

Garland Armed Forces (GAF) Profile

Background and Overview

The Garyan Armed Forces was formally established in 1983, immediately after Garland achieved its independence. Although some would argue that it has guerrilla antecedents, this is not actually the case, and even while it fought for independence against the Eastland Armed Forces (EAF), it fought as a conventional military force, utilising infantry, artillery and cavalry assets in conventional, set-piece military operations. In this regard, it is worth noting that the Dotan, the ethnic group comprising more than 80% of the GAF's officer corps, had significant training during the Colonial period and fought as they had been trained.

The GAF was always relatively well armed as when the rebellion against the EAF commenced, the Garyan Liberation Movement (GLM) and Garyan Patriotic Front (GPF) simply seized arms and ammunition from barracks dotted around present day Garland. Moreover, its political leadership moved quickly to gain agreement from Southland, Northland, and Westland, not to intervene in the struggle against Eastland. These nations agreed, recognising that the winds of history were on the side of the rebellion, and that they would need Garland's cooperation in future trade to the coast. These nations also understood that the Dotan had a strong military tradition and access to arms.

The war of liberation was relatively short and by 1983, the GPF and GLM amalgamated to form what is now known as the GAF. However, the new government was concerned about the presence of a potential fifth column in its ranks and followed an undeclared policy of primarily recruiting Dotan to its officer corps. Even today, the Dotan comprise approximately 80% of its officers; it is worth noting that after the 2012 attempted coup – led by Eastarian officers and NCOS – reinforced this policy and created some mistrust in the ranks. The other ranks are comprised of ethnic Eastarian (who constitute some 40% of the NCO body), Sunka and some Abu.

The GAF is largely loyal to the Dotan elite and to the ruling party, but it is perhaps a reflection of the post-coup mistrust of some units that only Dotan-majority units are garrisoned close to the Capital city (the Capital Defence Brigade); none of the CDB's personnel are Eastarian. It is worth noting that the CDB has access to the most modern weaponry the GAF has to offer, is at least twice the size of other Brigades, has access to armed helicopter gunships (at least one squadron of Mi24s), and has a nascent UAS capability; the UAS are not armed.

Its other units are spread across the country in areas that are considered to pose the greatest threat, particularly in the west, where the GAF must defend against IK, and in the Central and NE provinces where the AWF are present. However, the GAF's main focus is on its eastern border, where it maintains 2 full mechanised Infantry Divisions, with two Armoured Brigades in reserve. This is an acknowledgement that Garland considers that its greatest threat is Eastland and the proxy groups it supports.

The GAF has had no presence in South Eri since 2015, when the EIMF and the Government of Garland came to a peace agreement that guaranteed mining revenues would be shared. Indeed, it is understood that the GAF has developed a strong working relationship with EIMF commanders, with some GAF commanders believing that the EIMF would side with its forces if the EAF invaded to change the status quo.

However, the opposite is true for the ENLF. In North Eri the GAF continues to function as the de-jure authority, with the ENLF operating from inaccessible rural areas. The GAF has Battalion-sized garrisons in every urban area of North Eri, with Brigade HQ operating out of Nicada. The GAF controls all lines of communications in North Eri but can only assure the security of these routes by day, but not continuously; the ENLF remains an effective force and has demonstrated its ability to block route and/or ambush convoys of platoon size along MSRs. While there is a significant body of reliable reporting

indicating that some local GAF commanders cooperate with the ENLF in some areas, particularly in those that are located close to smuggling routes, the two groups remain generally opposed.

The arrival of the 7th Continent Force to supervise the humanitarian ceasefire led to a significant reduction in clashes between the two, but low-level, localised clashes continue to occur, albeit infrequently.

Overall, the GAF is a relatively effective, conventional fighting force, trained to engage in a conventional war with Eastland. Multiple sources, including those from within the GAF report that GAF planning for either an offensive or defensive war against Eastland relies on having secure western and southern flanks, with its main military effort orientated towards Eastland, and a secondary military effort orientated north, if required. Consequently, the government of Garland's grand strategy incorporates maintaining and improving diplomatic, economic and military ties with Westland and Southland. The Government of Garland also aims to maintain instability in Northland, without ever allowing this instability to topple the government. This is so because Garland is concerned that Northland wishes to reclaim the territory it lost in the 1997 war with Garland. Northland understands the Garland could bring about its downfall in relatively short order by providing more significant support to the rebellion there. This moderates Northland's behaviour and deters military action; the government of Garland believes that Northland would only take direct action if it was sure that Eastland would prevail.

Recent and Significant Activity

Throughout 2018, the GAF has remained outside EIMF territory, preferring to keep the group onside in case of a future conflict with the EAF. The GAF continues to garrison and train its troops in and around Kinea and Watiki.

The GAF continues to operate in the provinces of both North Eri and North, deploying one division in Sector North, and one division (minus) in North Eri. The humanitarian ceasefire has been breached approximately once per month, but these breaches have generally been at the tactical level, and have occurred as the GAF has attempted to project force into traditional ENLF heartland areas, where the group controls two Coltan mines.

In Sector west, the GAF continues to cooperate on cross-border operations with the Westland Armed Forces (WAF) and to engage in operations against IK.

GAF - Profile

	Total Strength	Army	Navy (Riverine)	Air force
Active Personnel	88,000	85,000	2,000	1,000

The Garland Armed Forces (GAF) originated from the GLM and GPF military wings, while the GLM's political wing has been the dominant ruling party in Garland since independence. The GAF is composed of units amalgamating recruits from all ethnic backgrounds. The officer corps is 80% Dotan, 15% Sunka and 5% Eastarian. After the attempted coup in 2012, severe restrictions were placed on ethnic Eastarian officer candidates, including a 5% ceiling, although they comprise 34.5% of the population. 40% of the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) are Eastarian, most of whom would have been eligible for officer candidacy, prior to 2012. Approximately 85% of the force is illiterate, with the majority of enlisted recruits coming from economically inactive and impoverished backgrounds.

C2 and Organization

The president is the commander-in-chief of the GAF. GAF has seven (7) Mechanised Infantry Divisions with one (1) Capital Defence Brigade. The Capital Defence Brigade is 85% DOTAN and 15% SUNKA.

Weapons and Equipment

Mechanised capability: 2-300 Infantry Fighting Vehicles (BMP type - tracked); 2-300 Armoured Personnel Carriers (BTR type – wheeled).

Armour: T-72 Main Battle Tank: 110. According to the most recent International Defence Capability publication, only 67 T-72s are serviceable due to lack of replacement parts and poor maintenance.

Artillery: 152mm Self-propelled howitzer: 15; 122 mm Self-propelled howitzer: 20; and 122 mm Multiple Rocket System: 36.

Anti-Tank Weapons: RPG-7 Rocket propelled grenade launchers.

Air-Defence Weapons: Unconfirmed.

Infantry Weapons: 7.62 mm AK-47/AKM Assault Rifle; 7.62 mm HK G3A3 Assault Rifle; 7.62 mm PK/PKM General-Purpose Machine Gun; 12.7 mm NSVT/DShK Heavy Machine Gun; 12.7 mm DShK Heavy Machine Gun; 12.7 mm Type 85 Heavy Machine Gun; 40 mm RPG-7 series Rocket Launcher; and 40 mm Type 69-1 Rocket Launcher.

Role and Deployment of the GAF

Currently, the GAF have internal law and order mandates and effectively, the GAF functions as a domestic counterinsurgency and the security force dealing with local conflicts, as well as providing security for the capital to complement the police force.

Morale

The GAF has admitted that salaries for the soldiers take up most of its budget. Morale ranges from high to low, depending on whether salaries are paid on time. The CDB is always paid on time.

External Operations

The GAF maintains cooperation with the Westland Armed Forces (WAF) in combating the Imuna Kakuatan (IK) terrorist group in the border area.

Conflict with the EAF

Although Garland and Eastland signed a non-aggression treaty in 1995, bilateral relations have not been favourable, because of the disputed border between the two countries and the annexation of what is now the East Province. There have been periodic, small-scale skirmishes between the armed forces along the border. Negotiations over outstanding issues remain caught in the dynamics of recurrent cycles of progress and stalemate, periodic withdrawals from and returns to the negotiating table.

Deployment Areas

The best GAF personnel are stationed in the capital – Garville. The GAF maintains one Capital Defence Brigade (with one Armour Brigade on permanent attachment), and one Mech Inf Division held in reserve just outside Garville.

The GAF maintains garrisons in the main urban areas of Central and West Provinces, and man some Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) along the border with Westland in order to assure cooperation with Westland. Total strength in these provinces is believed to be two Mech Inf Divisions (-).

A humanitarian ceasefire with the Eriyan National Liberation Front (ENLF) means that the GAF limits its operations in North Eri Province. However, it remains in its bases (Mech Inf Battalions) in the main urban areas and maintains a small presence in other FOBs (generally Company-sized) in less accessible areas such as Dahari.

An informal ceasefire of sorts exists between the Eriyan Independence Movement Force (EIMF) and the GAF, which in turn remains deployed around South Eri Province, but not in the province itself.

The GAF is also present (one Mech Inf Division) in North Province and North-West Province, where it is used to suppress the Anti-Western Fighters (AWF) in North Province, and as a QRF to deter military adventurism from Northland in North West Province.

In general, GAF have a moderate-good level of training, particularly in conventional operations. However, difficulties in constraining and defeating unconventional threats posed by separatists, extremists and terrorist have resulted in some units resorting to excessive violence. As such, in recent years, GAF has increasingly been accused by Human Rights' groups of pursuing a scorched-earth policy and committing gross Human Rights abuses including Gender-Based Violence in areas heavily affected by armed opposition groups, with many civilian casualties reported.

The brutality associated with the counter-insurgency operations in North and South Eri Province's has caused fears of the GAF disintegrating along ethnic lines. In response, Chief of General Staff explicitly warned soldiers from engaging in politics during the 2018 election season.

The GAF is generally amenable to the UN presence within Garland and has been willing to engage with it through training, joint patrols and capability improvement programmes. However, cooperation varies by region and there are concerns that – particularly at the tactical level – some GAF commanders may be reluctant to allow UN operations to interfere with their off-books agreements with local rebel factions. Indeed, the 7th CF noted such reluctance was prevalent in some areas of North Eri. The UN, for its part, also has some concerns pertaining to the GAF's human rights record.

Threat Profile - Eriyan National Liberation Front (ENLF)

Background and Overview

The ENLF was originally the North Eri branch of the Eriyan National Liberation Front (ENLF), which was formed to protect the Eastarian population from Dotan oppression in the period immediately after Garland independence in 1983. The Dotan-majority government at that time was concerned that regional neighbours would attempt to destabilize the fledgling state by stoking ethnic tension, leading to the deployment of the Garyan Armed Forces (GAF) to border areas. It is worth noting that in 1983, the GAF had not made the transition from rebel force to the professional military arm of Garland and, as such, ill-discipline, looting, sexual exploitation, and extra judicial killing was relatively common.

This led to the defection of Eastarian NCOs (Eastarians still comprise the backbone of the GAF non-commissioned ranks) from the GAF, and to the formation of loosely connected self-defence groups, with each group focused on the defence of its immediate environs. This is one of the few para-military organizations in the region with mixed gender cadres of males and females, and it is believed that this has resulted in fewer incidents of conflict-related sexual violence attributed to the group.

Over time, the ENLF became more powerful, benefitting greatly from the Garland invasion of Eastland in 1988. The invasion prompted Eastland to channel money, weapons, and experienced soldiers to the ENLF, which was then expected to attack GAF land lines of communications to Eastland. The ENLF readily complied and used its superior knowledge of the local terrain to great effect, eventually forcing the GAF to route supplies overland through North East province, or along the Nicada-Qanabi axis, the only road the government retained control of throughout the war.

During this period, the ENLF was primarily a guerrilla force, attacking the GAF in section to platoon-sized groups, using the local population to acquire information on targets. Typically, an ENLF operation involved the use of locals as reconnaissance elements and spotters, before a highly mobile ENLF platoon would attack small, isolated GAF bases and/or convoys using direct and indirect fire weapons. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the ENLF avoided large-scale conventional engagements; both Sparrow and Le Pew were heavily influenced by the writings of Sun Tzu and understand that they are cannot compete with the GAF's conventional firepower.

After the Garland-Eastland war ended, the ENLF divided into two groups, each led by charismatic commanders that emerged between 1988 and 1990. Joseph le Pew controlled all ENLF forces to the north of the Nicada-Qanabi axis, while John Sparrow controlled all ENLF forces to its south. At that time, this arrangement made sense from a command and control perspective and was not caused by ideological differences. However, over time, the two groups developed different perspectives and objectives. This led to a definitive split between the groups in 1995, with the northern ENLF retaining the ENLF name, and with the southern ENLF becoming the Eriyan Independence Movement Fighters (EIMF).

The catalyst to the split was linked to the control of resources. While both South and North Eri have relatively abundant mineral resources, South Eri had the more valuable mines and better lines of communications with Eastland. This meant that the ENLF southern sector became the wealthier group, developed stronger connections with regional businessmen, and was generally considered to be more politically astute. In 1993, John Sparrow set the tone for his southern sector when he unilaterally announced – apparently without coordinating with Joseph le Pew – that the ENLF sought to create an independent state, harnessing its natural resources and trading with regional partners, including Garland. This angered Joseph Le Pew, who favoured secession from Garland to join with Eastland. Despite talks aimed at bridging the significant political divide between the two, John Sparrow announced the formation of the EIMF in June 1995. The split was bloodless, though John Sparrow was known to have been frustrated at having to grant control of the Nicada-Qanabi axis to the ENLF. This

critical road is the ENLF's economic lifeline, allowing the group to manage large-scale illicit trade with Eastland, to raise taxes, and to use as leverage with the Government of Garland.

From 1995 to 2012, the ENLF maintained relatively good relations with the EIMF, but occasionally the groups clashed at the tactical level, particularly in areas close to the border with Eastland, which both need to control in order to engage in illicit trade. The ENLF also continued to engage in low-level clashes with the GAF during this period, but restricted its operations to denying GAF Freedom of Movement (FOM). This also allowed the ENLF to consolidate its hold on the countryside and meant that GAF units only patrolled in and around the urban areas of Nicada, Qanabi, and the northern section of Walesi, and along the major roads connecting them. The GAF also maintained a platoon-sized outpost at Dahari during this period. However, this outpost was overrun on two occasions, prompting the GAF to reinforce to a Mechanised Infantry Company, which remains there to this day.

There are multiple reports, including many from the 7 Continent Force, which maintained an OP at Dahari, that the ENLF had de-facto control of the border crossing point NE of Dahari, and that the local GAF commander was paid not to move his forces to that location.

Along with the EIMF, the ENLF also joined the mutinying ethnic Eastarian officers during the 2012 coup. However, unlike the EIMF, the ENLF never engaged the GAF in a conventional manner, preferring to engage in hit and run guerrilla tactics, which confined the GAF to urban areas.

The 2015 ceasefire between the EIMF and the GAF was a negative development for the ENLF. This allowed the GAF to concentrate its forces on North Eri, resulting in the ENLF losing control of some of its traditional zones of control. This undermined the ENLF's revenue-raising capability as the GAF had the capacity to move in Company to Battalion-sized convoys along the main supply routes in North Eri, more effectively securing them, ensuring that the ENLF was not able to extort money from local traders and/or humanitarian actors. The weakening of the ENLF relative to the EIMF also saw Eastland favour the EIMF, despite the EIMF not wanting to join with Eastland. It took the group until late 2017 until it regained control of the areas it had lost during that period, and it remains unclear whether it has the capability to maintain control over its valuable border crossing points, with pressure coming from the GAF, independent smugglers, and the EIMF, which is encroaching on traditional areas of ENLF control from South Eri.

The ENLF initially welcomed the 7th Continent Force and the UN deployment, but it has consistently messaged that any group or entity seeking to undermine its ability to control areas it dominated would face resistance. Indeed, on occasions when the 7th CF moved into border areas, even for short period of time, it faced multiple challenges, including the use of the local population to deny it FOM, and the use of mines to disrupt movement in isolated areas. On one occasion, a 7th CF drone was fired on from the Dahari border crossing point area. These incidents notwithstanding, the humanitarian ceasefire has largely held, and the incidence of clashes between the ENLF and the GAF has reduced considerably.

Recent and Significant Activity

Throughout 2018, the ENLF installed checkpoints on almost all routes in North Eri to extort money from humanitarian actors. The 7th CF and UN patrols have noted the existence of these checkpoints, but because the individuals manning them never appeared to have weapons, nothing could be done about them.

Throughout 2018, humanitarian actors report an increase in the appearance of armed men in the IDP camps in North Eri, particularly in Dafari IDP camp. Local sources indicate that these individuals are attempting to recruit at-risk youth. Local sources also report, but NGOs cannot confirm, the rape of women at some of these camps.

Through the summer of 2018, there has been an increase in the strength of ENLF cadres in and around Dafari, and the BXP to its north.

There have been several low-level breaches of the humanitarian ceasefire. These incidents have occurred at a rate of approximately once per month since Jan 2018, typically occurring when the GAF has attempted to move in force north east of Nicada. GAF patrols north of Dafari have also had warning

shots fired at them. However, the ceasefire is generally considered to be holding, which greatly pleases the local population.

In Sep 2018, a UNMIG patrol was denied access to the local IDP camp by a group of unarmed civilians. This incident followed two others where UN patrols were forced to halt on secondary roads leading to the border crossing point by locals, professing to be angry about the damage UN vehicles were doing to their roads.

Group Profile

The ENLF currently controls illicit trade to Eastland from North Eri, but faces challenges to its authority on several fronts, most notably from the EIMF, which has emerged as a more powerful group due to canny political decision making. The group also taxes agricultural produce, local markets, and controls the movement of goods to more remote areas of North Eri. It is also understood that it extorts foreign mining interests, which pays the group protection money; the ENLF asserts effective control over two cobalt mines, located in the north of the province and is reportedly paid to provide protection to gold and tantalum mines in and around Dafari. All told, GAF intelligence sources indicate that the group earns approximately 100,000 to 200,000 USD per month, which is sufficient to pay its soldiers (estimated to number about 3000) a living wage of approximately 150 USD per month. The group's financial constraints and its status as an active combatant group means that it cannot always attract personnel to its ranks. This has led to the forced recruitment of military aged males from IDP camps; the IDP camps are populated by Eastarians who are fleeing from areas of frequent GAF-ENLF combat operations, typically from rural villages on approach routes to mines and ENLF concentration areas. The IDP camps are preferred recruiting grounds as this does not interfere with agricultural production in North Eri. However, it does undermine ENLF popularity in the IDP camps.

ENLF bases are reported to be in the difficult terrain north of the Nicada – Qanabi – Dafari axis. These areas also act as their training areas. The group remains strong enough to control most secondary routes in North Eri, with the exception of the Nicada to Dafari axis, which is regularly patrolled by the GAF. However, even this route is not believed to be free of ENLF influence by night and it is well understood that the ENLF has the capability to close the route, particularly to the north of Qanabi where its influence is strongest (the difficult ground north of Qanabi is a known ENLF consolidation area).

The ENLF has contact with local GAF commanders and there are rumours that the group pays these commanders not to enter certain ENLF strongholds. The ENLF has a back channel to the government of Eastland and to the government of Garland, but neither of these governments consider the ENLF to be a viable partner going forward. Indeed, the GAF and the ENLF remain in a state of war, with no ceasefire of any kind in place. The GAF still maintains a Battalion-sized presence in Nicada and company-sized bases in both Qanabi and Dahari. The GAF also irregularly patrols the MSRs throughout North Eri, but generally confines itself to urban areas.

The ENLF approach continues to be limited to guerilla raids on isolated GAF bases, and ambushes of GAF convoys. It generally permits humanitarian actors to do their work but extorts money and goods from them at food/service delivery points. To date, the ENLF has tolerated the presence of international forces throughout North Eri, on the understanding that these forces do not interfere with its ability to recruit, raise money, and operate.

The group has an exceptional ability to operate over terrain denied to conventional forces, moving easily across forests and bodies of water, and is capable of self-sustaining in all types of terrain. The group has sympathizers throughout North Eri, but does not have the full support of all elements of the Eastarian community, many of whom just want to live a peaceful life. Moreover, the Dotan consider the ENLF to be an existential threat and only move outside of urban areas with an Eastarian friend or with the support and protection of the GAF.

The local IDP population does not always consider that the group acts in their best interests. To his credit, Joseph Le Pew understands that his group will not survive without local support, and he is using a social media messaging campaign to reach the local community. Under his guidance, the ENLF has also started outreach programs to local community leaders, and has punished some of its local

commanders who have overstepped in their mistreatment of the local population. The ENLF also uses a free pamphlet, which appears twice per month to keep the local population informed of its activities and objectives.

The ENLF has links to the Anti-Western fighters, but only because it trades with the latter. The two groups do not have a shared ideological platform, and the ENLF has never used suicide bombers. However, the group does have some asymmetric capabilities and has been known to use command wire detonated IEDs during ambushes. The group has also used VBIEDs to initiate larger attacks, but has never employed an SVBIED.

Generally, the ENLF operates at something between section and platoon-minus strength, although on two occasions in 2012 the group launched a company-sized attack. However, observers noted that this attack was poorly coordinated, and it sustained heavy losses. It is worth noting that heavy losses do not impact the ENLF's motivation. Indeed, its soldiers are secessionist zealots, most of whom are willing to die for their cause ('to join with their Eastland brothers'). It is important to note that the ENLF has historically recruited widely among the female population of North Eri, finding that they are adept planners, and intelligence operatives. However, female cadres have also been seen at the frontline, often used in ambushes against the GAF, which is often surprised to see women in frontline roles.

The group communicates using mobile phone between HQ locations, and HF radio to reach more remote locations. The group is also set up to use runners, the local population, mobile phone (WhatsApp), social media, and radio during unconventional operations.

The group's soldiers are armed with AK 47s and grenades, and each section of men carries two RPG-7 launchers. Each platoon-sized body of men has an indirect fire capability (60mm Mortars), and there is evidence that it retains an 81mm Mortar capability, which is sometimes deployed with a platoon-sized group. Each section of men moves on a Technical Vehicle (typically a soft skinned Toyota Hilux), some of which has a HMG mounted. The group has no armour, and a limited number of BMP-type APCs. The group has no functioning artillery capability.

The ENLF has used both anti-tank mines and anti-personnel mines to defend against GAF incursions.

The group has an anti-tank capability, but it is limited to RPGs and recoilless rifles.

The ENLF has no known anti-air capability, but has used RPGs, HMGs and other direct fire weapons to engage GAF helicopters in the past.

Threat Profile - Eriyan Independence Movement Front (EIMF)

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Over time, the ENLF became more powerful, benefitting greatly from the Garland invasion of Eastland in 1988. The invasion prompted Eastland to channel money, weapons, and experienced soldiers to the ENLF, which was then expected to attack GAF land lines of communications to Eastland. The ENLF readily complied and used its superior knowledge of the local terrain to great effect, eventually forcing the GAF to route supplies overland through North East province, or along the Nicada-Qanabi axis, the only road the government retained control of throughout the war.

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At the time, John Sparrow felt the loss of that road – and its border crossing point – was justified, considering that it meant a bloodless division of the ENLF.

Throughout the 1990s and until 2012, the EIMF continued to resist GAF encroachment into both North and South Eri, preventing the extension of Garland state authority beyond the main urban centres, and maintaining de-facto local control of security for mining concessions. This led to a live and let live dynamic between local GAF units and the EIMF, which was careful to share some of the spoils with local GAF commanders and Dotan politicians; it is worth noting that these GAF commanders and politicians also benefitted financially from the central government by raising ‘ghost units’ of Eastarian locals, and claiming their pay. On occasion, the central Garland government ordered crackdowns against the EIMF, during which times the group retreated into the mountains and forests, emerging at night to attack GAF units.

Over time, EIMF control of the mines and of the border with Eastland allowed it to procure more advanced weapons and communications systems, better training for its personnel and, despite its unwillingness to join Eastland, strong links with Eastland officials, who by 2012 could see that the international community would not countenance its annexation of either South or North Eri.

However, this relative calm was shattered by the 2012 coup. The coup was planned and executed by the Eastarian NCOs and aimed to topple the Government of Garland. At that time, both the ENLF and the EIMF saw this as an opportunity to realise their respective political ambitions and joined the mutinying GAF personnel. The coup was quickly put down and, after a period of GAF consolidation, it was deployed to both North and South Eri to defeat the ENLF and the EIMF on the battlefield. From 2012 to 2015, the GAF reasserted control of all key urban areas and lines of communications, ceding the forests and hills to the ENLF and EIMF rebels.

In 2012, the EIMF attempted to meet the GAF on the conventional battlefield, but suffered heavy losses, despite some successes at Company level. The GAF was able to quickly reinforce and replace its losses, but the EIMF suffered as it did not have a cadre of trained personnel to take the place of those lost. As a result, from 2013, the EIMF moved to the hills and forests, from which they engaged the GAF, disrupting their logistics route, and restricting its areas of influence to the major towns. Essentially, the conflict was in a mutually hurting stalemate from about mid-2014 through to the ceasefire.

It was at this time that John Sparrow realised that it was in his interests to come to a settlement with the government of Garland, lest the ENLF manage to do it first. The government of Garland, with its foreign currency reserves dwindling, largely as a result of reduced economic activity in the Eris, was also keen to do business. The subsequent Garland – EIMF ceasefire agreement worked for both sides. The GAF agreed to vacate all of South Eri, and to a revenue sharing agreement for the mines in the area. It was also agreed that the EIMF would have control of border crossing points between South Eri and Eastland, with taxes and tariffs collected being split between the Government and the EIMF. Once again, the EIMF was in position to re-arm and strengthen.

Since 2015, the EIMF has been pushing north towards the NICADIA – QANABI axis, and some commentators suggest that it is only a matter of time before the group attempts to take control of North Eri to increase its leverage with both Eastland and Garland. Indeed, John Sparrow reportedly believes that if he controls all eastern Garland, the EIMF may be granted even greater autonomy. However, it is important to note that the ENLF remains a viable force in North Eri and that the GAF would also be expected to resist further EIMF expansion.

Reluctant to cede control of the Eris to the EIMF, the Government of Garland has asked that the UN launch a DDR program in South Eri. The EIMF has stated that it will not engage in any DDR program until it is granted full autonomy in areas that it controls. The EIMF has also stated that because South Eri is under its full control, and because it is not a party to the SOFA between UNHQ and Garland, it will not countenance the presence of the UN in its AOR. The EIMF had the same attitude to the 7th Continent Force, which was reduced to sending SOF patrols into the area for reconnaissance purposes only.

Recent and Significant Activity

Between January and March of 2018, the 7th Continent Force reports indicate that EIMF patrols, up to platoon sized, were frequently operating along the northern reaches of the Walesi – Nicada axis. Source reported to the 7th CF that these movements were facilitated by the GAF; the 7th CF assessment was that the GAF would prefer to see the EIMF move into ENLF-controlled territory in order to defeat the ‘near enemy’.

In April 2018, local sources reporting to the 7th CF indicate that the EIMF had sent special forces units into the area surrounding Dafari, NFDK.

In June 2018, there was a stand-off between EIMF and ENLF units on the Qanabi-Dafari axis. The stand-off took place late at night, and was only resolved thanks to a personal phone call made from a high-level EIMF commander to the Joseph Le Pew, who happened to be an old comrade in arms; the EIMF commander apologised for the incursion into ENLF territory, claiming it was a navigation error by a junior officer.

Throughout summer 2018, locals report seeing small groups of EIMF personnel operating north of Dafari. The areas mentioned in reporting were IVO the gold mine, and IVO the border crossing point into Eastland.

From June to Sep 2018, the UN reports seeing an increasing number of ENLF patrols at irregular hours along the Nicada – Dafari axis, and a strengthening of their border crossing and gold mine point guards.

Group Profile

The EIMF generates significant funds from the provision of security services at mines (Cobalt, Tantalum, Gold and Nickel) dotted across South Eri. Security is provided on site, and for the transport of the minerals to state capital. The group is also believed to siphon off some resources for transportation to Eastland via the Byra border crossing point. These activities directly support the payment of approximately 500 of its 2-3000 soldiers, and indirectly supports the local economy. The revenues that the group accrues for the illicit movement of minerals to Eastland total approximately 500,000 USD per month and facilitates the payment of the rest of its soldiers, their training, and the procurement of new arms and munitions.

Considering South Eri has no Garland state presence, the EIMF also deploys its soldiers (approximately 10 in each major urban area) in a paramilitary role to keep the peace. It is worth noting that female cadres often lead in this paramilitary role, acting as a vital link to the local population. There have been discussions with state-level interlocutors to ascertain whether Garland could provide the EIMF with funds to create a lightly armed police force to maintain security in urban areas. However, it is uncertain this will happen as the Government is concerned that to do so would be to permanently cede control of South Eri to the EIMF. EIMF leadership is concerned that using its soldiers in this role reduces their combat effectiveness and, as a result, only its oldest soldiers, commanded by female officers, are used to provide urban security.

The EIMF has no difficulty recruiting soldiers as a result of its ability to pay a relatively high monthly salary of approximately 200 USD. The group recruits almost exclusively from the local population, but there has been some information (dating from late 2017) that the group is also recruiting from the southern part of North Eri.

In order to maintain its ability to pay its soldiers and to generate revenue through taxes and tariffs, the EIMF maintains good relationships with political figures from both Garland and Eastland, and with local military leaders on both sides of the border. The EIMF's generally good financial position means that it encourages rather than stifles local economic activity. All this means that the group maintains a high popularity rating with the local population and has good relations with key leaders from all ethnic groups in South Eri. Indeed, the EIMF has a relatively well-developed propaganda arm and broadcasts pro-EIMF/pro-secessionist messaging on FM radio from Byra. The group also publishes a weekly pamphlet, which is handed out free of charge at markets in urban areas.

Despite its guerrilla antecedents, the group has developed a more hierarchical structure, facilitated by the lack of military pressure from the GAF. Accordingly, the group maintains what is roughly recognisable as six Battalion areas of operational responsibility, centred on each major urban area in South Eri. It has one special forces Battalion which is known to operate in and around Walesi. This Battalion comprises of some of its most experienced personnel. This Battalion is tasked with securing the largely undefined region between ENLF and EIMF control. As a result of its good relationship with the GAF and with the Government of Garland, the EIMF uses a central training area, located north of Turus; this area, comprising a mixture of wetland, forests, and hills is considered ideal for inexperienced troops. More advanced SOF training takes place in the difficult terrain north of Byra.

Generally, the EIMF trains to fight at Company level, incorporating indirect fire (to 81mm Mortar level) and heavy machine guns. However, John Sparrow, recognising the possibility of future GAF operations in South Eri, has insisted that all personnel be trained to operate independently at section to platoon-level in an unconventional manner. It is understood that the group holds an annual exercise simulating a large-scale GAF invasion, overrunning its bases and disrupting its C2 structures. Whilst using its conventional structure the group communicates using e-mail and mobile phone between HQ locations, fixed line communications in and around urban areas and its mining interests, and HF radio to reach more remote locations.

The group is also set up to use runners, the local population, mobile phone (WhatsApp), social media, and radio during unconventional operations.

To date, there have been no recorded incidents of the EIMF using suicide bombers on operations, despite unsubstantiated rumours of links to the Anti-Western Fighters, but it is understood that it has the capability to remotely detonate mines using radio and command wires.

The group's normal soldiers are armed with AK 47s and grenades, and each section of men carries two RPG-7 launchers. Each platoon has an indirect fire capability (60mm Mortars), and at company level there is an 81mm Mortar team. Each section of men moves on a Technical Vehicle (typically a soft skinned Toyota Hilux), and each platoon as at least one Hilux that has a HMG mounted. The group is known to have a small number (no more than 20) of BMP-1s, which are generally thought to be held in reserve. These vehicles and a small number (no more than 10) of T54-55 MBTs were captured from GAF bases in 2012. The EIMF can operate them, but their state of repair is unknown. It is also believed that their combat utility is questionable in the heavily forested terrain of South Eri. The EIMF has a well-developed indirect fire capability, primarily from light and medium mortars, but is also known to have captured at least 10 2S1 self-propelled artillery systems from the GAF. Once again, little is known about their state of repair, or of the group's ability to maintain them.

The EIMF has used both anti-tank mines and anti-personnel mines to defend against GAF incursions.

The group has an anti-tank capability and photos taken from social media indicate that it now has access to Javelin ATGMs, probably supplied by Eastland, and recoilless rifles. However, the Javelin has never been used in EIMF operations.

The EIMF has no known anti-air capability, but has used RPGs, HMGs and their limited stock of ZSU-234 to engage GAF helicopters in the past.

Threat Profile - Anti-Western Fighters (AWF)

Background and Overview

The UN has formally listed the AWF as a terrorist group. It is led by the young, charismatic leader, Sebastian Nazari (currently believed to reside in Northland, NFDK), who framed the philosophy of the group as self-determination and equal rights, achieved by force. Nazari, and the AWF, believe that Garland needs to be purified of modern values and innovations, and follow a more traditional path. As such, Nazari and his followers oppose the spread of Western/colonial secular values such as democracy, and those aspects of Western/colonial learning. The AWF is driven by a firm belief that their struggle is a divine cause, and that the Dotan sold their ancient ways and live in a false culture that requires cleansing. The AWF abhors any manifestation of external influence, including large international organisations. Indeed, the 7th CF considered the AWF a threat group.

The AWF came into being in late 2004 after a highly contagious flu-like virus struck North and North East Provinces. At that time there was a significant Abu population in this area, which had been moved to the area to work in the highly profitable lumber industry; a significant number of Northland refugees also moved to the area to work in this industry. However, despite having worked in the area for more than 25 years, these workers had no provincial voting rights, and very limited access to education and other basic services. The onset of the virus, and the concurrent drop in the price of lumber led to a large number of deaths among the ‘guest worker’ population and very high unemployment. With no place to move to, and no government support, including health support, the population slowly turned on the government of Garland. However, at that time, nascent uprisings against the GAF were easily suppressed and the problem was ignored at the strategic level; the government of Garland had more pressing concerns in the Eris.

In late 2004, Nazari began delivering a series of speeches to growing crowds of guest workers, blaming their situation on western-style governance and adherence to an externally imposed system or rules and regulations. Nazari also wrote pamphlets criticizing the manner in which the government of Garland copied colonial traditions and rules, claiming that Garland has simply replaced one ruling elite with another. Over time, the AWF emerged as an organized group, arming itself by raiding isolated GAF posts, and building its military know-how through its links with IK. The GAF focus on the Eris (the ENLF and the EIMF) allowed the group the space and time to grow, culminating in significant armed resistance to the GAF.

From 2005 until late 2008, the AWF engaged in a series of targeted assassinations, intimidation of government officials, and occasional attacks on small GAF outposts or lightly guarded convoys, facilitated by excellent links within the migrant worker community. This activity continued until late 2014, but little was achieved for the local population.

The group is understood to have a decentralized command structure, taking operational guidance from Nazari remotely (via recordings, sermons, and pamphlets), or from a small number of trusted aides who are unknown to the security services. The AWF area of operations is throughout the North-East and North Provinces, where it operates a series of Active Service Units; the actions of these ASUs are not very coordinated, though each has an approximate area of control. The ASUs appear to operate with a certain degree of independence, with each attempting to outdo the other with the relative daring of their operations. It is understood that Nazari only provides broad target sets, rather than issuing orders or controlling operations directly. The AWF auxiliary support network extends into the North-East Province and across the border into Northland. Operational cells seem to be formed through friends and family, which makes detection by counter terrorism units difficult. It is likely recruits come from the refugees from the ongoing civil war in Northland.

Nizari has raised funds through donations from within the Abu/Northarian expatriate community in the North and North-West Provinces. It has also been alleged that Nizari received funds from

government officials and the pro-government business community in Northland in return for disrupting the Northland rebel effort in Garland, and by disrupting GAF attempts to support these rebel groups (Garland is reliably reported to support anti-government elements in Northland).

Evidenced by the type of operations its conducts, AWF ASUs are equipped with a range of small-arms, including AK-series assault rifles, and heavier infantry weapons like general-purpose machine-guns (GPMG) and rocket-propelled grenade launchers (RPGs). Such weapons are readily available on the regional black market, and the AWF are heavily involved in regional smuggling networks. Although it is understood that neither the ENLF or the Linohas have allowed their personnel to have contact with the AWF, it is understood that men operating at lower levels for both groups have supplied middlemen with advanced weaponry without verifying their end-user.

In 2015, the AWF detonated their first Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) and Suicide VBIED (SVBIED). It is believed that the technical know-how required to make and deploy such devices came from IK fighters, recently returned from the Civil War on the 6th Continent. The AWF deployed these VBIEDs in every increasing numbers, including into regional capitals.

This led to a significant GAF-led Counter Terror campaign, facilitated by the GAF-EIMF secession of hostilities agreement. This almost wiped the AWF out, but the Government of Garland was highly criticized for alleged human rights abuses throughout the counter terror campaign.

Despite the success of its CT campaign, the Government of Garland failed to follow it up with the extension of state services to the migrant community; there was no build part of the campaign. This meant that by 2016 AWF recruits were even more radicalized than had been the case in the past.

It is understood that Nazari has instructed the AWF to lay low, to strengthen its networks and to prepare for a future battle with the GAF. It is also suspected that some Abu militants from the AWF have migrated to the Westland border region to join the IK with the express intention of gaining military experience. Smaller GAF units continue to be targeted and wealthy Dotan businessmen and families are targets for intimidation. The group also continues to assassinate symbols of government and international influence, including shutting down schools teaching what is considered to be western philosophies.

Overall, the 7th CF U2 briefed UNMIG that the AWF have achieved significant operational capability and that the current relative détente is not expected to last. Currently, there are vast tracts of North and North East province that the GAF will only enter in Company plus strength.

Recent and Significant Activity

Jan to March 2015: the AWF explodes at least 10 VBIEDs, and three SVBIEDs in the regional capitals of North and North East provinces.

April to November 2015: large-scale GAF CT operation against the AWF.

Jan 2016: Nazari issues communique to AWF ASUs advising them to ‘show strategic patience’, counselling that ‘the GAF has watches, but we have time – generations if necessary’.

2018

Jan: The AWF commences a social media campaign urging local resistance to the 7CF.

Mar-Apr: The AWF organizes demonstrations against the presence of the 7CF after a woman is killed in a traffic accident by a 7CF vehicle.

Jul: The AWF promises resistance to the UN Force which it describes as ‘neo-colonial’. No further details were offered as to the form of such resistance.

Aug to Sep 18: UNMMIG reports incidents where their convoys were followed.

Oct 18: UNMMIG reports instances of the AWF recruiting in POC sites.

Oct 18: There have been unconfirmed reports that AWF has formalized links with extremist groups operating in UNMMIG Sector West.

Threat Profile - Imuna Kakuatan (IK)

Background and Overview

The roots of IK lie in the late 1980s during a period of prolonged unrest in the neighboring country Westland. In late 1985, members of Abu clans of the Imuna tribe led an insurgency against the Westland Government. During the Westland campaign against the insurgency, many of the rebels fled across the border into Garland. The group went on to launch sustained offensives against the Westland Armed Forces (WAF) from Garland's remote west province throughout 1986 and 1987; however, their offensives were not successful and were suppressed by the WAF. At that time the group was known as the Abu Popular Front for the Liberation of Imuna lands in Westland (APFLIW). At its peak, the APFLIW numbered approximately 3000 rebel fighters, but the group's heterogeneous character meant that the Government of Westland (GoW) had little difficulty in buying some of the more powerful clans off, destroying others. Indeed, only those that fled to Garland were in a position to keep the insurgency alive. By 1987, the majority of the Imuna signed a peace agreement with the GoW, which required them to give up their heavy weapons and integrate into the WAF. However, the GoW did not trust these reconciled Imuna and deployed them far from the border area. Those that did not reconcile chose to remain operational, organizing in groups straddling the Westland-Garland border.

The rebels that stayed in Garland or refused to reconcile formed Imuna Kakuatan (IK) and subsequently adopted terrorist tactics, recognizing the engaging conventional forces head-on was destined to fail; Kakuatan is the Imuna word for God.

The original goal of the Imuna rebels was to overthrow the Government of Westland. However, these secular aims were forgotten in the aftermath of the 1987 peace agreement, and IK limits its objectives to controlling the areas it currently occupies, and applying its ideology (religious) there. The group claims that its long-term goal is to replace the governments of Westland and Garland with a theocracy, but this is generally considered impossible.

From 1987 until late 1990, IK had space and time to grow as an armed group, largely due to the GAF's involvement in the Garland-Eastland war (1988-1990). It used this time well, moving into small urban areas along routes running from Garland to Westland, and taking control of them. This allowed to create links to local businessmen, to extort money from commercial ventures, and to engage in smuggling. This period of relative quiet allowed the group to raise significant funds, facilitating the purchase of arms and ammunition; IK is known to have purchased weapons from corrupt officers of both the GAF and the WAF, and is also known to have stolen weapons from Westland DDR sites.

During the 1990s, the group was wary of a war-fighting capability of the GAF, and so focused its efforts on proselytization to build local support, on smuggling, and on creating networks within the local population; it was largely successful in its efforts. Its plan to spread their strict interpretation of the Imuna religion was particularly successful among the disenfranchised Abu youth living in refugee camps close the Westland border (these refugees fled Westland during the original Imuna-WAF conflict), and in other Abu camps. The group also created and maintains links to Dotan and Eastarian traders, who use the groups to smuggle goods from Westland to Eastland and along the reverse route.

By 2000, IK had approximately 1200 men operating in between 4 and 6 Brigades or 'Katibats'. Its leadership is unknown, but is known to have a decentralized command structure, with each Katibat named after a famous fighter; it remains unclear if these men are dead or alive. Today, the areas over which it has control varies according to military operations conducted by the Garland Armed Forces, but extends from eastern Westland into western Garland, and the GAF cannot patrol along the border with anything less than platoon strength.

Throughout the early 2000s, the GAF launched a series of sporadic operations against IK. These operations were launched not because the Government of Garland was concerned that IK pose a

strategic threat, but because the weaker Government of Westland (GoW) was concerned at a growth in pro-IK sentiment in the eastern part of the country; simply put, the GoW wanted to destroy the group, lest it grew into a more significant threat in the long term. Indeed, IK did strengthen and now poses a far more significant threat to both the GoW and to the GoG. However, the threat remains at the tactical level.

Most recently (2010-2016) IK sent many of its fighters to a country in the 7th Continent where a bitter ideological Civil war is being fought. In the face of extreme pressure from a sustained combined arms offensive by western forces on the 7th Continent, IK and aligned forces were defeated. While many IK fighters were killed, hundreds returned to Westland and to Garland. Some of these fighters returned further radicalized, and all returned with combat experience, and training. Indeed, from 2014 onwards, the typical IK small scale, low-intensity assaults and criminal activities, were replaced by attacks of a growing sophistication. These attacks incorporated complex attack methodologies, including the use of both IEDs, PBIEDs and (S)VBIEDs; all types of IEDs can be either remotely or command wire detonated.

The group is also known to have access to a wide variety of small arms, RPGs, mines (used to make the IEDs), and to have a low-level indirect fire capability. The group uses modified 4x4 ATVs to move, many that have artisanal armor plating, and most with mounted HMGs.

The group remains generally popular among the local population, but its brutality against unsupportive sections of the population means that its popularity among mainstream Abu has waned; this trend became more pronounced in the years after 2010.

Recent and Significant Activity

On 10 February 2012, an unknown number of people were killed or wounded when suspected Imuna Kakuatan militants attacked a village (mixed ethnicity) in Garland, approximately 15 km east of the border with Westland.

On 6 June 2012, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that at least 20 attacks had been carried out by the IK in the Westland border area of Garland's Central Province and Northland since the beginning of the year, leaving one person dead, 17 others kidnapped, and displacing several thousand people.

2013

On 30 March 2013, the UNHCR confirmed that two people had been killed in attacks by IK militants in the Central Province, and four people had been killed in the West Province since the start of 2013.

On 20 May 2013, the Garland Police confirmed that a suspected senior IK commander had been arrested during a counter-terrorism operation.

2014

On 3 September 2014, 11 people were wounded and 25 others were injured when IK militants raided five border villages of West Province. This precipitated the first of several internal population displacements.

On 28 September 2014, three people were killed and 13 others were abducted when IK launched an attack near a western border town of West Province.

On 6 October 2014, the Garland military force announced that it had resumed active joint operations with WAF against the IK and had killed 100 suspected militants.

On 10 November 2014, a soldier was killed and six others were wounded, including one UN local national staff, when IK militants ambushed an army convoy near the tri-border of Garland (Central Province), Northland and Westland.

Reliable intelligence reports suggest that members of the group travelled to the 7th Continent to participate in a civil conflict.

2015

On 17 May 2015, a VBIED was detonated at a Westland border police checkpoint on the road leading to Garland's Central Provincial capital.

2016

On 6 July 2016, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) released a report in which it alleged that the IK killed and injured 26 civilians and abducted 26 others, including 10 children, in 44 separate attacks along the West and Central Provincial border areas with Westland during 2014-2016.

Members of IK that had been fighting in the 7th Continent begin to return to Westland as western forces secure battlefield victory in the fight against terrorism.

2017

On 23 April 2017, GAF, in coordination with Westland counter terrorism forces, launched a 3-week anti-terror campaign in the desert area of eastern Westland and Garland's West Province. 18 IK fighters were killed on the Garland side of the border. No prisoners were reported taken, which resulted in a demand for an investigation by OHCHR.

On 9 June 2017, a VBIED was detonated at the Garland Central Province border check point with Westland. The VBIED detonated prior to reaching its target.

From Jun to Dec 2017, IK carried out several suicide operations against the GAF along the border with Westland.

Reports indicate the presence of IK religious figures and fighters in villages close to the border with Garland, preaching to the local population and – in some cases – intimidating them in an effort to change their ideological outlook.

In Nov 17, reports indicate that IK attempted to forcibly recruit members of the local population in western Garland and eastern Westland, leading to large population movements to UNHCR-run IDP camps in Garland.

On 17 Dec 2017, IK launched a complex suicide attack on a GAF base in central province of Garland.

2018

From Jan to Jun 17, reports indicate that IK continued to recruit among local villages in both central and west province.

Reports also indicate that some AWF fighters may have travelled to these provinces to benefit from IK training.

The 7th Continent Force actively engaged several IK convoys with air power.

IK responded with a campaign of sniping against the 7th Continent Forces, and launched several IED attacks on their convoys.

In Jun 18, Source (F6) reports that IK plans to attack UN forces in order to keep them out of IK operating areas. IK is reportedly concerned that a long-term presence may hamper its fund-raising and recruitment efforts, as well as undermining its safe havens for attacks against both the government of Westland, and the Garland Armed Forces.

Jul 18: there were credible reports that IK was testing explosives in the border area.

Aug 18: UNDSS publish a threat warning indicating that a UN convoy would be attacked on a resupply route. Attack methodology was unknown.

Sep 18: Reports emerge indicating that IK is now recruiting at POC sites in Garland.

Reports emerge (unverified) that IK has formalized its links with the AWF.

Threat Profile - Linohas

Background and Overview

In ancient Eastarian, the word 'Linoha' means self-preservation, but the intent of this organized criminal group is not limited to such activities. Founded after Garland achieved its independence from Eastland in 1983, the group's raison d'être is generating profit from a range of illegal activities. Its leader, Jon Mkali, like most of its members is a former member of the Eastland Armed Forces (EAF), who left after the Eastland government, lacking funds due the loss of Garland's revenues, reduced pay by 50% across the public sector.

Jon Mkali had been a Colonel in the EAF, with responsibility for the tri-border area between Garland, Northland and Eastland. He commanded a Brigade of 1500 men and knew the local population and terrain very well. Facing the loss of his salary – and his pension benefits – Mkali gathered a group of his most loyal subordinate officers, NCOs, and soldiers and deserted. The group initially numbered approximately 100 men, who had armed themselves with small arms, RPGs, and sniper rifles.

At the time, the EAF was concerned that Mkali's desertion would encourage others in the EAF to follow suit and, as such, did not pursue him or his men, giving Mkali time to build small bases in the tri-village border area. The Eastland recession continued during the years from 1983 to 1988, which allowed Mkali to recruit other equally disaffected EAF personnel to his Linoha banner; by now the term Linoha was synonymous with smuggling (people, drugs, and weapons), and violence.

The Linohas steady growth in power and influence was also a product of Mkali's links to his former security force networks, which he used to gather intelligence on EAF patrol routes. This allowed him to move Linoha goods along Eastland MSRs from the tri-border area to the coast. Smuggling routes moved from Northland and Garland into Eastland and in the other direction. The Linohas moved drugs and trafficked women to and from IDP camps and other urban areas in Northland and to North Province in Eastland. The Linohas also attempted to move into the Eris, but were unable to do so due to the strength of the ENLF; in late 1986, several Linoha convoys into the Eris were ambushed as they moved from Sunia and Ganush towards Conville and tens of Linohas were killed. As a result of this Mkali decided that his group would not operate in the Eri's, and pursued a strategy of appeasement with the ENLF that saw the Linohas launder money and move arms for the group. It is understood that Mkali and Joseph Le Pew developed something approaching a friendship.

Over time, the Linohas became the strongest OCG in Eastland, moving in on the territory of other criminal gangs and taking over their territory. Indeed, by 1987, the Linohas had monthly revenues of more than one million USD. However, it was the 1988-1990 Garland-Eastland war that saw the Linohas reach the peak of their powers. During the war, the EAF needed a guerilla group to move money and arms to the ENLF in a clandestine manner. The EAF wanted to use the ENLF as a 'fifth column' against the Garland Armed Forces (GAF), by increasing instability in North and South Eri, thereby forcing the GAF to deploy there; the rationale was that any GAF soldier deployed to the Eris could not be deployed against the EAF. The Linohas, with pre-existing links to ENLF leadership, and with in-depth knowledge of hidden border crossing points, were perfectly placed to act as a go-between.

Naturally, co-operation of this kind led to a strengthening of Linoha-EAF links at the tactical and operational levels, and allowed the Linohas to make alliances with Eastland intelligence services. This period saw Linoha power and influence steadily increase and also gave them access to new and more sophisticated weaponry, including Heavy Machine Guns, Mortars, and armoured vehicles; these vehicles were meant to go to the ENLF – and most did – but the Linohas kept some as a 'tax'.

After the war ended in 1990, the Linohas were the de-facto power in the tri-border area and controlled most criminal activity in Eastland. Their power has only increased since then, despite occasional EAF forays into their territory ahead of elections in order to make the Eastland government look like it is 'doing

something' to combat organized criminal activity. It is worth noting that Eastland government figures and many in the security services consider the Linohas to be a strategic asset, albeit one with an adverse reputational impact, should war with Garland break out once more.

Despite his advancing age (it is thought he is 74), Jon Mkali continues to control the group through his most trusted lieutenants – generally those that deserted with him from his former EAF unit. He is known to be cunning and brutal in equal parts. He understands that instability in eastern Garland and official Eastland concerns of renewed war with Garland allows his group to prosper. As such, it is rumoured that the Linohas sometimes attack GAF posts dressed as EAF and ENLF personnel. It is also believed that his men have raided EAF border posts dressed as Garland military personnel. All this is done to maintain an air of fragility and tension along the Garland – Eastland border.

Mkali continues to have links with the ENLF, but has no dealings with the EIMF. The ENLF consider the Linohas to be a useful source of revenue and are known to impose a tax on Linohas operating in North Province of Garland, and on trucks moving through ENLF territory. However, the ENLF is known to crackdown on drug dealing and prostitution in areas under its control. Understanding that the ENLF could disrupt Linoha operations, Mkali rarely responds to these occasional provocations; North province (specifically Ashra and Zasa towns) is a useful area for Linoha leadership to take shelter in during EAF operations.

The EIMF does not deal with the Linohas as it considers that any association with the group would tarnish its image, and undermine its nascent relationship with both Eastland and Garland. Indeed, the EIMF does not need to deal with the Linohas, considering its own considerable revenue raising ability and its control of formal and informal border crossing points in South Eri.

The Linoha group is reputed to have some links with Anti-Western Fighters (AWF), but these remain unconfirmed and are probably limited to the Linohas paying taxes rather than fighting the group at its illegal checkpoints further inland. The Linoha leadership is generally thought unwilling to deal with terrorist groups, not because of any moral objections, but because it understands that its greatest threat comes from external counter-terror forces.

The Linohas do not enjoy the support of the local population in either the Garland or Northland border areas, which they sometimes use for shelter. However, the group is generally popular in NE Eastland, where it uses its criminal gains to support local farmers/businesses (buying their produce at market prices), and where its members live and work; after operating in NE Eastland for more than 30 years, its members now have families and extended families living there.

Notwithstanding this support, the group is not popular elsewhere in Eastland. Its leadership does not hesitate to resort to extreme violence and brutality. For example, the Linohas is well known to kill the entire family of those that resist its expansion and of informers. The group will also attack anyone that attempts to interfere with its criminal activity, including key local leaders, vigilante groups, and security forces. For the Linoha cartel, business is business and nothing else matters; the group does not align or identify with any political party or country, although its members remain connected to the EAF.

Recent and Significant Activity

In the first quarter of 2018, Linoha smugglers are reported to have increased its shipment of Coltan from Garland into Eastland. Reporting indicates that the Coltan was provided by the ENLF.

In May 2018, a UN panel of experts' report indicates that the Linohas have expanded activity to Northland, where they reportedly move drugs to local IDP camps. It is also reporting that the group continues to transport people from these camps to both Eastland and Garland. The individuals being trafficked pay up to 1500 USD for transportation, believing they will be moved to the 7th Continent. However, most have their identification papers stolen and end up working on farms as labourers until they pay off 'debt' to the Linohas. Many women are also forced to work as prostitutes. The report concludes that the ENLF does not allow such activity in North Eri, but that trucks carrying people are allowed to move through North Eri after a tax is paid.

In August 2018, the Linoha group is reported to have shipped several consignments of weapons to the ENLF. Reliable reporting indicates that the ENLF is attempting to increase its access to modern weaponry, including commercial off the shelf drones, as it fears encroachment from the EIMF.

Threat Profile

The Linoha cartel controls almost all organized criminal activity in Eastland, but asserts almost complete control of smuggling routes to and from Northland and Garland. However, it cannot act in South Eri and has difficulty operating in North Eri. Its interests range from the trafficking of humans and drugs to prostitution. The group also forces businesses in major Eastland urban areas to pay for protection. Overall, the group has significant revenues, with profits thought to exceed one million USD per month. There is more than enough for the group to pay its personnel, and to attract new soldiers from elite EAF units when it needs to replenish its ranks.

The group enjoys links with the Eastland intelligence services and with the Eastland security forces and politicians, some of whom consider the Linohas a strategic defensive asset. It also co-operates with some Northland Armed Forces' commanders and with the ENLF.

The Linohas are armed with a variety of weapons, including AK47s, Sniper Rifles, modern anti-tank weapons, RPGs, and has access to Technical Vehicles with mounted HMGs. It has no anti-air capability. The group also has personnel that can operate fast boats, which allows it to operate in Eastland's coastal waters and affords the group a limited riverine capability. The group can operate in terrain denied to conventional forces and has significant expertise in clandestine operations. Its personnel are all trained military personnel, most of whom have combat experience. As one would expect with such personnel, it has a hierarchical command structure and each of its 'Active Service Units' is assigned a specific AOR. Notwithstanding this hierarchical command structure, all ASUs have a detachment of former special forces personnel, expert in small unit operations, which are meant to lead the ASUs in a decentralized manner during intense periods of EAF operations against the group.

When the Linoha group must take action, it does so with extreme violence, understanding that fear is an effective way to generate loyalty, respect, and silence. The group has been known, for example, to cut off the entrances and exits to local villages while exacting punishments on transgressors, often executing entire families with the whole village expected to watch.