



# 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 rules-based order and sovereign rights of all nations.

## WHAT IS LAWFARE?

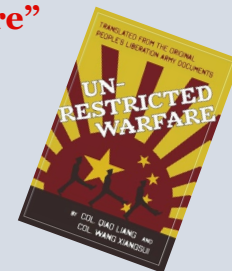
Lawfare is the use—or misuse—of law as a means to achieve a strategic, operational, or tactical objective. May also be used to create false legitimacy for unlawful national/military objectives or coercive actions.

### Example: People's Republic of China "Legal Warfare"

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

The PRC'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 the rules-based international order (RBIO) and sovereign rights by exposing and opposing misuse and misrepresentation of the law through legal vigilance, support to operations in the information environment, and legal diplomacy.

Counter-lawfare contributes to integrated 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:

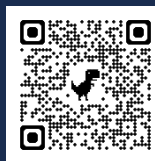
- Legal Vigilance...closely monitor competitor actions in the legal domain to identify misuse of the law and mobilize partners to respond.
- Counter-Lawfare – Support to Information Environment...use routine updates and legal analysis to emphasize INDOPACOM's adherence to rule of law and expose competitor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

**Desired Outcome:** Deter potential adversaries from undermining RBIO and sovereign rights of all nations, thereby preserving freedom of action for all States.

*"We will safeguard the international order characterized by transparency, cooperation, fair competition and the rule of law. We'll bring all to bear in all domains, harnessing an integrated capability supporting partnerships to maintain peace and security while safeguarding sovereign rights."*

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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