



AFRICAN HORIZONS

FEATURED EXERCISES



SOUTHERN ACCORD



WESTERN ACCORD

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS ECHELONS OVER TIME



FOLLOW U.S. ARMY AFRICA



U.S. ARMY AFRICA LEADERS



Maj. Gen. Darryl A. Williams
Commander



Brig. Gen. Kenneth H. Moore, Jr.
Deputy Commander



Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Jeffery T. Stitzel
Command Sergeant Major



Col. Stephen J. Maranian
Chief of Staff

MISSION: U.S. Army Africa/Southern European Task Force employs Army forces as partners, builds sustainable capacity, and supports the joint force in order to disrupt transnational threats and promote regional stability in Africa.

VISION: U.S. Army Africa/Southern European Task Force is a trusted and respected partner, achieving long-term strategic effects in Africa.

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Members of the Zambian Defense Force march with U.S. Army soldiers during the opening day ceremony for Exercise Southern Accord in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 4.

Southern Accord 2015 begins

By Capt. Jason Welch, U.S. Army Africa Public Affairs

LUSAKA, Zambia – Zambian and U.S. Soldiers stood together in a battalion formation as both nations’ national anthems were played to signal the beginning of Southern Accord 2015, held in Lusaka, Zambia, Aug. 3-14.

Southern Accord 2015 brings together the U.S. Army, Zambian Defense Force, Southern African Development Community and other partner nation participants for two weeks of command post and field training exercises.

U.S. Brig. Gen. Peter Corey, deputy commanding general U.S. Army Africa, Zambian Army Commander Lt. Gen. Paul Mihova, and Zambian Deputy Minister of Defense Christopher Mulenga welcomed more than 850 service members from several countries including Angola, Botswana, Germany, Ma-

lawi, Namibia, the Netherlands, Tanzania and the United Kingdom.

Southern Accord 2015 builds stronger partnerships between participating nations leading to both an increased ability to work together and increasing their capacity to support peacekeeping operations, said Corey.

“The ultimate goal is increased cooperation between countries in the region and of course, across Africa,” said Mulenga.

Training focuses on scenarios based on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) where U.S.-trained Zambian Defense Force personnel are currently supporting peacekeeping operations.

Corey reminded all participants to work together and learn from each other during the exercise.

“Many of our African partners have a lot of experience with UN operations,” said Corey. “This is about partnering.”

Exercise participants will use United Nations Security Resolution 2149 that initiated the MINUSCA to coordinate efforts during the exercise, said Capt. Scott Saunders, U.S. Army Africa exercises deputy.

Each country’s military has its own doctrine that presents a challenge when trying to work together as a single military staff.

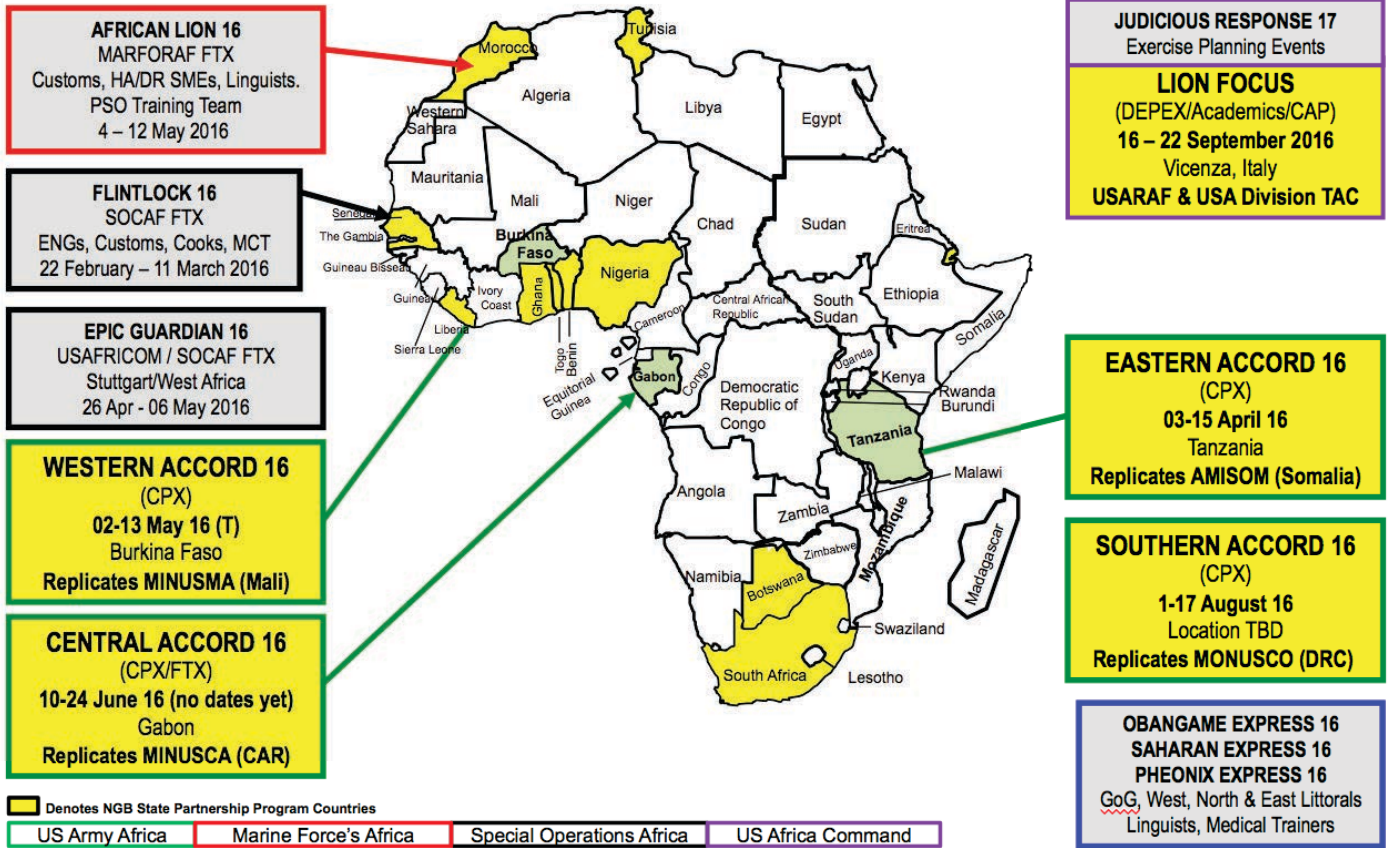
“We all have our own methods for problem solving,” said Saunders. “We need to speak a common language and that’s where the UN doc-





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trine comes in.”

Most of the Americans have very little experience with UN operations,” said Corey. “We are learning together.”

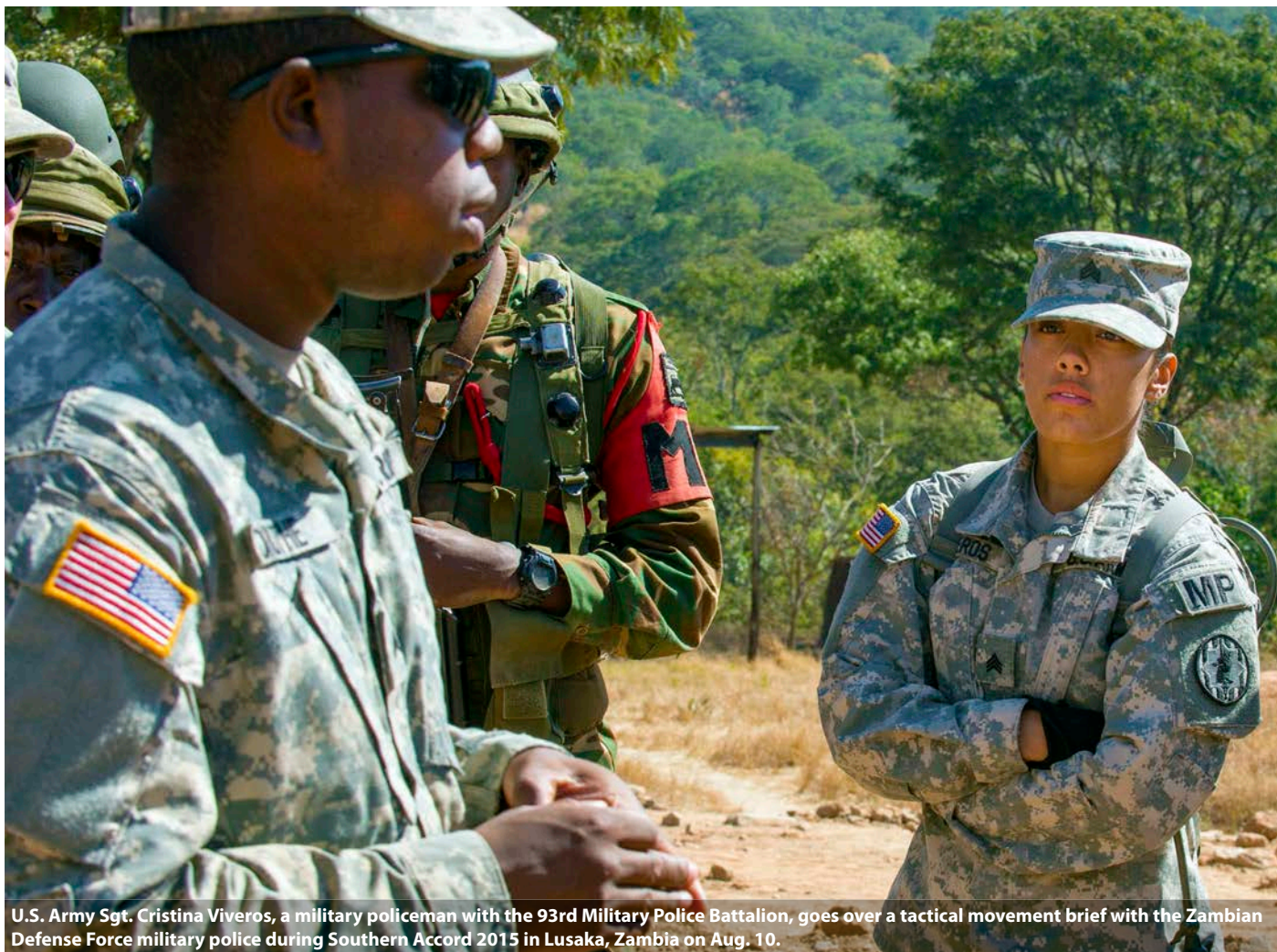
The command post exercise helps validate the ability of a combined staff from partner nations to exercise command and control of a joint, combined force during

peacekeeping operations.

The field training exercise training permits combined companies of U.S. and Zambian personnel to train together in both combined arms tactics and peacekeeping operations.

“The element of realism in the practical aspect of this training will present challenges,” said Mulenga.

“I commend the governments of partner nations, the United States Embassy Zambia, the Zambian service chiefs, and all of you present here today for putting on this important event. It is now my honor and privilege to declare Southern Accord 15 officially open,” said Mulenga.



U.S. Army Sgt. Cristina Viveros, a military policeman with the 93rd Military Police Battalion, goes over a tactical movement brief with the Zambian Defense Force military police during Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 10.

Southern Accord 2015, gender integration within military

By Staff Sgt. Michael A. Simmons

U.S. Army Africa

LUSAKA, Zambia – At the Nanking Training Area outside Lusaka, Zambia, U.S. and Zambian male and female Soldiers lived and trained in close proximity to one another in integrated platoons during exercise Southern Accord 2015, Aug. 3-14.

During the field-training portion of the exercise NTA mirrored the look of a combat outpost typically seen in a forward operational area.

With nearly 850 men and women from 10 participating nations, training scenarios ranged from command post activities to live-fire infantry drills. U.S. Army Africa

Commander Maj. Gen. Darryl A. Williams reinforced the growing focus on incorporating women in all aspects of the exercise.

“Gender integration is very important, not only on the continent of Africa, but in our great country as well,” said Williams.

The Zambian Defense Force has fully integrated women into every sector of their military, including infantry.

Women were able to enter the ZDF in the early 1970s, said exercise director and Zambian Defense Force Col. Charles Nakeempa. They were

given access to all branches of the military, including all combat arms, in the mid-1990s.

Nakeempa has a daughter who is a lieutenant in the armor branch of the Zambian Defense Force.

There are female general officers in the ZDF, but none from the combat arms yet, said Nakeempa. He hopes his daughter can be the chief of the armor branch someday.

Exercise Southern Accord is an annual joint, combined peacekeeping training exercise.

The focus of Southern Accord 2015





U.S. Army Sgt. Cristina Viveros, a military policeman with the 93rd Military Police Battalion, goes over a tactical movement brief with the Zambian Defense Force military police during Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 10.

was to increase the capability of U.S., ZDF and the Southern Africa Development Community to support regional peace operations. It also gave U.S. Soldiers an opportunity to see how gender integration takes place in the ZDF.

“The females in the Zambian infantry are treated as equals. They do everything males do, nothing is different,” said Spc. Larry Medina, M240 Gunner, 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment. “We haven’t had any obstacles to overcome, there’s no problem working together.”

For the exercise, a platoon from the 978th Military Police Company worked with an integrated platoon of Zambian MPs in an effort to maximize training.

Sgt. Tyesha Smith said that she would like to see the U.S. forces fully integrated.

“Despite slight differences in tactics, I’ve learned we are more alike than different,” said Smith, team commander, 978th Military Police Company. “The Zambian males treat us as equals.”

Williams commented on the importance of sharing gender integration experiences.

“What we’ve seen here in Zambia, is female infantry soldiers partnered with our female soldiers, working together to work through gender integration,” said Williams. “We are asking questions of each other, and we are learning that we each have creative solutions for working forward with gender integration.”



U.S. Army Sgt. Hugo Perez, with the 13th Cavalry Regiment, directs movement to a Zambian soldier during a tactical exercise at Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 7.

Zambian, U.S. Soldiers become brothers in arms

By Sgt. Terry Rajsombath, U.S. Army Africa

LUSAKA, Zambia – “Ready! Position! Charge one, elevation 11-38,” said the mortar team as they readied to launch an 81mm training mortar during a cross-training exercise between U.S. and Zambian Soldiers on Aug. 5, at the Nanking Training Area.

The commands could be from any U.S. Army mortar team but these were delivered by the mortarmen of the Zambian Defense Force during Southern Accord 2015, an annual exercise aimed to increase interoperability between U.S. and African partner nation forces.

“We have this type of cohesion even though we’re different armies,” said Spc. Chris E. Vong, of San Jose, Calif., a mortarman assigned to A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment.

Despite the cultural differences, their roles as mortarmen and as

Soldiers helped bridge the cultural gap, said Vong.

The initial meet-and-greet between the U.S. and Zambian Soldiers started off with slow conversations but swiftly turned into easy and open discussions about their hometowns and experiences as mortarmen, said Vong.

“They’re old school in their tactics, but they’re a lot like us,” said Vong.

Dry runs and rehearsals kicked off the exercise, culminating in a live-fire event. Two mortar crews from each country fired 81mm high-explosive mortars at a target approximately 1500 meters from their position. Leading each mortar team were experienced officers and Soldiers.

“Some of their NCOs have 20-plus years of being a mortarman,” said Vong. “They taught us new tech-

niques and we taught them new techniques.”

Vong said the only challenge he found working with the Zambian Soldiers was a minor language barrier. Although English is the official language in Zambia many different dialects and languages are spoken within the country. Bemba and Nyanja are two of the major languages commonly spoken.

By living beside one another, U.S. and Zambian Soldiers overcame minor language barriers and built strong connections with one another, said Vong.

“There is a similarity, maybe not in terms of technology, but as the army, our training is almost the same,” said Staff Sgt. Lubinda Mufngulwa, a ZDF non-commissioned officer.

Despite differences in technology



and equipment between the two armies, their fighting spirit is “on the same foot,” said Mufngulwa.

Pfc. Brian Curnow, of Lodi Calif., a mortarman assigned to A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment agreed with Mufngulwa.

Despite differences in tactics and technology, the U.S. and Zambian Soldiers were able to unite, accomplish missions and learn from one another, said Curnow.

Despite cultural differences between the U.S. and Zambian forces, Soldiers were able to identify with one another as professionals. U.S. and Zambian forces share the same values of respect, loyalty and commitment, said Curnow.

Lance Cpl. Pythiaius Zulu, a ZDF soldier, said that regardless of language, their roles as professional soldiers allowed the U.S. and Zambian forces to communicate as brothers-in-arms.

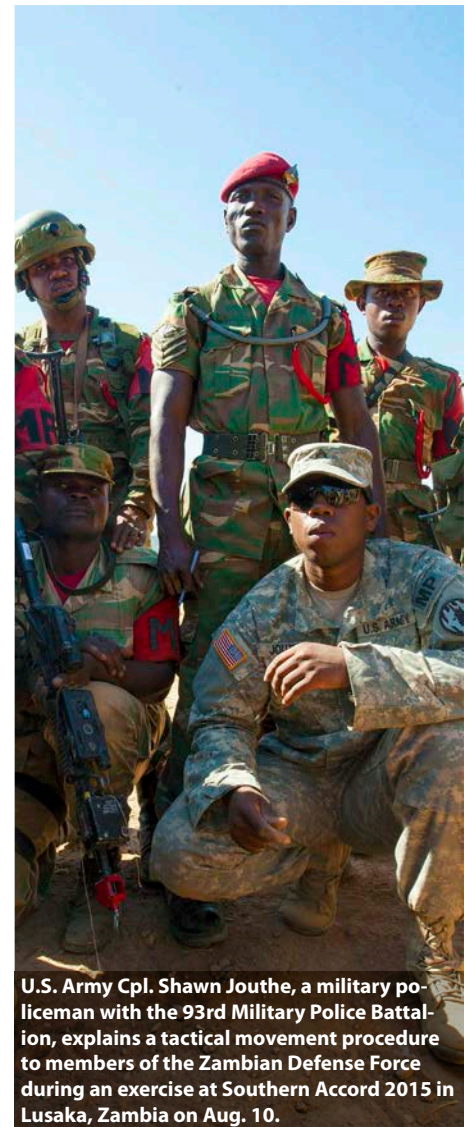
“I’m sure whether we are an English-speaking country or not, we could communicate and we would not have a problem,” said Zulu.

For Zulu, a rifleman who has deployed three times, Southern Accord 2015 was his first multi-cultural, joint exercise.

“You know, we just feel we are one,” said Zulu. “This exercise is helping us, both Americans and Zambians.”

Southern Accord 15 is a joint-training exercise with more than 800 participants from 10 participating nations: Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, U.S. and Germany.

The aim of the exercise is to enhance U.S. and African forces’ capabilities and increase their ability to operate together in support of peacekeeping operations.



U.S. Army Cpl. Shawn Jouthe, a military policeman with the 93rd Military Police Battalion, explains a tactical movement procedure to members of the Zambian Defense Force during an exercise at Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 10.



U.S. Soldiers and members of the Zambian Defense Force work closely together during a daytime tactical movement at exercise Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 5.



Maj. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, U.S. Army Africa commanding general, escorts the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable John M. McHugh, through the halls of the Golden Lion Conference Center upon his arrival to a USARAF Training and Leader Development Conference, Aug. 17.

Senior leaders build foundation for African Horizons

By Sgt. Lance Pounds, U.S. Army Africa Public Affairs

VICENZA, Italy – Have you ever caught yourself daydreaming about the perfect home? You picture how big the yard has to be, one story or two, should you add a bedroom for guests or not, size of garage, and type of pool you want. The list goes on and on. These thoughts keep you motivated to someday have the perfect home.

Over time, thoughts turn into plans, then actions. Eventually you break ground and lay the foundation for your dream house. Along the way, there might be setbacks or struggles, but the final outcome keeps you motivated.

The same could be said for U.S. Army Africa. However, it's not a daydream, it's a goal. The list could consist of what an operation has to be, the number or level of partnerships required, should it add this element or that, number of personnel, and type of missions needed. Again, the list goes on and

on. As an example, this list depicts the things that assist the USARAF team to achieve its desired goal, to assist their African partner nations to achieve peace, security and stability.

Maj. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, USARAF commander, hosted a Training and Leader Development Conference and a Senior Leader Strategy and Orientation Session Aug. 17-20 in the Golden Lion conference center. The two events brought together Active, Guard, Reserve and Army Civilians who have cultural and subject matter expertise on the continent of Africa. Among the attendees were Secretary of the Army, Honorable John McHugh, and the Commander of U.S. Africa Command, Gen. David Rodriguez.

“Africa is a challenging place today and one that, if left unattended, is likely to be the birthplace of many more challenges in the future.

That's why it's so important that U.S. Army Africa, working alongside AFRICOM, is here and doing important work,” said McHugh.

In the analogy of building a dream house, this gathering of senior leaders would be comparable to pitching your plans to skilled master builders. The USARAF conference featured a variety of ideas intended to turn dreams into reality.

Through the help of the master builders, blueprints create a visual plan for dream house. In this case, the blueprints are in the form of a strategy, called African Horizons.

African Horizons is USARAF's plan. It articulates the framework of the African Horizons construct, establishes objectives supporting USAFRICOM's goals and describes responsibilities as a Theater Army. The plan aids in prioritizing efforts, requesting and applying Army resources, directing specific activities

in support of USAFRICOM and improving upon core functions.

Once blueprints have been created, it is time to source the work force. The conference, similar to a convention of master craftsmen, served as a place for the USARAF team to learn from and make connections with those who can help achieve its goals.

The TLDC was designed to help the USARAF team understand Army Chief of Staff's guidance on Army training and leader development in order to apply that guidance to their program. Other topics discussed during the conference included regionally aligned force lessons learned, RAF readiness, training on the continent, and the National Guard's State Partnership Program lessons learned.

Support from RAF and the SPP is similar to that of hiring specialized contractors to complete portions of your dream house.

RAF assets serve as the boots-on-the-ground element – strategically selected units aligning their capabilities with African nation partners in efforts to learn and grow from one another.

“We show them ways to achieve success,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Weiss, command sergeant major of the current RAF asset, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division. He added the development of a non-commissioned officer corps was one of those ways to success.

When constructing your dream house, more than one specialist is required. Plumbers, electricians, painters and drywall workers are employed for their various special skills. USARAF planners also take advantage of specialists.

The SPP is a Joint Department of Defense program that aligns state National Guard units with African nation partners in a long-term rela-

tionship according to the National Guard website. Through the program, military-to-military events are conducted to support defense security goals. It also leverages capabilities to facilitate broader interagency engagements spanning military, government, economic and social spheres.

“Not only do our Guardsmen get their own training but they also provide help to a nation that they may not ever travel to,” said Maj. Gen. Steven Cray, the Vermont National Guard adjutant general.

Cray added, many Soldiers and Airmen rarely go outside of U.S. except for occasional deployments, and even fewer have been in Africa.

“They see it as a real honor to represent the National Guard and their service in a foreign nation,” said Cray.

During a panel discussion, Cray shared that there are countries in Africa that are proficient in



The Secretary of the Army, the Honorable John M. McHugh, addresses participants of a U.S. Army Africa Training and Leader Development Conference, in the Golden Lion Conference Center Aug. 17.



A panel of generals from National Guard discusses lessons learned and experiences gained from working with African Nations through the State Partnership Program during a U.S. Army Africa Training and Leader Development Conference, Aug. 18



Maj. Gen. Darryl A. Williams, U.S. Army Africa commanding general, provides opening remarks for a multi-day USARAF Training and Leader Development Conference, Aug. 17.

military skills sets such as peace-keeping operations.

For instance, the Vermont National Guard has been in partnership with Senegal since 2008. Cray said the Senegalese taught Guardsmen how to organize, train and equip soldiers for United Nations peace-keeping missions.

“It’s very applicable for what we do,” said Cray. “We take those lessons learned and we make our force better.”

Cray also said both parties gain more than training when working together.

“It is not just about training; it is about people and those connections and relationships,” he said. Question and answer segments followed each speaker’s brief which opened the floor for a fluid exchange of ideas.

One topic was balancing the right alignment of RAF assets to mission objectives.

“It is all about aligning like units to deter the threat,” said Weiss as he explained how aligning units with similar needs or objectives could prove more effective.

In terms of constructing the perfect dream house, alignment is a must. Even the slightest miscalculation could compromise the stability of the whole house.

Now that the plans have been made, contractors hired, and building has commenced, the next step is to supervise the moving pieces to ensure they remain moving in the same direction.

Following the two-day conference was a two-day SLSOS, where key

leaders and subject matter experts from USAFRICOM shared their knowledge and experiences. The roles of these experts are similar to construction foremen who ensure that building schedules are met.

The session was designed to help the USARAF team share ideas and experience, as well as an opportunity to get the latest information from USAFRICOM and European partners. The session offered a venue for fresh perspectives as new personnel and Spouses were introduced. Topics discussed during the session included security cooperation, role of and responsibilities of an Army Service Component Command, and briefings from various USAFRICOM components.

Many of the topics discussed during the session were geared towards the future – the how to’s of implementing the African Horizons strategy as described in the 2015 USARAF Campaign Support Plan.

In the CSP, Williams stated:

“In an area of operation as large and diverse as Africa, this requires USARAF to plan, support and conduct operations ranging from the protection of U.S. embassies to training African militaries, and enabling both ally and partner operations.”

The CSP serves as a guide for the USARAF team to set conditions needed to achieve its goals, assisting their African partner nations in achieving peace, security and stability, over the next five years.

This plan follows suit with the African Horizons key concept, ‘Building partnerships over time and across echelons.’ What this means is U.S. forces, such as USAFRICOM, USARAF, RAF, Army Reserve and

the National Guard, collectively work together to build long-term relationships with partner nations on the continent.

The key concept, though relatively new, pulls in practices already in use.

Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton, the Utah National Guard adjutant general, addressed the topic of building enduring partnerships when he shared his experiences working with Morocco. The Utah National Guard has been in partnership with Morocco since 2003.

“Its total force integration,” said Burton. “Any engagement we can have with building the capacity of our partners can help us prevent problems before they happen.”

Burton attributes the success of the program to trust building and relationship building.

“The people on the continent know us by name, they are comfortable with us, and when problems occur they have someone they can communicate with,” Burton said.

Proper planning, coordination and partnerships over time can bring this daydream to reality.

The conference and session, hosted by Williams, brought together Active, Guard and Reserve component personnel together with cultural and subject matter expertise to take African Horizons into the next phase of construction, while maintaining relationships with African partner nations.

“We can help shape this vision of African security at the [conference] by sharing ideas, exchanging experiences and looking to the future. African Horizons,” said Williams.



U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jarrod Branch, assigned to C Troop, 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment, high-fives a Zambian Soldier after a successful live-fire mortar exercise on Aug. 5, during Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia.

3rd ABCT, 1st AD completes RAF mission with Southern Accord 2015, passes torch to 3rd ID

By Staff Sgt. Killo Gibson, U.S. Army Africa

LUSAKA, Zambia – As the sun set in the sky of Lusaka, Zambia Aug. 14, the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, bid farewell to the regionally aligned forces mission in Africa.

Over the last nine months, members of 3rd ABCT, 1st AD traveled across the continent of Africa and to the Netherlands, participating in the U.S. Army Africa Accord series of exercises as its regionally aligned force known as RAF.

U.S. Ambassador to Gabon, Cynthia Akuetteh, said the number one purpose of the Accord series is to maintain peace, test capacities and strengthen relationships of all nations involved.

“Understanding the culture of who

we are fighting, fighting with, who is nearby, is vital to understanding warfare,” said 1st Lt. Michael Mulligan, 3rd ABCT, 1st AD. “At the end of the day, culture drives all our decisions. If you don’t understand cultural markers, you may not initially recognize what they value, where they see it, and how they will fight for it.”

In order to be successful during a United Nations mission, multi-national forces combine their efforts towards one common goal.

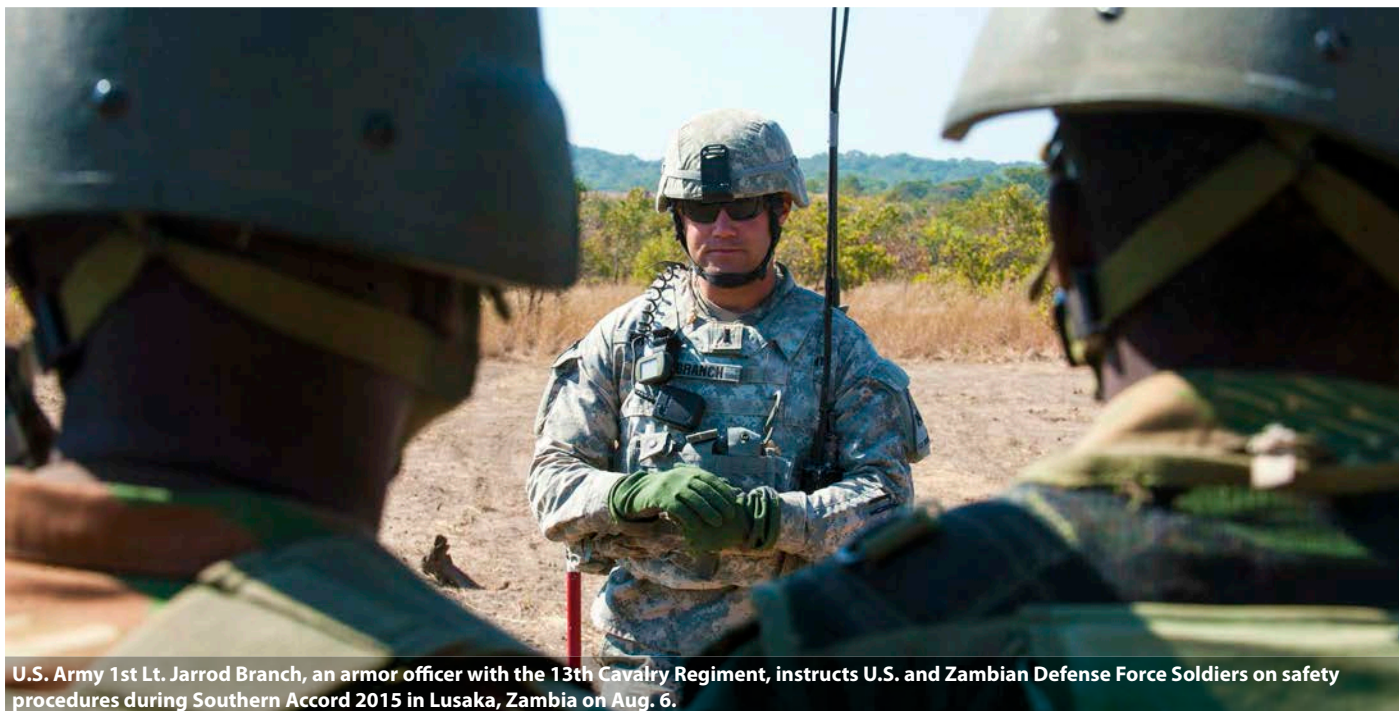
“The U.S. Army has a long history of maintaining close cooperation with members of other militaries in the promotion of stability and security,” said Col. Melinda Mate, director of peace operations, Peace Keeping and Stability Institute.

“Our cultures may be different but by coming together and sharing our experiences we can build our capacity to foster peace and stability.”

“It is clear that in this era of globalization no country can single-handedly deal with all forms of threats. This is what justifies the pooling of strengths and experience-sharing that supports these kinds of exercises,” said Commissioner General Air Marshal Jean Felix Sockat, the secretary general of the Department of National Defense for Gabon.

More than 20 countries participated in these exercises throughout the year. The exercises not only provided an opportunity to train and become more efficient in mul-





U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jarrod Branch, an armor officer with the 13th Cavalry Regiment, instructs U.S. and Zambian Defense Force Soldiers on safety procedures during Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 6.

ti-national responses to crises and threats around the world, it also showed the U.S. military's continued support to its African partners and allies.

Soldiers from 3rd ABCT, 1st AD posed the question, why Africa? Senior leaders throughout the different branches of service considered Africa to be a leadership laboratory.

So what exactly is a leadership laboratory?

"It's the intermingling of forces from the commanders down to the individual squads," said Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffery Stitzel, U.S. Army Africa. "It's an environment where we get to test all those things we talk about in the Army about being an agile and active leader."

At Southern Accord 2015 U.S. Soldiers had the opportunity to fully integrate themselves with Zambian forces.

"You have Soldiers from 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment, intermingled with Zambian forces," said Stitzel. "Young sergeants get an

opportunity to lead and motivate Zambian forces; while at the same time the young lieutenant is trying to figure out how to motivate the staff sergeant and understand the commander's intent."

The Accord series also allows leaders to focus on recent and potential conflicts.

"These exercises are another way of exercising what we have done the last 15 years in Iraq and Afghanistan," Stitzel said. "We get to experiment without people dying."

However, Staff Sgt. Luis M. Hernandez, 2nd Sqd., 13th Cav., with 20 years of active service, said the biggest take away for his Soldiers will be humility.

"I had a lot of Soldiers who just believed the U.S. was the best and all other countries were mediocre," Hernandez said. "When the troops saw their African partners completing the same missions, with less, it was a humbling experience."

The U.S. can work side-by-side with its European and African partner nations during peacekeeping op-

erations if the time arises.

"This is an experience I will cherish for the rest of my life," said Ferdinand Tongambou, of the Washington Army National Guard's 341st Military Intelligence Battalion. "This is the type of training you can't receive in a classroom; you need the human interaction which cannot be replicated in a class."

The tone and culture of Africa is unique, Tongambou said.

"It's amazing how people just get along here and are so willing to help one another out, even strangers," said Tongambou.

He was born and raised in Africa before coming to the U.S. and joining the military.

"This is the perfect opportunity for Soldiers and leaders to learn about people and their cultures," said Tongambou. "This environment shows that you can bring multiple countries together and be successful. It's a great confidence booster. Many countries that participated didn't even speak the same language, but we managed to adapt

and overcome our differences.”

Language and cultural barriers hindered communications during the first Accord Exercise, even with the help of multiple linguists, said Col. Barry “Chip” Daniels, 3rd ABCT, 1st AD. Something had to be done to optimize training time.

Key leaders from 3rd ABCT, 1st AD decided the exercise needed a more structured academic phase that would allow team building and give participants time to overcome any barriers they may face during the exercise.

Participants of the exercise said it would be beneficial to have transcripts printed in English and French to make things easier to comprehend.

“Academics should complement and build on the capabilities the participants bring to the exercise,” said Mate.

By the time the 3rd ABCT, 1st AD arrived at Western Accord 2015 in the Netherlands, participants were gliding seamlessly through the first week of the exercise.

“This is my third Accord series exercise and I’m very impressed with how rapidly we are progressing through the training objectives; frankly, this is the fastest I’ve seen,” said Daniels, commander, Western Accord chief of staff of U.S. Forces.

However, the Accord series did more than just train multi-national forces and build relationships; it helped stimulate the local economies.

“Those of us attending the exercise itself will actually infuse some dollars into the local economy as we purchase goods and services to feed our servicemembers,” said Brig. Gen. Peter Corey, the deputy commander of U.S. Army Africa.

“We’re buying fuel for the vehicles that we will be using to move about the training area. Certainly, many of our personnel will be arriving through commercial airlines so we are pumping some dollars into the local airlines and that sort of thing. So, there is an economic benefit to our African partner nations,” said Corey.

Participants were able to experi-

ence a cultural day to get a better understanding of the country and also given the opportunity to venture out and explore local cities.

“I can tell you from the American perspective; our Soldiers and personnel that are attending the exercise are excited to be in this part of the world,” said Corey. “It’s not something we get to do very often.”

“I encourage all participants to develop relationships that will last long after the exercise has concluded. It is through teamwork, cooperation, and trust among partnered nations that we are able to overcome security challenges now and in the future,” said Corey.

“As these series of exercises continue, I hope our European, and African partner nations adapt similar scenario-driven models to increase their proficiency,” said Daniels.

The 3rd ABCT, 1st AD will relinquish the regionally aligned force mission to the 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, later this year.



U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jarrod Branch (left), an armor officer with the 13th Cavalry Regiment, works with Zambian Defense Force soldiers with a graphical fire scale during Southern Accord 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia on Aug. 6.



Brig. Gen. Kenneth H. Moore Jr., deputy commander, U.S. Army Africa, speaks with an African partner during the opening ceremony for Western Accord 2015, July 20.



Dutch Brig. Gen. Gino van der Voet, director of training and operations, Royal Netherlands Army Command, addresses a formation of U.S., African and European Soldiers during the opening ceremony for Western Accord 2015, July 20.

Western Accord 2015 begins

By Sgt. Marcus Fichtl, U.S. Army Africa

HARSKAMP, Netherlands – A myriad of military uniforms graced the parade field as more than a dozen nations stood side-by-side to mark the opening of Western Accord 2015 at Harskamp, The Netherlands, July 20.

U.S. Brig. Gen. Kenneth H. Moore Jr., deputy commanding general U.S. Army Africa, and Dutch Brig. Gen. Gino van der Voet, director of training and operations, Royal Netherlands Army Command, welcomed African, European and American service members to a 12-day United Nations-derived, command post exercise.

“This exercise will be a rigorous event that will involve nearly 200 military and civilian participants,” said Moore. “The exercise is patterned after the existing United Nations mission in Mali and designed to increase the ability of participants to execute similar missions in the future.”

Based on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the exercise is divided into two phases. First,

an academic portion focused on the military planning, peacekeeping and current United Nations operations. The second phase focuses on operations where partner nation staffs apply the academics in a computer-simulated United Nations mission.

According to Moore, Western Accord plays an important role in maintaining decades of African-U.S. military partnerships.

“This exercise is a key element to a broader series of military-to-military exercises that demonstrate the strong partnership between the U.S., The Netherlands, Africa and all other participating African and European partners,” said Moore.

Originally planned to take place in Liberia, Western Accord moved to Netherlands after an Ebola outbreak there in 2014.

Voet said hosting the exercise in The Netherlands was, “an easy yes.”

“The Netherlands is very committed to the African continent,” said Voet. “Not only do we have

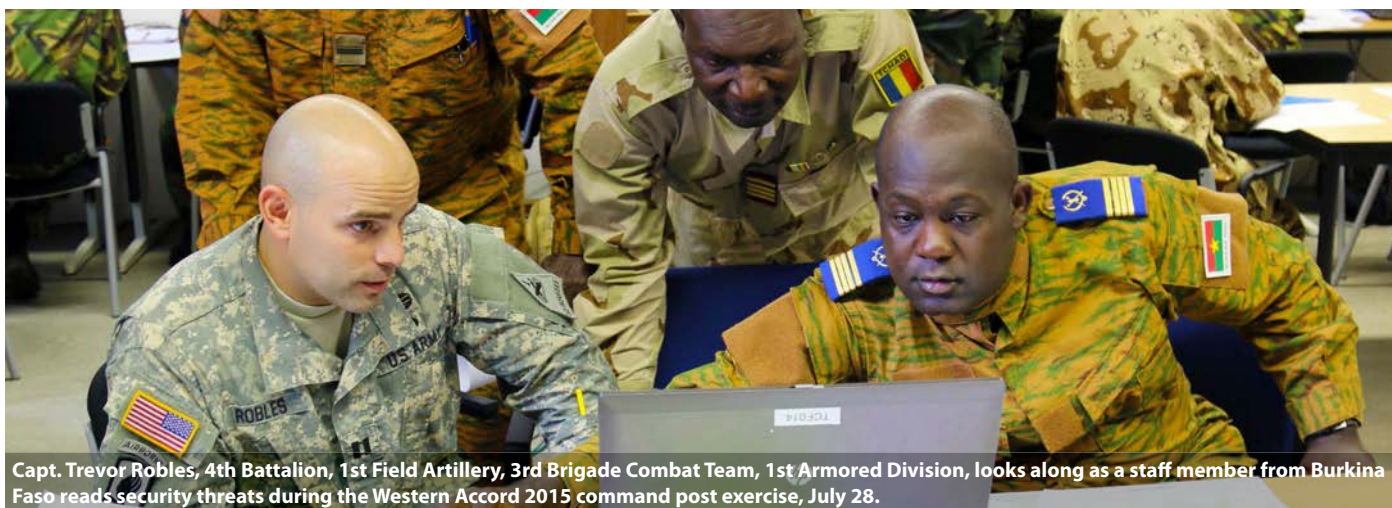
good relationships with our African partners, we are committed to many operations including those in Mali, Sudan and Somalia.”

As various staff elements exercise together to build capabilities between the nations of Western Accord, Moore stressed there’s a stronger reason for the exercise — the human element.

“Above all, most importantly, I want all the participants to develop long-term professional relationships,” said Moore. “These relationships will last long after the exercise is concluded. It is through developing teamwork, trust and confidence in participant nations that we will overcome any obstacle.”

Voet stressed the commitment has overcome the obstacles of the past and will deal with challenges of the future.

“We’ve been allies for many years and have shared many fields of battle. When it comes down to our mission we are all a band of brothers,” Voet said.



Capt. Trevor Robles, 4th Battalion, 1st Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, looks along as a staff member from Burkina Faso reads security threats during the Western Accord 2015 command post exercise, July 28.

WA15: Leader growth through academics

By Staff Sgt. Killo Gibson, U.S. Army Africa

HARSKAMP, Netherlands – Western Accord 2015 is officially underway as it enters the academic phase of the exercise at Winkelman Kazerne, Harskamp, The Netherlands, July 20-31.

The annual combined-joint exercise is designed to assess U.S., European and African partner nation military organizations on their ability to conduct United Nations peacekeeping operations based on the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali known as MINUSMA.

However, it takes more than just showing up to an exercise to be successful; it requires the growth of competent leaders.

The comprehensive academics portion ranged from guest speakers from the U.N., International Committee of the Red Cross to military leaders on the ground in Mali. Professional development is a fundamental building block of training for Western Accord.

U.S. Brig. Gen. Kenneth H. Moore Jr., deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Africa, said leadership development is key to building cohesion between multiple nations.

“The academic period of the exercise is a great opportunity for leaders at all levels to learn and share knowledge,” Moore said. “It’s also a time to build positive relationships.”

With multiple obstacles including time, money and operations tempo, the African partners have limited opportunities to conduct the in-depth professional development provided at Western Accord.

“Academics should complement and build on the capabilities the participants bring to the command post exercise,” said U.S. Army Col. Melinda Mate, director of peace operations, Peace Keeping and Stability Institute.

“For the academics portion to be successful, you have to clearly lay-out what the scenario is and ensure the training audience understands their roles and responsibilities, so they can go through the planning process to produce a friendly course of action that everyone understands. This will set the conditions for a successful execution of the CPX,” said Col. Barry “Chip” Daniels, commander, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, and Western Accord chief of

staff U.S. Forces.

Language barriers can hinder operations when multi-national forces work under one roof.

To bridge the language gap, U.S. Army translators from the Utah Army National Guard worked to provide scripts and materials in both English and French, the primary languages of the African nations at Western Accord.

“Having briefings and exercise documents available in both English and French precludes a barrier to comprehension of the material presented,” said Mate. “Our team of linguists is also supporting this endeavor. Most importantly, our partners’ ability to communicate in multiple languages has ensured exercise success.”

“This is my third Accord series exercise and I’m impressed with how rapidly we are progressing through the training objectives; frankly, this is the fastest I’ve seen,” Daniels said. “If they keep up this level of motivation the academics will be a success.”



Adam Sterling, deputy chief of mission, U.S. Embassy, The Netherlands, speaks to the participants of Western Accord 2015 during the exercises closing ceremony at Winkelman Kazerne, July 31.



U.S., African and European Soldiers stand in formation during the closing ceremony for Western Accord 15, at Winkelman Kazerne, July 31.

A cooperative conclusion to Western Accord 2015

By Sgt. Marcus Fichtl, U.S. Army Africa

HARSKAMP, Netherlands – Cool, sunny skies filled with bright, fluffy clouds greeted more than 180 military personnel from 16 different countries in a final Western Accord 15 formation at Winkelman Kazerne, July 31.

The annual 12-day exercise provided participants with an in-depth academic week of study on United Nations operations, peacekeeping and military planning, followed by a week of computer simulated scenarios designed around the UN’s Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission template in Mali.

All staff sections within the exercise put European, U.S. and African personnel together by design; however, in the final formation nations stood together by choice.

“Amitie internationale, friendship international – that’s Western Accord,” said. Spc. Andrew Jensen, French linguist, Utah National Guard.

Jensen saw first-hand and became part of the building of camaraderie within the exercise. Tactical communication turned into friendly conversation by day and games of

soccer and dinners in the evening. “We all have a connection,” said Jensen.

According to Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy, The Netherlands, Adam Sterling seven decades of connection binds the U.S. to the Dutch and their NATO allies as well as decades of partnership in Africa.

“If there’s one thing you all shared coming in and will share going forward, it’s a commitment and a sense of duty to bring peace and security in West Africa,” said Sterling. “Western Accord is one step





African military leaders listen to Brig. Gen. Kenneth H. Moore, Jr., U.S. Army Africa deputy commanding general, as he speaks to the participants of Western Accord 2015 during the exercises closing ceremony at Winkelman Kazerne, July 31.

in the process to achieve that goal together.”

“A road to peace,” Brig. Gen. Kenneth H. Moore, Jr., Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Africa, said, “is paved with trust, the antithesis to Africa’s greatest obstacle – fear.”

“Fear is the opposite of trust,” said Moore. “There is no cooperation without trust.”

At Western Accord 2015, trust was key.

African colonels from 11 different nations went to Jensen, a junior American Soldier, to understand the technical communications of the joint operation center. During the computer exercise, U.S. servicemembers followed the lead of Africans who’ve participated in the peacekeeping operation in Mali.

Trust wasn’t only built between the partner nations – the U.S. forces from across the services who played the Joint Exercise Control Group and exercise support relied on each other in a foreign land.

“You represent the total force of all services and components; active, Guard and Reserve, your commitment to professionalism continues to make us proud,” said Sterling. “The relationships you built over the last two weeks will lay the foundation for the future.”

A foundation, Moore said, begins and ends with Africa.

“For as one African leader said, ‘Only Africa can solve its problems,’ we want to be part of the problem-solving team,” Moore said.

African Horizons

