawfare Center to receive updates and join the team [INDOPACOM.Jo6.OPLAW@PACOM.MIL](mailto:INDOPACOM.Jo6.OPLAW@PACOM.MIL)

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