



# Lesson 3.5e

## Course of Action Development

# Steps of the UN MDMP



**Analysis of the Operational Environment**

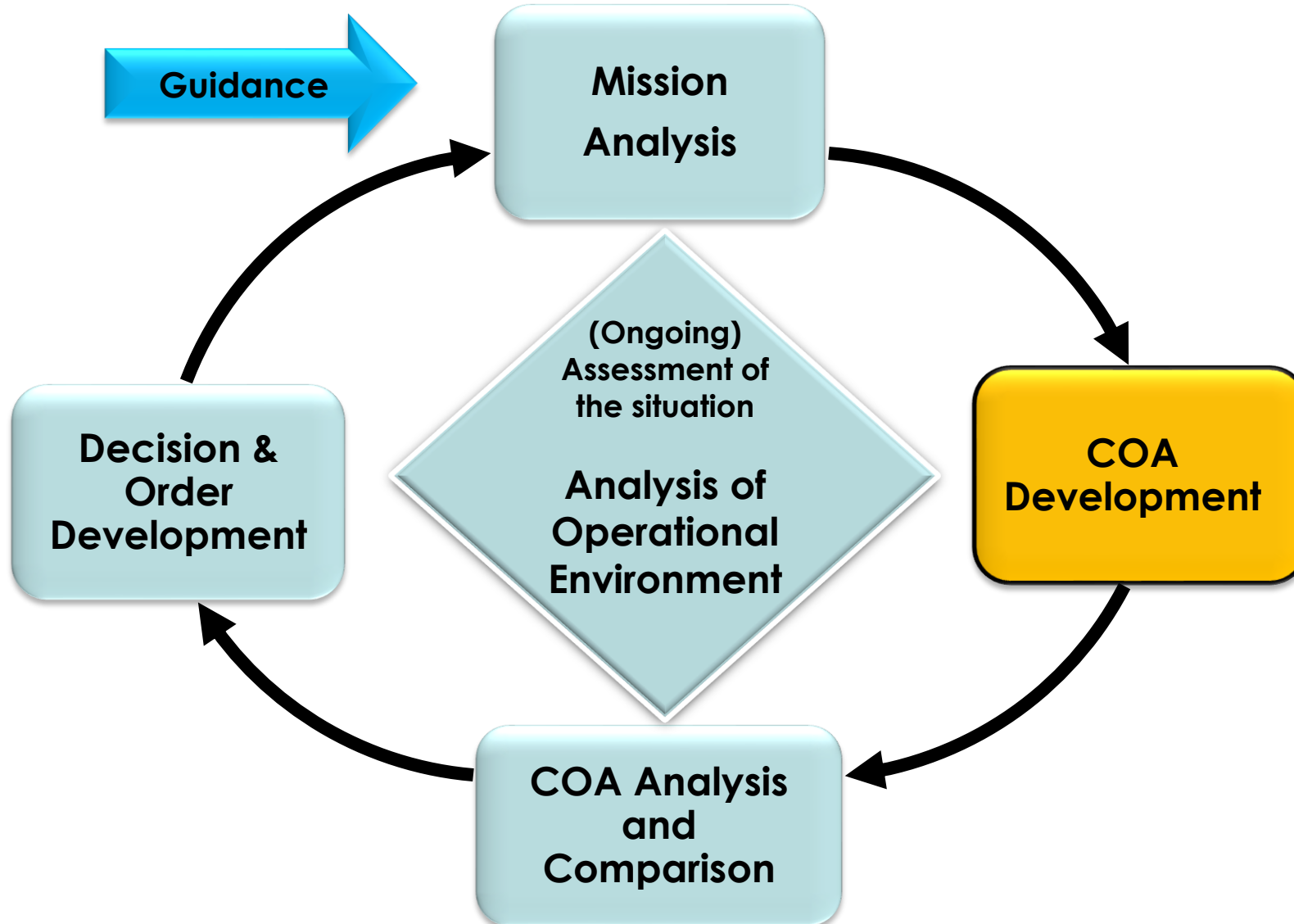
**Mission Analysis**

**Course of Action Development**

**COA Analysis, Comparison and Selection**

**Preparation and Delivery of Orders**

# UN Military Decision-Making Process



# Purpose of the COA Development

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- Develop potential COAs that can resolve the problem identified during the Mission Analysis
- Involves generating multiple options, evaluating their feasibility and effectiveness, and selecting the most suitable COA for further planning
- It is a process which leads from very general deductions to more and more specific descriptions of own activities and tasks

# Courses of Action Development



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## **Each COA must provide the following information/elements:**

What: Tasks to be executed

When: Critical timing parameters

Where: Locations where military effects will be achieved

How: Concept of operations and incorporating tasks

Why: Purpose of the mission



# COA Development Sub-Steps



- Confirm Centre of Gravity (COG)
- Conduct Critical Capability Analysis
- Develop Lines of Operation (LOO) and Decisive Conditions (DC)
- Develop detailed COA
- Evaluate COA

# Confirm Centre of Gravity



COG is the characteristic, capability or locality from which the force derives its freedom of action, strength or will to engage in the operation



# Confirm Centre of Gravity



- Critical Capabilities
- Critical Requirements
- Critical Vulnerabilities

<b>Centre of Gravity</b> Strength of the Threat Actors	<b>Critical Capability</b> Strength that makes it a CoG
<b>Critical Vulnerability</b> Through which the Threat Actors may be disrupted	<b>Critical Requirements</b> That which the Threat Actors needs to be effective

**Understanding own and threat actors CoG is critical in developing a successful plan**



# Conduct Critical Capability Analysis



- Identify critical capabilities of the threat actors
- Identify critical vulnerabilities of the threat actors to be targeted
- Identify critical capabilities of own force
- Identify own critical vulnerabilities to be protected or defended



# Develop Lines of Operation



## Lines of Operation (LOOs):

- Linking of Decisive Conditions (DC) to achieve the required effect
- May be expressed functionally or environmentally
- Op will be broken down into distinguishable LOOs with identifiable DC
  - Ex: Logistics LOO, Humanitarian LOO, Land LOO, Maritime LOO, and Media LOO



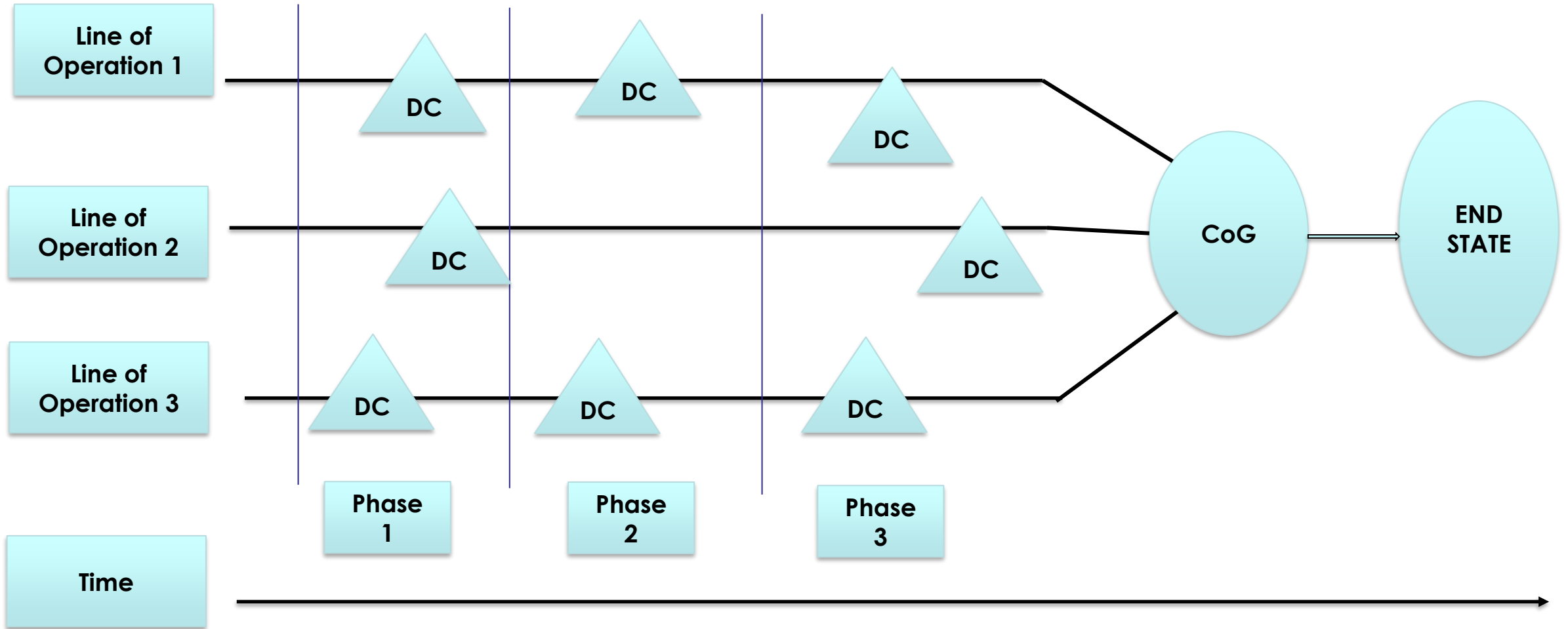
# Develop Decisive Conditions



## Decisive Conditions:

- Achievement of desired effects
- Operation cannot progress further until the DC is achieved
- Must be measurable and have a clearly articulated purpose
  - Ex: securing a vital piece of local infrastructure, winning the support of the local population, degrading the adversary's will to fight

# Lines of Operation and Decisive Condition



# Develop Detailed Courses of Action



- Determination of Tactical Tasks
- Troops to Tasks Analysis
- Development of COA



# Determination of Tactical Tasks

For each deduction, tasks must be determined in the areas identified

Example:

<b>Deduction</b>	<b>Task</b>
Attacks against the population in valley A must be prevented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Observe ceasefire</li><li>• Monitor human rights</li><li>• Establish check points</li><li>• Perform cordon and search</li><li>• Facilitate humanitarian assistance</li><li>• Provide convoy protection and escorts</li><li>• conduct crowd management</li></ul>



# Troops to Tasks Analysis

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- Determines troop strength needed for each task
- No standardised numbers exist for task requirements, as each mission is different
- Troop strength for each task is individually calculated based on the mission's unique circumstances
- The experience and imagination of military planners play a crucial role in determining the necessary troop numbers for each task



# Develop Detailed Courses of Action

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## **The following must be considered for each COA:**

- Main effort
- Supporting effort
- Integration of different Lines of Operation
- Command, control and communications
- Threat actors, risks and COA

# Main Effort and Scheme of Manoeuvre



- **Main Effort (ME):**

- The Main Effort establishes an activity, the successful accomplishment of which is decisive to the achievement of the mission

- **Scheme of Manoeuvre (SoM):**

- Description of how the Commander's Intent is expressed in the deployment of military assets to accomplish the mission



# COA Presentation Sample

Sketch

COA #1

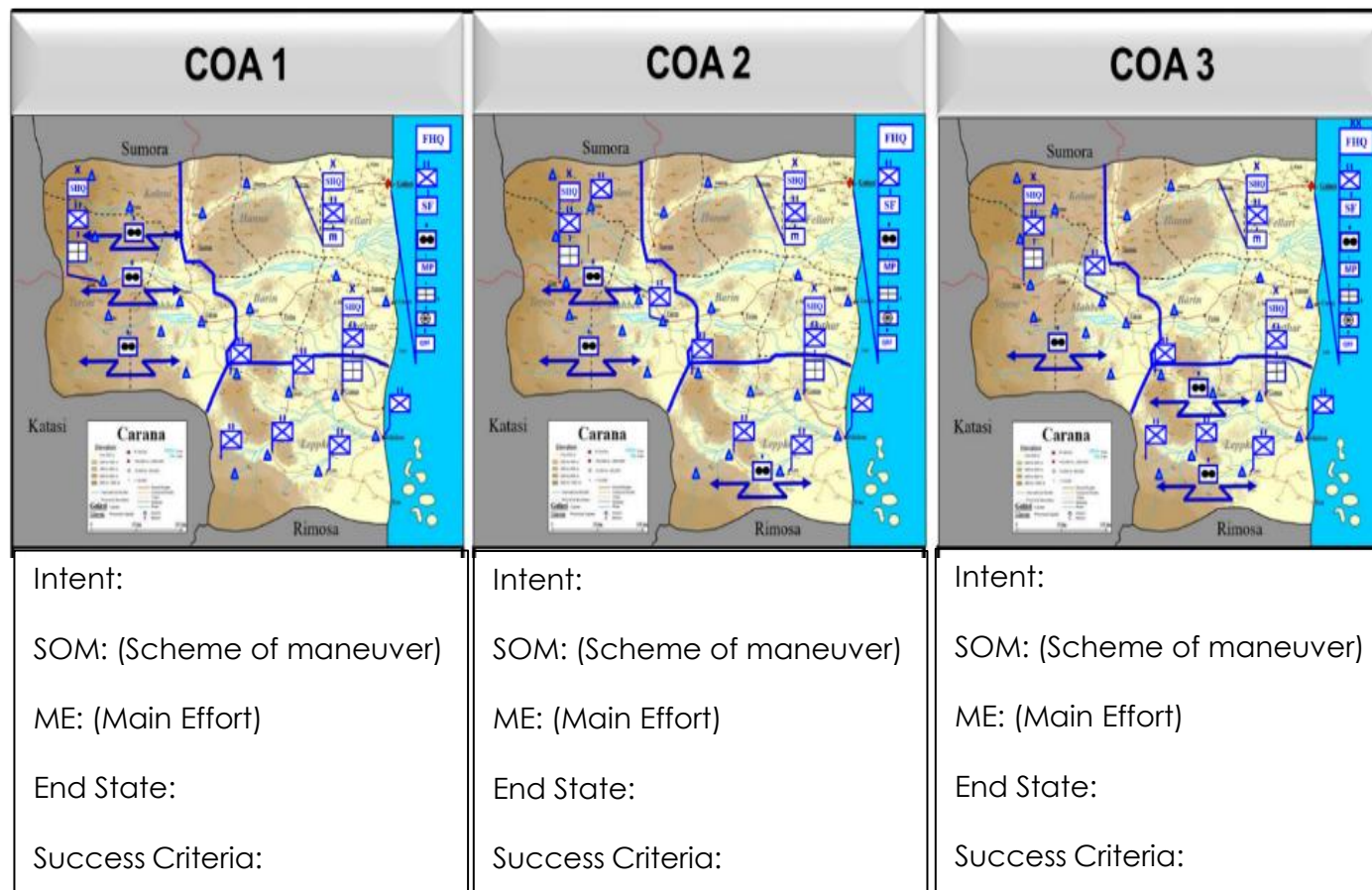
Intent:

SOM: (Scheme of maneuver)

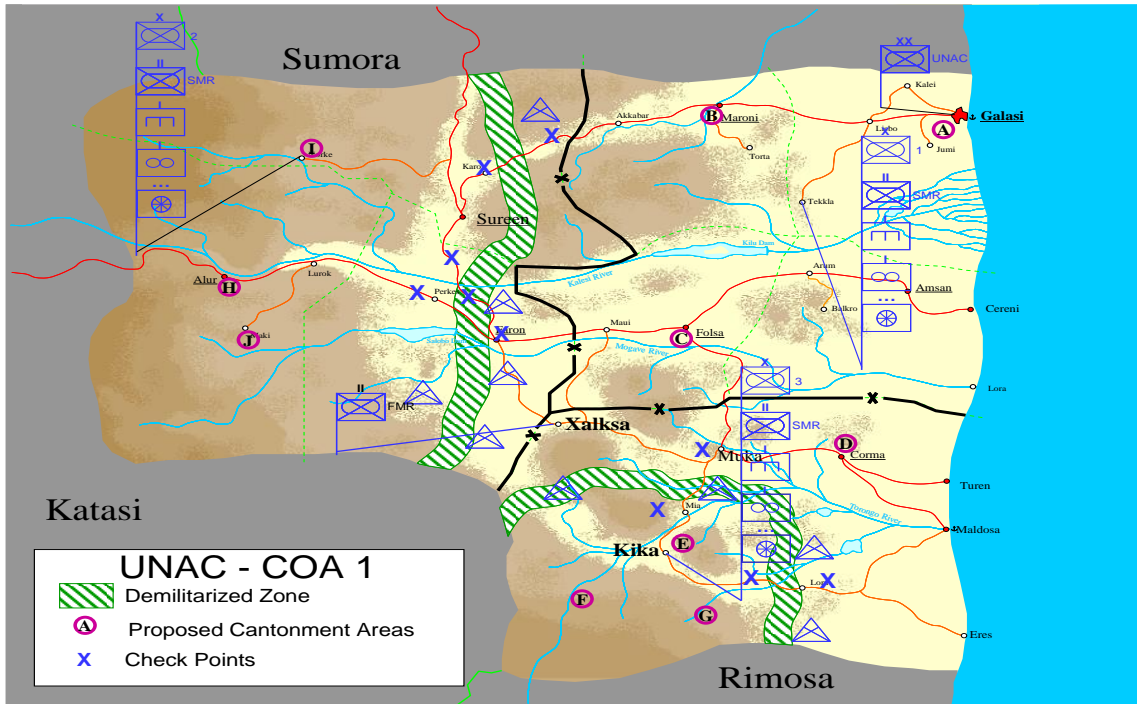
ME: (Main Effort)

End State:

Success Criteria:



# Example: Course of Action 1 (COA 1)



**Intent:** To restore peace and security in Carana through effective safeguarding of the United Nations demilitarised zone while dominating the Area of Operation to ensure compliance with UN Security Council Resolution.

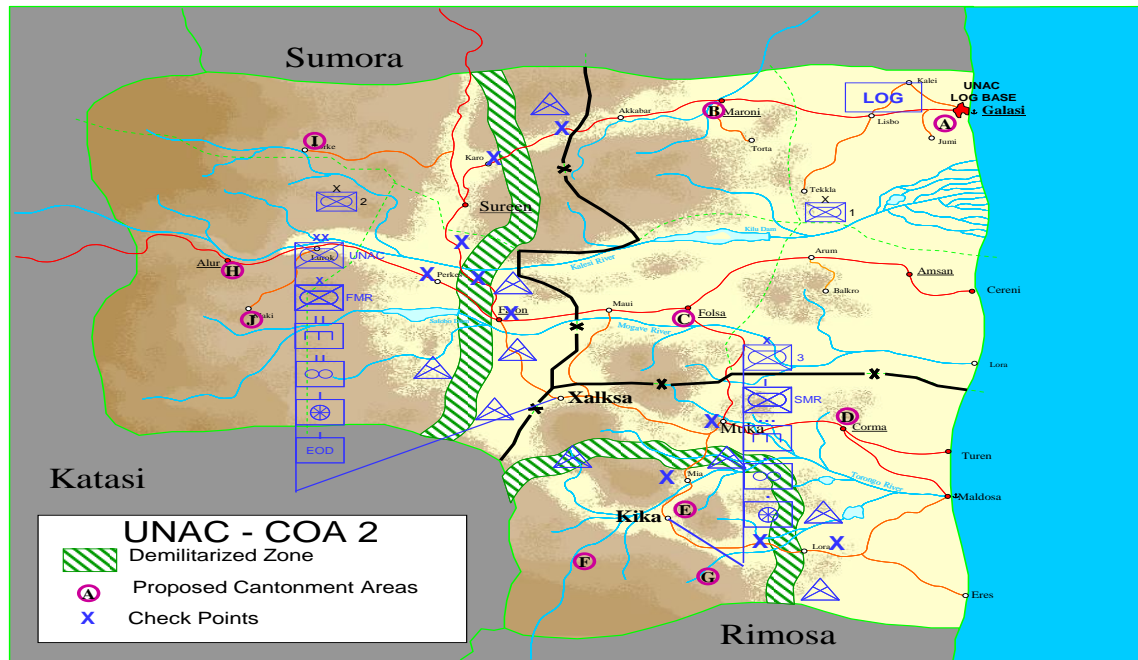
**SOM:** To divide the force into **three sectors**, secure the demilitarised zones with a system of Checkpoints, Patrols and Obs Posts with **each sector maintaining a company size reserve** for employment under orders of Force HQ

**ME:** Monitoring the UN demilitarised zones and population centres in each Sector

**End State:** Complete cessation of hostilities in Carana with UNAC presence across the country

**Success Criteria:** Free movement of UNCT and civilians throughout Carana without fear of attack or harassment by conflict parties or criminal gangs.

# Example: Course of Action 2 (COA 2)



**Intent:** To restore peace and security in Carana through effective safeguarding of the United Nations demilitarised zone while dominating the Area of Operation to ensure compliance with UN Security Council Resolution.

**SOM:** To divide the forces into **two sectors**, secure the demilitarised zones with a system of Checkpoints, Patrols and Obs Posts with **a strong Force Mobile Reserve of brigade group size**.

**ME:** Monitoring the UN demilitarised zones and conduct offensive actions against spoilers

**End State:** Complete cessation of hostilities in Carana with UNAC presence across the country

**Success Criteria:** Free movement of UNCT and locals throughout Carana without fear of attack or harassment by conflict parties or criminal gangs.

# Synchronisation Matrix



ORIGINATOR: (HQ)
DTG:
REF:

MSN		INTENT					INTENT SCHEMATIC						
		SOM					END STATE						
		ME											
TIME	H - 72	H - 48	H - 36	H - 24	H - 12	H HR	H + 12	H + 24	H + 36	H + 48	H + 72	REMARKS	
CONFLICT PARTY 1 (ACTIONS)													
CONFLICT PARTY 2 (ACTIONS)													
POTENTIAL DB													
MANOEUVRE	SUB UNIT 1												
	SUB UNIT 2												
	SUB UNIT 3												
	MOBILE RES												
	RES SUB UNIT												
SP ARM	OS												
	ENGR												
	COMM ETC												
SYC SP	LOG												
	MED												
	ES												





# Evaluate Courses of Action



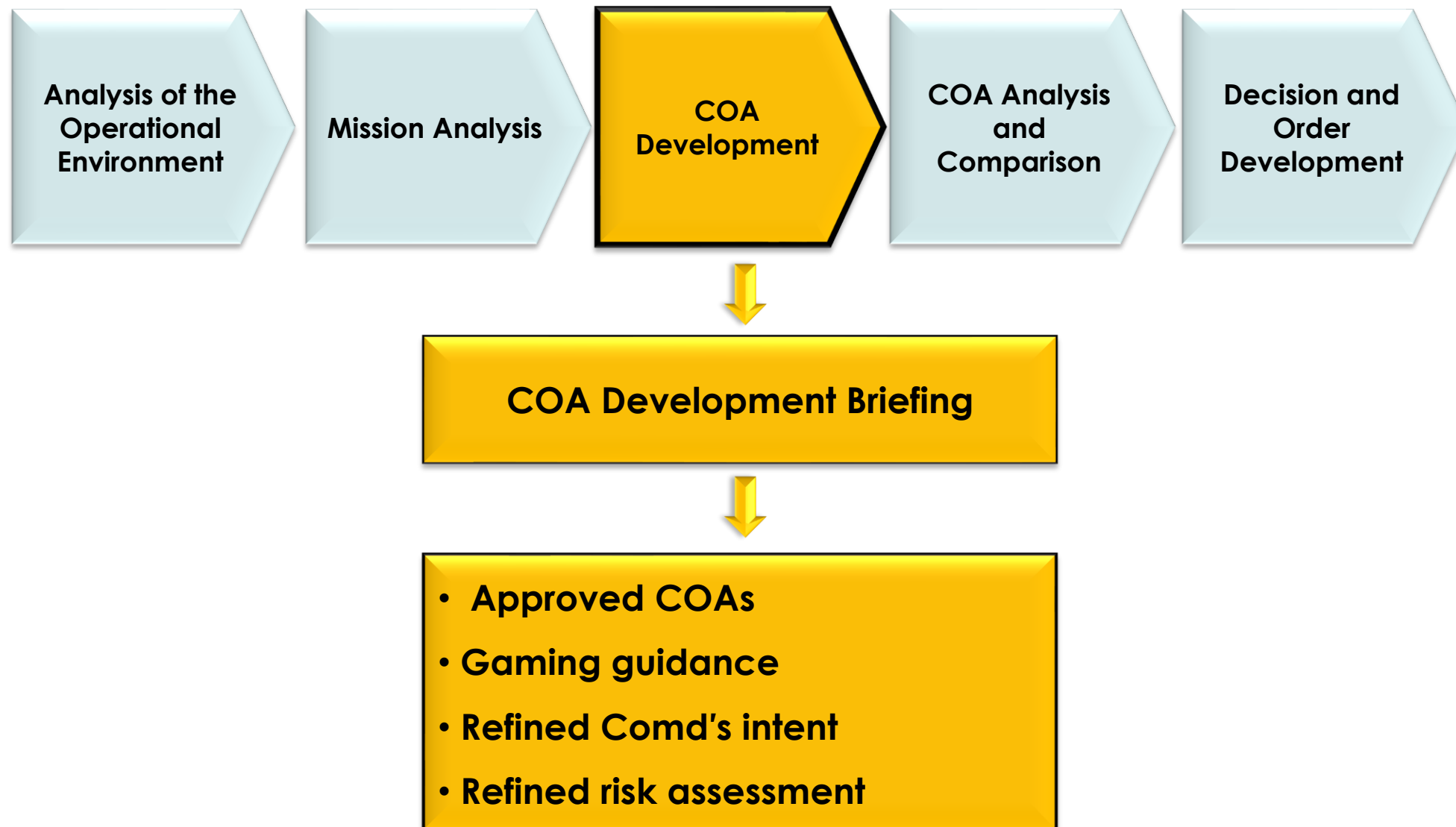
## Each COA must meet the criteria of:

- **Feasibility**
  - Achievable within allocated resources
- **Acceptability**
  - Accepted doctrine, risk, costs, etc.
- **Completeness**
  - Answers the 5W questions
- **Exclusivity**
  - Different from other COAs
- **Suitability**
  - Will it result in Mission accomplishment





# Outputs of Step 3 - COA Development



# COA Briefing



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- Introduction
  - Mission Statement
  - Commander's intent
  - Evaluation criteria
  - Assumptions
  - COAs Overview
  - Detailed description of COAs
  - Coordinating Instructions
  - Resources Required
  - Risk Assessment
  - Commander's guidance

# Learning Activity 3: COA Development

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Type: Syndicate Group

Suggested Time: 135 mins (preparation) + 45 min (presentation – all groups)

Activity: COA Development and COA briefing

# Learning Activity 3: COA Development

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## SCENARIO

At the end of the Mission Analysis briefing, the FC want the Staff to come up with COAs to deal with the situation.

The FC directs the COS and MSOs to reduce or eliminate identified risks, and particularly to reduce potential harm to civilians.

The FC wants MSOs to consider the development of protected areas, secure humanitarian access, etc.

# Learning Activity 3: COA Development

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## SCENARIO

The FC further suggests that MSOs think about:

- COAs to reduce the likelihood of physical violence
- COAs to use resources in the most effective way and in support of synchronisation with other mission components
- Coordination with protection actors outside the mission (e.g., humanitarian actors, state authorities)
- Consultations with communities at risk are critical to ensure the COA is comprehensive and represents a thorough analysis of all relevant aspects, including their protection capabilities

# Learning Activity 3: COA Development



## Requirement:

Based on the situation presented above, as MSOs in the FHQ, develop three (03) COAs to deal with the current situation in the mission area, and prepare the COA Development briefing for COS.

In addition to the guidance provided by the FC above, key points to consider during the development of each COA:

- Confirm the Centre of Gravity
- Conduct critical capability analysis
- Develop (confirm) Lines of Operation and decisive conditions
- Develop detailed COAs:
- Determination of tactical tasks
- Troops to Tasks Analysis
- Development of COA
- Evaluate COAs
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Time of the COA Development Briefing: DD MM YYYY, HH MM hours (maximum 15 minutes).