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# Communicating the resistance

## The basics

What is resistance warfare? It is a nation's organised, whole-of-society effort, encompassing activities from nonviolent to violent, led by the legally established government, even if exiled, to re-establish independence and autonomy within its sovereign territory wholly or partially occupied by a foreign power.<sup>1</sup> Nations have resisted more powerful foreign occupiers throughout history.<sup>2</sup> It is also a type of warfare for which a state can prepare in order to broaden its national defence strategy.

What is resilience? "The will and ability to withstand external pressures and influences and/or recover from the effects of those pressures or influences."<sup>3</sup> A nation's resilience encompasses its whole society. It ranges from the individual person to government and non-government organisations. It is the full range of civil and military preparedness from the local to the national level. Resilience is the critical foundation of resistance, the confident belief in the nation and preparation for survival.

Why focus on resistance warfare? Over the past several years, the US and its allies and partners have awakened to the reality of potential conflict against the increased

<sup>1</sup> O. Fiala, *Resistance Operating Concept*, Stockholm: Swedish Defense University, 2019. p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*. The same definition is also used in NATO's Special Operations Headquarters' *Comprehensive Defence Handbook*, vol. 1, December 2020, <https://www.nshq.nato.int/nshq/library/nshq-comprehensive-defence-handbook-volume-1/> [accessed: 15 October 2021].

capabilities of Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The threats from those two powers come at the geographical periphery of American military power. Within these same recent years, realizing the lack of conventional military capability to defeat potential incursions from Russia or the PRC, the concept of resistance warfare has come to the fore among several nations threatened by Russia and the PRC. Which nations would conduct resistance? The nations most concerned with conducting this type of warfare are those under the most direct physical threats by Russia and the PRC due to proximity to those two nations, coupled with their comparative lack of conventional military capability against those two nations, e.g., Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Taiwan, and Ukraine.

Which nations would support resistance? Although some threatened nations have partner states to assist them, none of those partner states have the deterrent capacity of US forces or the capability to re-take infringed or invaded territory from Russia or the PRC without US assistance.

Critical to conducting a successful resistance is communication. In today's interconnected world, with nearly instantaneous worldwide communication in words and pictures, and the interpretation of those words and pictures by individuals and governments receiving them, effective communication is critical to success. Such communication reaches voting citizens of a democracy, which is translated into polling data and then becomes a factor in the decision-making process of that country's leadership.

Communication encompasses both words and actions. Previously, the US military referred to this as strategic communication, but after confusion due to its failure to clearly explain and effect the concept, it no longer uses the term.<sup>4</sup> However, the term survives in NATO, and is a clear concept promulgated by NATO's Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia.<sup>5</sup> The Centre explains it as a holistic approach to communication, encompassing everything an actor does to achieve objectives in a contested environment. It encompasses public diplomacy, public affairs, military public affairs, information operations, and psychological communications.<sup>6</sup> This holistic approach will form the basis of our understanding when discussing communication, the de-conflicted integration, and mutual support of words and actions. The government must have the ability to create a narrative, themes and messages, and be able to effectively synchronize and communicate them.

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<sup>4</sup> "Pentagon drops 'strategic communication,'" USA Today, 3 December 2012, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2012/12/03/pentagon-trims-strategic-communication/1743485/> [accessed: 12 March 2022].

<sup>5</sup> NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, <https://stratcomcoe.org> [accessed: 19 February 2022].

<sup>6</sup> Definitions are available at the Centre's website, [https://stratcomcoe.org/about\\_us/about-strategic-communications/1](https://stratcomcoe.org/about_us/about-strategic-communications/1) [accessed: 19 February 2022]. The term is also used in NATO's Special Operations Headquarters' *Comprehensive Defence Handbook*, *op. cit.*

Established well before a crisis, a nation's strategy to address national security threats provides the foundation for its narrative by outlining how a government builds resiliency and prepares for contingencies. The narrative is the overarching expression of the context, reason, and desired results associated with the resistance campaign. A psychologically unifying, crafted narrative, meeting strategic and operational objectives, should also resonate with the population to enable control, unity of purpose, and encourage ethical behaviour. Themes are formed at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. The themes at each level (each level should have several themes) must be nested under the themes of the higher level. Messages are subordinate to themes and support the themes and narrative. They deliver precise information to a specific target audience to create desired effects while supporting a specific theme. Messages are tailored for a specific time, place, delivery mechanism, and target audience.<sup>7</sup>

## Timeline

Communicating resistance must occur during four points in time: pre-crisis, crisis (includes warfare), occupation, and resumption of sovereignty. Understanding communication as holistic or all-inclusive of words and deeds, this understanding must also be integrated in a linear fashion, i.e., through time. The communication messages (words and actions) in each of these phases in time must be consistent (not in conflict) not only during that particular phase, but with the prior phase and the phases yet to come and must not conflict with the communication in those phases.

## Audiences

As with most communications, there are several audiences to consider. Although messages can be tailored to target each audience, the messages must be mutually supporting and must not conflict. They must be understood and presented as part of a strategic narrative. Broadly, the audiences are: domestic citizens, allied and partner governments and citizenry, adversary governments and citizenry.

The domestic citizenry is the most important audience because its resilience is critical to success. Its support must be harnessed throughout all phases. This is best accomplished through open, honest, and clear communication to them in all phases regarding organised resistance.<sup>8</sup> This communication of words and deeds throughout

<sup>7</sup> O. Fiala, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>8</sup> During the Cold War, several NATO nations maintained "stay-behind" organisations, intended to remain in place during a Soviet invasion. They were to conduct guerrilla activities and sabotage against Soviet forces and send intelligence to non-occupied NATO states. The Italian plan was code-named "Gladio" and its revelation when the USSR began disintegrating came as a shock to most Italians. It was blamed for criminal and terrorist acts. It was not

all phases is integral to strengthening and maintaining national resilience and resistance. The government must also communicate to allied and partner governments and citizens. This is necessary to garner and maintain the support of those governments and their citizenry throughout all phases. The support of these citizens is necessary for those populations to understand and support the actions of their government in supporting the resistance as necessary, through each phase.

The adversary government and its citizenry must also receive messages. The populations within Russia and the PRC have access to many modes of communication, with some restrictions, especially in the PRC.<sup>9</sup> Although they are autocratic regimes and not very responsive to the will of their people, they each maintain a system of governmental control that has an element of public support. This support is based on internal government messaging, often false. Concurrently, these states restrict accurate information from abroad from entering the information environment, but there is the possibility of breaking through some restrictions and targeting messages directly to the people.<sup>10</sup>

## Pre-crisis

A nation considering developing a resistance capability, must decide to authorise, organise, and prepare that capability prior to conflict. In this phase, the government decides to authorise, organise, man, equip, and train a resistance. In so doing, the message to a potential adversary is that the nation will not surrender its identity and sovereignty. It will fight for its sovereignty and to maintain its identity as a nation, even if occupied, until it is free again. Authorizing this capability is done through the nation's legal or legislative process. Doing this through a regular democratic process, ensures both domestic and international legitimacy. If it is not accomplished by such method, it risks being an illegitimate organisation in the minds of many citizens and support for it during a crisis may be weak. Its existence need not be secret. In fact, the knowledge of its existence, and the fact that it came about as a decision of the people's

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organised under an authorized legal framework and legitimised for its citizens. Several other nations soon revealed and disbanded similar networks. The existence of such an organisation must be authorised through a legal framework and clearly communicated in order to legitimise it to its citizenry and allies and partners to avoid the "Gladio" problem. See: D. Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe*, New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 2005.

<sup>9</sup> H. Moynihan, C. Patel, *Restrictions on online freedom of expression in China: The domestic, regional and international implications of China's policies and practices*, London: Chatham House, 2021, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/2021-03-17-restrictions-online-freedom-expression-china-moynihan-patel.pdf> [accessed: 21 March 2022].

<sup>10</sup> G. Faulconbridge, "More than 4,300 detained at anti-war protests in Russia", Reuters, 7 March 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/more-than-64-people-detained-anti-war-protests-russia-protest-monitor-2022-03-06/> [accessed: 21 March 2022].

elected representatives, enhances national confidence and resiliency. Prior to it being invaded, the Ukrainian government prepared a website entitled “National Resistance Center.” Then, during the invasion crisis, the government used it to offer tips and ideas for “would-be resistance fighters” regarding sabotage, field medicine, countering disinformation, etc.<sup>11</sup>

### Domestic

The domestic citizenry must be assured of the legitimacy and capability of the government-sponsored resistance.<sup>12</sup> Legitimacy is in the minds of people, and the people must know that this organisation came about through the regular authorized governmental legal or legislative processes. Further, prior to a crisis, the government must ensure that its people are aware of how they can contribute to a resistance against an occupation.<sup>13</sup> This can involve informing and educating the populace regarding personal and family resilience, such as stocking up on canned food, first aid supplies, communication alternatives and knowing transportation options. They can also be informed of peaceful and passive methods of resistance, and even informed of how to coordinate such activities.

### Allied and partner governments and citizenry

The domestic democratic process which authorises the organisation and associates it with the government, gives it international legitimacy with its fellow allied and partner democracies. This allows a nation such as the US to assist this organisation in the pre-crisis stage with training exchanges and equipment, in the same way that the US conducts such mutual training and equipment sales and compatibility assurance with the nation’s conventional military forces. Allied and partner governments must be assured that the resistance organisation is a legitimate part of the threatened

<sup>11</sup> The Ukrainians launched a website entitled as the “Center for National Resistance”, <https://sprotyv.mod.gov.ua/?fbclid=IwAR0ztryuxEYvrpZHdAs7lAkiF8XPuAo95-ZTIWcq2lLb6TC-nzA2IZZE4Mk> [accessed: 14 March 2022], created by their Special Operations Forces to support and coordinate the fight for liberation from the Russian invaders.

<sup>12</sup> The Swiss government communicated its Cold War resistance capability to its citizens and the rest of the world: J. Osburg, *Unconventional Options for the Defense of the Baltic States: The Swiss Approach*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE179.html> [accessed: 21 March 2022]. See also: K. Stringer, “Building a Stay-Behind Resistance Organization: The Case of Cold War Switzerland Against the Soviet Union”, *JFQ: Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 86, 2017, pp. 109–114, <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Publications/Article/1220620/building-a-stay-behind-resistance-organization-the-case-of-cold-war-switzerland/> [accessed: 3 March 2022].

<sup>13</sup> M. Chernov, L. Hinnant, D. Litvinova, “Ukrainians building up resistance in case Russia attacks”, *Military Times*, 1 February 2022, <https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/ukraine/2022/02/01/ukrainians-building-up-resistance-in-case-russia-attacks/> [accessed: 23 March 2022].

nation's defence structure. With this affirmation of an authorized legitimate organisation, allies and partners can support it.<sup>14</sup> A government such as the US has strict and specific laws regarding foreign militaries and what type of training events and material support can be made available through its Department of Defence.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, the citizens of allies and partners must understand that they are supporting an organisation adhering to democratic procedural norms as well as international law, designed to defend a free people, who are citizens of an allied or partner nation.

### Adversary government and citizenry

The adversary government must understand that even if its military forces are successful in the conventional fight, national resistance will continue against their aggression, and they will not be able to politically consolidate the invaded territory. Their people must know that their government is threatening a free and peaceful people who will fight for their national identity and territorial integrity.

### Crisis

Once indications and warnings have reached the point that invasion by the adversary is imminent, the government must begin activating its plan for resistance simultaneously with its conventional defence capability. Readyng its conventional forces is itself a public act of defiance against the invader. In the same manner, its resistance plan, not only involving a specific authorized organisation, but involving the whole society, must be put into effect. Once hostilities begin and open warfare occurs, the government's message must be one of defiance against the enemy and confidence in ultimate victory. The message can be broadcast via television, radio, cell phone, print and internet. It must demonstrate a resilience that will give the population strength and confidence. The defending nation must communicate its will to resist.

### Domestic

The domestic message to its citizens is that the government will fight for the nation's sovereignty and that any territorial loss to enemy forces will only be temporary. The government must maintain that the enemy be pushed out of the nation's sovereign territory so that the nation and its institutions can resume. This is also intended to deny political space to a new form of government or to a faction seeking to take control of the government and collaborate with the enemy. An invasion by foreign military

<sup>14</sup> D. Winkie, "How the US and Europe helped Ukraine prep for insurgency", *Military Times*, 7 March 2022, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2022/03/07/how-the-us-and-europe-helped-ukraine-prep-for-insurgency/> [accessed: 15 March 2022].

<sup>15</sup> A good starting point to understand this process is: United States Department of Defense, *Security Cooperation*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-20, Washington, D.C. 2017.

forces is a man-made disaster. As such, the nation's emergency services must not only respond to fires and injuries but must also be seen to respond to those events. The unstated message is one of resilience and competence demonstrated by the local emergency services. Broadcasting damage to residential areas evidences the adversary's willingness to destroy non-military targets and kill and injure non-combatant civilians, in violation of international law. Here, the population also has the ability to message defiance and strength. In Ukraine, in March 2022, an older couple whose courtyard was intruded upon by Russian soldiers insisted that they leave and closed the gate behind them.<sup>16</sup> In other examples in Ukraine, local citizens engaged in public protests against Russian occupiers. A woman of grandparent age gave a Russian soldier a handful of seeds so that flowers would grow once his body was buried.<sup>17</sup> These were acts of defiance and resilience communicated to fellow citizens and the outside world. As the crisis unfolds, the government must also ensure that external messages of support from other nations are made available to the population. This will help affirm their resilience by knowing they have significant foreign supporters who will assist them. The message to the population is that this struggle is a whole-of-society defensive effort against the invader, supported by allies and partners.

#### Allied and partner governments and citizenry

The government must communicate to the governments and citizens of its allies and partners that it is willing to continue the fight for its sovereignty. The above-mentioned acts of Ukrainian citizens and the ready response of their emergency services were broadcast to world audiences. Those positive images of Ukrainian resistance and resilience in the face of overwhelming odds motivated governments, with the support of their citizenry, to assist the Ukrainian fight against the Russians. These audiences must also see the emergency response of local police, firefighters and ambulance personnel respond to the physical wreckage and fires in this man-made disaster. They must see these "first responders" fighting fires, aiding the injured, and helping people move to safety. Allied and partner audiences can immediately relate to these emergency responders, helping as they do in peacetime, and staying in places of danger to assist the populace. The goal of this communication to allies and partners, and even

<sup>16</sup> A. Guzman, "Get off my lawn! Moment fearless elderly couple in Ukraine confront four heavily armed Russians soldiers who broke into their property – before escorting them out and locking the gate behind them", *Daily Mail.com*, 12 March 2022, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10605823/Elderly-couple-Ukraine-tells-three-Russians-soldiers-leave-property-broke-in.html> [accessed: 22 March 2022].

<sup>17</sup> N. Craven, "Put sunflower seeds in your pockets so they grow on Ukraine soil when you DIE': Moment defiant woman bravely confronts heavily armed Russian troops", *Daily Mail.com*, 24 February 2022, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10548649/Put-sunflower-seeds-pockets-grow-Ukraine-soil-Woman-confronts-Russian-troops.html> [accessed: 22 March 2022].

the general international community is to facilitate diplomatic, economic, political, and moral pressure against the aggressor nation. Additionally, this communication lays the groundwork for justification of military support, which may be the provision of weapons and material and later possibly even more significant military support.

### Adversary government and citizenry

The government's actions of violent defiance against the invader are the palpable message sent to the enemy government. The actions of the military and immediate resistance by the populace informs the enemy government that the invaded nation is resilient and will fight for its sovereignty. Violent resistance is also a message to the invading soldiers that they are not liberators, though their own government may have told them otherwise. This communication must be combined with specifically tailored psychological operations against the invading troops to negatively affect their morale, aggressiveness, and willingness to obey orders. The citizenry of the adversary government can receive messaging similar to that sent to partner nations. Images of popular defiance as described above in Ukraine, and competent emergency services responding to the man-made disaster caused by their own government can help counter that government's internal messaging. Their own captured soldiers, speaking openly about their confusion regarding the war while informing their families that they are being treated well, can also have an anti-war effect on the citizens of the aggressor nation. This messaging is intended to directly affect the citizenry of the aggressor nation by evoking commonality and sympathy with the invaded nation and weaken the domestic political support for the invading state's government.

## Occupation

If during the invasion, the capital city is about to be occupied, then the defending government should internally displace to another city, or it must exile to a foreign state to continue the fight.<sup>18</sup> Exiling is an extremely difficult choice to make. If the most senior members of the government and their families depart the country, then they can be seen as abandoning their people. However, if they remain, they run the risk of capture, ending the sovereign government. An exiled government can represent the people and the sovereignty of the state, reduce the risk of an adversary-installed government gaining international recognition, and can advocate for its people among its partners. The leadership must decide when and who will become the exiled government. This decision criteria, location, and means are best prepared for in the pre-crisis phase. A significant additional value of such an exiled government is to provide

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<sup>18</sup> S. Talmon, *Recognition of Governments in International Law: With Particular Reference to Governments in Exile*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 115–116.



a lawfully valid chain of command under international law (the Geneva Conventions) for its organised resistance. The message to all audiences is that the sovereign government representing the nation is extant, represents the people and is continuing the fight. During occupation is when the government-sponsored organised resistance is active against the adversary. The core of this effort is a small organisation which has been trained and equipped to conduct operations on behalf of the government in occupied territory. However, resistance writ-large is a whole-of-society effort. The government's messaging must maintain the morale of its domestic population.

### Domestic

The core resistance organisation communicates with the displaced or exiled government and partakes in actions to maintain the morale and resilience of the populace. It partakes in activity (e.g., sabotage or violence) to communicate its existence and resistance to the occupier, on behalf of the sovereign government. Its actions must comply with international law governing combatants. This gives it the moral high ground among its people and in the international community. This effort at legitimisation is important to maintain not only domestic support but also external partner support. Its actions complying with the law of land warfare, give it the ability to argue that its fighters (members of the organised resistance) possess combatant's privilege, and that if any of its members are captured by the enemy, then they should be treated as prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions.<sup>19</sup> However, the enemy will likely not abide and agree that it is a legitimate organisation, because doing so would damage its own claim to legitimacy to rule over the territory. This battle for legitimacy of the resistance can be fought and won amongst all audiences, excepting the adversary government. That itself is a form of isolation of that government and shaping the continuing struggle. Civil society can also partake concurrently in both peaceful and passive resistance activities against the occupier.<sup>20</sup> Through these activities, the citizens communicate their resilience to each other and to all other audiences while setting the example for how their fellow citizens should behave.<sup>21</sup> Peaceful resistance

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<sup>19</sup> Y. Dinstein, *War, Aggression and Self-Defence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2011; idem, *The International Law of Belligerent Occupation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009.

<sup>20</sup> Recently, Ukraine issued a pamphlet containing methods of violent, peaceful and passive resistance in which citizens could partake, guided through the document by the popular character of Vault Boy, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.militarytimes.com/assets/pdfs/1646691281.pdf> [accessed: 14 March 2022].

<sup>21</sup> E. Chenoweth, M.J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, New York: Columbia University Press 2011; R.L. Helvey, *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: Thinking About the Fundamentals*, Boston: The Albert Einstein Institution, 2004; G. Sharp, *Civilian-Based Defense: A Post-Military Weapons System*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990.

can be organised protests, marches, blocking roads and bridges, work stoppages such as general strikes, messaging via posters, banners, graffiti, leaflets, and social media. Songs (singing revolution),<sup>22</sup> music, humour, and even theatre plays, as well as economic and political non-cooperation are all aspects of popular domestic resistance. These efforts by the domestic populace are intended to prevent the enemy's political consolidation over occupied territory.

There are many historical examples of successful resistance. Within our context of resistance to a foreign occupier, two of the most successful examples of resistance are: Lech Wałęsa in Poland,<sup>23</sup> and Mahatma Gandhi in India. Additionally, a successful campaign of civilian resistance was the Ruhrkampf of 1923, when French and Belgian soldiers occupied the German Ruhr in an attempt to extract reparations from WWI.<sup>24</sup> In terms of additional tactics, but outside the context of national resistance to a foreign occupier, one of the most effective recent examples was Otpor (Resistance), which was the successful internal Serbian movement to oust Slobodan Milošević.<sup>25</sup> However, the more coercion, particularly violent coercion, that the occupier is willing to apply, the less effective the open and public methods will be. In that case, most resistance will become passive.

Passive resistance encompasses such things as not obeying all laws, not paying all taxes, slow work performance, ignoring certain procedures or rules while claiming to be unaware, miscounting or not accounting for goods required by the occupier, and many other activities. It is also a lack of activity that can be excused or disguised as acting out of ignorance, fear, or incorrect information. Citizens employed in administrative government services under occupation can engage in extreme inefficiency to make the occupier appear incompetent. Such resistance can also make the population seem un-governable.

### Allied and partner governments and citizenry

The actions by the government's organised resistance, combined with the actions of the general populace, must be transmitted to allied and partner nations. The transmission can be through foreign journalists and social media, messaging eyewitness accounts by the population, and other organisations (e.g., non-government). The resistance activities as messages must support the words spoken by the displaced or exiled

<sup>22</sup> S. Zunes, "Estonia's Singing Revolution (1986–1991)", International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC), April 2009, <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/estonias-singing-revolution-1986-1991/> [accessed: 5 March 2022].

<sup>23</sup> There is little doubt that the Polish government of the time, communist and aligned with the Soviet Union, survived only due to the presence of Soviet military and security forces.

<sup>24</sup> R.J. Schmidt, *Versailles and the Ruhr: Seedbed of World War II*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968.

<sup>25</sup> United States Institute of Peace, *Nonviolent Civic Action: A Study Guide Series on Peace and Conflict*, Washington, D.C. 2009, pp. 8–9.

government. These audiences must see a broad-based legitimate resistance by a sovereign people struggling to restore their territorial integrity.

### Adversary government and citizenry

All of the actions above are designed to refuse political consolidation to the occupier. The sovereign government's mere existence messages the fact of the occupier's violation of another nation's sovereignty. The resistance organisation fighting the occupier while complying with the law of armed conflict lets the adversary government, its soldiers, and its people know that a legitimate organised resistance against it exists. International sanctions against the occupier isolates the adversary government and its people. The message to the adversary is that the occupied nation is resilient, has support, and is fighting back, while the invader commits lives and treasure to attempt to rule a free people. The intent is to weaken adversarial resolve in its government and within its population.

### Resumption of sovereignty

For our purposes of examining the limited aspect of communicating the resistance, we will assume that the resumption of sovereignty occurs either through external assistance, such as can be relied upon by NATO nations, by other external aid, or by the nation's own resilience and resistance to the occupier. This last phase is the withdrawal of the occupier, which is simultaneous with the nation's regaining self-rule. During this last phase, the displaced or exiled government prepares to return to its sovereign national territory. This return is internally facilitated by its organised resistance and the general will of the populace. Critical to success is that a competing internal resistance group with goals other than the return of the previously mandated government, is not allowed political or physical space. If non-government resistance groups develop while under occupation, the legitimate government must have a process by which they can be legitimised as part of the government's resistance effort. They must be given a chain of command leading to the legitimate government, rules to obey, including compliance with the law of armed conflict, and must support the government's political goal to return. If a group cannot adhere to such requirements, then the government must protect itself from potential wrongdoings committed by such a group by letting it be known that the group operates outside the purview of the government and does not have the government's material support.

### Domestic

The message to the domestic population is that their lawfully elected representative government is returning, even if some of its members have changed by a legal process

during displacement or exile. The returning government must assure its people that the previous legal and constitutional regime will return to govern. The returning government should also inform the people as to when the next elections will be held to return normal elective processes to the people. The government must also assure the people that if any foreign support comes into the country, that it is with the permission of the government. This legitimises partner and allied presence and assistance in stabilisation. The message to the people is that the occupier has been defeated and is departing because of the people's resilience and resistance and that the nation will resume its self-determination.

### Allied and partner governments and citizenry

Friends and allies must be given messages of thanks and appreciation of support. This is an opportune time to form long-lasting bonds with the people of those nations through political visits, ceremonies, erections of physical memorials and non-governmental exchanges to solidify long-term bonds of friendship.

### Adversary government and citizenry

The adversary government must receive the message of utter defeat due to its decision to invade a sovereign and independent neighbour, and that the resilience and resistance of that neighbour, based on its national desire for self-determination, brought about the defeat of its objectives. In today's interconnected world facilitated by communications on the World Wide Web, even an authoritarian government will find it difficult to control the spread of this message. The population of the adversary must know that their government undertook a fatefully poor and illegal decision to invade a neighbour for no reason other than the selfish motives of its leadership. This is intended to attempt to maximise the distance between the people and their government and to avoid a repetition. The additional message is the resilience of their democratic neighbours, the resiliency of their system of government and their resistance to those who would attempt to take it from them.

## Conclusion

As in many things involving people, communication is critical to success. Governments must be prepared to effectively communicate a narrative with themes and messages to their populations, their allies, and partners, and even the adversary's government and citizens. This must be done prior to conflict or pre-crisis, crisis, during occupation, and as sovereignty is resumed. The government's overall narrative must dominate the information environment to keep and maintain support, while using this communication to deny as much support as possible to the adversary government. The necessity

and criticality of a national legal framework to support the organisation, development, and authorised use of this form of warfare cannot be overemphasised. A legal framework communicates internal legitimacy to the actions of the threatened nation. Communication of this legitimate framework under international law and the law of armed conflict facilitates maintenance of allied and partner support to restore sovereignty. From beginning to end, resistance must be clearly, credibly, and competently communicated.

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## Communicating the resistance

### Abstract

The article is an expansion and elaboration of the vital concept of communication or strategic communication, as originally expressed in the Resistance Operating Concept. It examines how a state that chooses to authorise a resistance organisation as part of its national defence plan communicates the existence of that organisation through the four phases: pre-conflict, crisis, occupation, and resumption of sovereignty. It also covers communication directed at specific target audiences (domestic, allied and partner governments and citizenry, and the adversary government and citizenry) during the lifespan of resistance. It broadly examines the actions and messages, or communication intended for each audience in each phase and the intended effects of such communication. Additionally, it focuses on the concept of legitimacy of resistance. This legitimacy is granted by authorising a resistance organisation through an established legal framework and by adherence to the law of armed conflict during wartime. A government establishing such an organisation must also consider the option of a displaced or exiled government in extremis, accounted for under international law, and its effect on communicating and continuing resistance. The article also references concurrent examples of effective communication from Ukraine during the 2022 Russian war on Ukraine.

**Key words:** resistance, resilience, warfare, strategic communication, communication, narrative, legitimacy, exiled government