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UNIT 30401, APO AE 09107-0401

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From: Gunnery Sergeant Brian R. Ross
To: HQMC International Affairs Program PLU-8
Via: Assistant Chief of Staff G-3/5

Subj: SITUATION REPORT 2 FOR GUNNERY SERGEANT ROSS FOREIGN AREA
STAFF NCO (FAS) BETA TEST MARINE CORPS FORCES, AFRICA

Ref: (a) MARADMIN 724/11
(b) SITREP 1 FAS Beta Test MARFORAF 25 Apr 2012

1. Executive Summary. This report follows SITREP 1 and identifies engagements and activities conducted from April through November 2012 that supported both Marine Corps Forces, Africa, (MARFORAF) Headquarters objectives and the FAS Beta Test.

Activities internal to Headquarters, Marine Corps Forces Africa, included: application of Language Skills, Regional Expertise, and Cultural Capabilities (LREC) into twenty-one (21) confirmation and In-Progress Review (IPR) briefs; delivery of Command Brief to Partner Nation delegations; and attendance at regional PMEs and information sessions.

In support of engagements outside the HQ and in the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) AOR, I applied FAS LREC expertise during Africa Partnership Station (APS) and Maritime Security Force Assistance (MSFA) Pre-Deployment Site Surveys (PDSS) in Cape Verde and Senegal; as Exercise Coordination Cell (ECC) Operations Chief for Exercise WESTERN ACCORD 12 in Senegal; in support of an Evacuation Control Center (ECC) certification exercise in Rota, Spain; and at SOUTHERN ACCORD 12 Botswana Distinguished Visitor's (DV) Day. Additionally, I joined PLU-8 to brief Full and Partial Track SNCOs completing Naval Postgraduate School (NPS).

Language skills, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities remain in high demand at this headquarters. The current internal structure and operational demand challenge full usage of FAS capabilities.

2. Marine Forces Africa Headquarters Internal Support.

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a. Staff Support to Engagement Briefs. Subordinate task forces and staff planners deliver confirmation and In-Progress Review (IPR) briefs to the Commander, Deputy Commander, Chief of Staff, or AC/S G-3/5 at HQ MARFORAF. I attended the following briefs:

WESTERN ACCORD (WA) 12 IPR; Task Force	Combat Lifesaver Benin; SC Team
WA 12 Conf Brief; Task Force	Maritime Security Force Assistance (MSFA) Senegal; SPMAGTF
ACOTA Uganda INTEL Traveling Contact Team (TCT); SPMAGTF	Liberia NLW Training; SC Team
Vehicle Maintenance Chad; SPMAGTF	AFRICA ENDEAVOR 12 Cameroon; MARFORAF
Vehicle Maintenance Tunisia; SPMAGTF	Engineer/Sapper Uganda; SPMAGTF
Mechanized Operations Malawi; SPMAGTF	Tactical Comms Botswana; SPMAGTF
Combat Lifesaver Togo; SC Team	SOUTHERN ACCORD 12 Botswana; Task Force
Orders TCT Tanzania; SPMAGTF	Infantry Skills Training Djibouti; SPMAGTF
Armory TCT Liberia; SPMAGTF	Military Intelligence Non-Commissioned Officer Course (MINOCA) Senegal; MARFORAF
Military Intelligence Basic Officer Course (MIBOCA) PDSS Kenya; MARFORAF	Operations TCT Seychelles; SPMAGTF
Africa Partnership Station 12	Security Force N. Africa

LREC expertise was injected to ensure that forces were adequately manned with appropriate linguists, cultural concerns were identified, and current regional issues were understood that could affect mission assurance and accomplishment.

b. Command Briefs. I developed and delivered a MARFORAF Command Brief to two delegations.

(1) USAFRICOM Public Affairs sponsored a group of nine (9) journalists representing news agencies from Kenya and Zambia. Feedback provided by Priscilla Hernandez, USAFRICOM: "- Marines - removed myths; impressive, forthright presentation about their mission showed that the Marines had nothing to hide about why they exist."

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(2) Liaison Officers (LNO) from Partner Nations to the Combined Joint Task Force, Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). Countries represented included Ethiopia, Egypt, France, Japan, Romania, South Korea, and Uganda. Comments from event host Eric Wills of USAFRICOM J-5: "thank you again for the enjoyable and informative brief you, the private and corporal presented to our Coalition Liaison Officers. They benefitted from it."

c. Scripted Translation.

(1) For MARFORAF Public Affairs Officer, French to English, Speech given by Admiral Sall, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Senegalese Armed Forces, to Senegalese media regarding the success of WESTERN ACCORD 12.

(2) For the MARFORAF G-4, French to English, Moroccan letter and detailed invoice for charges incurred during AFRICAN LION 12.

(3) For Command Deck, French to English, Curricula Vitae of Senegalese dignitaries as part of trip book in support of Commander Visit.

d. Professional Military Education (PME) and Information Sessions. MARFORAF and USAFRICOM locally host numerous PMEs related to African current affairs and United States diplomacy. I attended the following:

(1) Mr. Kevin O'Keefe, United States Department of State (DoS), Bureau of Political Military Affairs. Mr. O'Keefe provided an overview of the DoS political-military architecture and hosted a Q&A forum for both African and European affairs.

(2) Mr. Zach Huber, Marine Corps Intelligence Activity. Mr. Huber provided a PME titled "South Africa - Why Its Military Struggles."

(3) Senator Romero Dallaire. Retired Canadian LtGen spoke about UN Operations in Rwanda (1994 Rwandan Genocide).

3. Engagements in USAFRICOM AOR.

a. Cape Verde and Senegal PDSS. I traveled to Cape Verde and Senegal, along with MARFORAF and Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group (MCSCG) plans officers, for an APS and MSFA PDSS and to participate in the WESTERN ACCORD 12 Final Planning Conference

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(FPC). In support of APS and MSFA, we assessed landing sites, medical facilities/capabilities, billeting, and met with Partner Nation personnel. During the FPC in Dakar, I supported all operations-centric activities in anticipation of serving as the ECC Ops Chief during execution. I also paired with MARFORAF Antiterrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) Officer to assess six (6) hotels in Thiès, Senegal. French and Portuguese language skills were integral to each of the aforementioned engagements. Additionally, the cultural ability to communicate with locals simplified searches for hotels and development of contracting services for both billeting and meal service. As part of each of these events, we engaged with U.S. Embassy personnel to include Regional Security Officer and Senior Defense Official.

b. WESTERN ACCORD 12 Execution. WESTERN ACCORD 12 was a MARFORAF-led Combined Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) exercise in the Dakar and Thiès areas of Senegal designed to enhance the regional capability to command and control, deploy, operate, and sustain forces in support of peace support operations. Partner nations included Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea Conakry, and Burkina Faso with observers from France and Cape Verde. I was originally scheduled to participate for one week, but was extended an additional week as LREC was critical MARFORAF operational accomplishment. My duties included:

- (1) Establish the Exercise Coordination Cell (ECC).
- (2) Arrange for ECC billeting and meals at the Centre de Conférences pour le Développement Durable (CCDD) in Thiès.
- (3) Assign local cell phones and air cards to ECC and Task Force.
- (4) Develop vehicle and contracted driver usage plan.
- (5) Assist in ensuring that the Task Force recognized MARFORAF operational objectives and accordingly integrated Partner Nation personnel.
- (6) Enable integration of invited Cape Verde and French observers.
- (7) Provide French and Portuguese translation as required.
- (8) Support Distinguished Visitor's Day planning and execution.

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c. ECC Certification Exercise. MARFORAF directed SPMAGTF 12.2 to conduct an Evacuation Control Center (ECC) exercise in order to identify organic processing capability and any shortfalls in anticipation of supporting potential contingency operations. I traveled to Rota, Spain, to observe the exercise and provide associated feedback to the G-3/5. Initial Plan incorporated observers from Spanish Marine Corps, who did not participate on execution day, thus LREC provided only marginal utility in getting around Spain and the Combined Spanish-U.S. Naval Station Rota.

d. SOUTHERN ACCORD 12 DV Day. I traveled to Gaborone, Botswana, with MARFORAF SgtMaj and AC/S G-3/5 in support of CJCS Exercise SOUTHERN ACCORD 12 Distinguished Visitor's Day. SOUTHERN ACCORD 12 was a U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) supported exercise designed to increase and strengthen relationships and partnership between the Botswana Defense Forces, Southern Africa Development Community and the U.S. The exercise included a company (-) of U.S. Marines. My FAS duties included:

(1) Assist AC/S G-3/5 and SgtMaj as required for AOR travel.

(2) Achieve G-3 oversight to MARFORAF support to USARAF exercise and USMC Training Objectives.

(3) Provide MARFORAF background to facilitate responses to RFIs fielded during DV Day from CCDR, USARAF, Country Team, and Partner Nation leadership.

4. West Coast FAS Update Brief. I accompanied PLU-8 FAS Program Manager to visit West Coast commands in order to educate Full and Partial Track FASs, offer insight to FAS gaining commands, and further posture the FAS Beta Test. Visits targeted Marine Detachment, Defense Language Institute; Naval Postgraduate School; Expeditionary Warfare Training Group-Pacific; 13th MEU; 15th MEU, I MEF Sergeant Major, and I MEF Military Operations Center.

5. Recommendations.

a. **MARFOR FAS Designation**. SNCO LREC can be applied, and is sought after, for myriad engagements at Marine Corps Forces, Africa. I have been dual-hatted as Senior Enlisted Advisor to Director of Plans and Operations (Operations Chief). In this billet, support to staff operational requirements, such as the North Africa Embassy Crisis, supersedes LREC engagement. Thus, a Foreign Area SNCO would be best assigned at a regional MARFOR as Assistant Operations Chief, Engagements Chief, or Future Operations

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Chief. This designation would mutually support staff operations and LREC maneuver requirements.

b. **FAS Training.** The FAS program, like that of the Foreign Area Officer (FAO), is open to Marines of any primary MOS, who may not have experience in the S/G-3/5. Therefore, to enable and bolster FAS utility, and tied to the aforementioned staff support recommendation, the Ground Operations Specialist (GOS 8711) course would add critical skill sets in the training phase. The GOS course covers the Marine Corps Planning Process, Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace, Operations Center Integration, Amphibious Operations, and Command and Control.

6. Potential Upcoming Events.

- a. SNCOIC Military Intelligence Basic Officer Course, Africa
- b. AFRICAN LION 13 FPC and Exercise Execution
- c. APS 13 Site Surveys
- d. WESTERN ACCORD 13 Execution
- e. Regional Plans/SPMAGTF Site Surveys

7. For questions or additional information, I can be reached at
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