

Scoping exercise

Special forces



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Section I

Non-governmental organisations

Analyst's note: There are a very limited number of NGOs undertaking research or advocacy work on special operations forces (SOF), and almost all of these are based in the United States. Even organisations that do cover special forces usually limit their scope to occasional research papers or media commentary. This is most likely due to a lack of access to classified information and a lack of critical networks within the close-knit special operations community. Indeed, many of the individuals who write on the topic are ex-military or have close links to military establishments.

Actively engaged organisations

Organisation	Afghanistan Analysts Network
Location	Kabul, Afghanistan
Website	www.aan-afghanistan.com
Relevant URL(s)	http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2502
The Afghanistan Analysts Network features detailed research and commentary by Kate Clark on the use of special operations forces in Afghanistan and what it means for the war, human rights, accountability and Afghan sovereignty.	

Organisation	American Enterprise Institute
Location	Washington DC, United States
Website	www.aei.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.aei.org/media/foreign-and-defense-policy/defense/eaglen-on-special-forces-defense-cuts/ http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy/defense/red-tape-no-excuse-for-giving-special-ops-autonomy/ http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy/defense/green-berets-value-is-proven-in-war-on-drugs/
Mackenzie Eaglen, resident fellow in security studies at AEI, has published a number of commentaries on US special forces and their operations in the Middle East and Latin America. His commentary is focused on domestic debate around force composition and the implications of spending cutbacks. Note, although committed to non-partisan analysis, AEI does have a strong conservative bent.	

Organisation	Amnesty International USA
Location	New York, United States
Website	www.amnesty.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/afghanistan-leak-exposes-natos-incoherent-civilian-casualty-policy-2010-07-26 http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/kandahar-massacre-international-forces-must-increase-protection-afghan-civilians-2012-03-12 https://www.amnesty.org/pt-br/library/asset/ASA11/002/2010/en/8532dc51-4d91-445c-9445-ebc8399c710b/asa110022010en.pdf
Amnesty International's Afghanistan investigations – focussed on night raids by special operation forces in 2008 – highlighted problems of the unaccountable nature of SOF acting outside the regular chain of command and without following proper rules of engagement. Amnesty's key recommendation was to put most special operations under the regular chain of command.	

Organisation	Atlantic Council
Location	Washington DC, United States
Type	Think tank
Website	www.acus.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.acus.org/natosource/list-nations-special-forces-libya-conflict http://www.acus.org/natosource/nato-building-connectivity-between-special-forces-and-partners http://www.acus.org/content/us-special-forces-mali http://www.acus.org/natosource/nato-inaugurates-new-hq-allied-special-forces http://www.acus.org/natosource/us-special-forces-remain-afghanistan-until-least-2017
Atlantic Council has a number of recent articles on NATO member special forces by Jorge Benitez, director of NATOSource. The council also has coverage of special forces' deployment in Libya, Afghanistan and Mali.	

Organisation	Center for a New American Security
Location	Washington DC, United States
Website	www.cnas.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.cnas.org/specialops http://www.cnas.org/blogs/naturalsecurity/2010/06/us-special-operations-forces-era-natural-security.html http://www.cnas.org/node/4544 http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_To%20Serve%20the%20Nation_Malvesti.pdf http://www.cnas.org/lightfootprints
CNAS has a Special Operations Forces project and has published a number of papers including one on SOF in an era of persistent conflict.	

Organisation	Center for Strategic & International Studies
Location	Washington DC, United States
Website	www.csis.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://csis.org/files/publication/120412_gf_nelson_wise.pdf http://csis.org/blog/eastern-european-defense-review-special-operations-forces-new-opportunity-new-members http://csis.org/publication/implications-2012-defense-strategic-guidance-us-special-operations-forces http://csis.org/multimedia/video-gen-peter-pace-special-operations-forces http://csis.org/blog/risks-associated-increasing-reliance-sof-defense-planning
CSIS has been one of the more active think tanks on special operation forces. See, for example, the work of Rick "Ozzie" Nelson, a non-resident senior associate on the Homeland Security and Counterterrorism programme.	

Other relevant organisations

Organisation	Aspen Institute
Location	Aspen, Colorado and Washington DC, United States
Website	www.aspeninstitute.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.aspeninstitute.org/video/asf-2012-point-spear-interview-admiral-william-mcraven-commander-joint-special-operations http://www.aspeninstitute.org/about/blog/how-us-special-ops-forces-are-fighting-extremism http://www.aspeninstitute.org/news/2011/08/02/aspen-institute-wraps-2011-aspen-security-forum http://www.aspeninstitute.org/video/admiral-eric-olson-aspen-security-forum
Aspen Institute has held a number of forums for top ranking US military officials to discuss issues including special operation forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.	

Organisation	Brookings Institute
Location	Washington DC, United States
Website	www.brookings.edu
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.brookings.edu/events/2013/01/28-mcchrystal-zarqawi http://www.brookings.edu/~media/events/2013/1/28%20mcchrystal%20zarqawi/mcchrystal%20transcript.pdf
Recently held a forum on Joint Special Operations Command pursuit of al-Qaeda in Iraq.	

Organisation	Buffett Center, Northwestern University
Location	Evanston, IL, United States
Website	www.bcics.northwestern.edu
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.bcics.northwestern.edu/documents/workingpapers/Buffett_10-007_McKelvey.pdf
The Buffet Center supported the publication of a paper on the use of special forces in Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan and other countries to track down and eliminate al-Qaeda leaders and militants.	

Organisation	Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments
Location	Washington DC, United States
Website	www.csbaonline.org
Relevant URL(s)	www.csbaonline.org/wp-content/.../02/Congressional-Testimony-QDR.pdf http://www.csbaonline.org/2012/11/28/the-crown-jewels/ http://www.csbaonline.org/2013/02/13/mac-thornberry-congress-must-empower-special-operations/
CSBA produced more thematic special operation forces material before 2010. Current material is primarily focused on domestic national security and expenditure policy.	

Organisation	Centre for Research on Globalization
Location	Montreal, Canada
Website	www.globalresearch.ca
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.globalresearch.ca/syria-chemical-weapons-canadian-special-forces-to-assist-opposition/5315783
The Centre for Research on Globalization carries recent commentary on Canadian special forces assistance to Syrian opposition.	

Organisation	Council on Foreign Relations
Location	New York and Washington DC, United States
Website	www.cfr.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.cfr.org/national-security-and-defense/future-special-operations-forces/p28688 http://blogs.cfr.org/zenko/2012/01/30/guest-post-special-operations-forces-and-the-armys-future/
CFR has republished a number of important works on US special forces. Much of CFR's own commentary on SOF is contained within material on unmanned aerial vehicles.	

Organisation	Eurasianet.org
Location	New York, United States
Website	www.eurasianet.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64736 http://www.eurasianet.org/node/65868 http://www.eurasianet.org/node/61473 http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav091709.shtml
Eurasianet carries a number of articles on US special forces in Central Asia written by staff and freelancers.	

Organisation	Hoover Foundation
Location	Stanford, CA, United States
Website	www.hoover.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.hoover.org/publications/defining-ideas/article/134566 http://www.hoover.org/publications/policy-review/article/111651 http://www.hoover.org/publications/hoover-digest/article/72116
Hoover has a number of ex-military personal writing for the organisation and providing commentary on special forces issues. Their work considers the importance of special operation forces in the US counter-terrorism strategy as deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq.	

Organisation	Human Rights Watch
Location	New York, United States
Website	www.hrw.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.hrw.org/news/2010/03/23/indonesias-special-forces-unit-still-doesnt-respect-human-rights http://www.hrw.org/keywords/indonesian-special-forces
HRW has undertaken work on Indonesia's special forces, Kopassus, and have monitored their actions in Aceh, East Timor and Papua. Although this work primarily covers Indonesia's domestic special forces, Kopassus has been involved in a number of counter-insurgency actions in Papua and the training relationship between United States and Indonesia has been drawn into question.	

Organisation	Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis
Location	Cambridge, MA and Washington DC, United States
Website	www.ifpatest.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.ifpa.org/pdf/SSGkrakowSlides.pdf http://www.ifpa.org/research/researchPages/NSHQ.php
IFPA was active on special forces issues prior to 2010; post 2010, the material published on special operation forces is much more limited.	

Organisation	Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies
Location	New Delhi, India
Website	www.ipcs.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.ipcs.org/article/india/ipcs-debate-targeted-killings-as-a-counter-naxal-strategy-3678.html http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/IB172-Gurmeet-DefenceModernisation.pdf
IPCS original commentary discusses use of domestic special forces and targeted killing to address insurgency groups in India. They have also published syndicated stories on special forces in Pakistan.	

Organisation	International Crisis Group
Location	Brussels, Belgium
Website	www.crisisgroup.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/190%20A%20Force%20in%20Fragments%20-%20Reconstituting%20the%20Afghan%20National%20Army.ashx http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/north-caucasus/221-the-north-caucasus-the-challenges-of-integration-ii-islam-the-insurgency-and-counter-insurgency.aspx
ICG has limited coverage of special forces in Afghanistan and Caucasus.	

Organisation	NATO Watch
Location	Ross-shire, United Kingdom
Website	www.natowatch.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.natowatch.org/node/834 http://www.natowatch.org/node/728
NATO Watch has some commentary on interoperability and coordination of NATO special forces collaborating on joint exercises in international terrorism, piracy and trafficking.	

Organisation	RAND Corporation
Location	Arlington, VA, United States
Website	www.rand.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR1199.html#abstract http://www.rand.org/publications/randreview/issues/rr-08-02/hardshelled.html http://www.rand.org/publications/randreview/issues/RRR-fall97-QDR/sideshow.html
RAND produced policy research paper on improving special operation capabilities within the US Army National Guard (ARNG). Other commentary includes consideration of special force cooperation in Afghanistan and use of drones.	

Organisation	Stimson Center
Location	Washington DC, United States
Website	www.stimson.org
Relevant URL(s)	http://www.stimson.org/images/uploads/research-pdfs/A_New_US_Defense_Strategy_for_a_New_Era.pdf http://www.stimson.org/spotlight/britains-age-of-austerity-an-opportunity-for-european-defense-cooperation/
In November 2012, Stimson published a key policy advice document on US Military modernisation and forward planning which contained a number of comments on the deployment of special forces.	

Section II

Publications

Analyst's note: English-language reports and articles from the stipulated 2010-13 timeframe focussed almost exclusively on US special operations forces; books were predominately of the sensationalist, 'first-hand account' variety. As such, some key publications from outside this timeframe have been included in the following bibliography. The list is not, however, a comprehensive catalogue of SOF-related publications but rather focusses on those related to the concept of remote-control warfare.

Reports

Title	ADP 3-05: Special Operations
Author	-
Publisher	US Army
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/10csDIs
The role of special operations forces within the US Army's operating concept is to <i>Shape</i> operational environments in the countries of consequence, <i>Prevent</i> conflict through the application of special operations and conventional deterrence, and when necessary help <i>Win</i> wars.	

Title	America's Shadow Warriors: Legal Dimensions of Special Forces and the Targeted Warfare
Author	Tara McKelvey
Publisher	Buffett Center for International and Comparative Studies
Year	2010
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/X6Szc5
Barack Obama is escalating an ambitious, covert war, relying on special forces and strikes to track down and eliminate al-Qaeda. Meanwhile, administration officials are attempting to create a legal framework for the expansion of targeted warfare. However, officials, the media and the American public know too little about the successes and consequences of these clandestine operations to make an informed decision about the costs and benefits of such covert actions.	

Title	Counterinsurgency on the Ground in Afghanistan
Author	Jerry Meyerle, Megan Katt and Jim Gavrilis
Publisher	Human Security Gateway
Year	2010
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/YfSC64
<p>Provides a glimpse into what relatively small military units have done to roll back the insurgency in some of the more remote areas of Afghanistan. The focus is on counterinsurgency at the tactical and local levels. Includes 15 vignettes about different units from the US Marines, Army and Special Forces, the British Army and Royal Marines, the Dutch Army and Marines and the Canadian Army. The case studies cover 10 provinces in Afghanistan's south and east.</p>	

Title	Light Footprints: The Future of American Military Intervention
Author	Fernando Lujan
Publisher	Centre for New American Security
Year	2013
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/WXCNAi
<p>Looming budget cuts, ground forces worn down by years of repeated deployments and a range of ever evolving security challenges are quickly making 'light footprint' military interventions a central part of US strategy. Instead of nation building with large, traditional military formations, policymakers are increasingly opting for a combination of air power, special operators, intelligence agents, indigenous armed groups and private contractors, often leveraging relationships with allies and enabling partner militaries to take more active roles.</p> <p>Despite the relative appeal of these less costly forms of military intervention, the light footprint is no panacea. Like any policy option, the strategy has risks, costs and benefits that make it ideally suited for certain security challenges and disastrous for others. For these smaller-scale interventions to be an effective instrument of national policy, civilian and military leaders should make a concerted effort to understand their strategic uses and limitations.</p>	

Title	Special Operations Forces: Future Challenges and Opportunities
Author	Robert Martinage
Publisher	Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments
Year	2008
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/YRoyam
SOF face several challenges, as well as opportunities, in adapting to a future security environment that will likely be dominated by the continuation and possible intensification of violent radicalism, the potential rise of China as a more aggressive military competitor, and the global proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and nuclear weapons, in particular.	

Title	The Future of Special Forces
Author	Rick Nelson and Robert Wise
Publisher	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/YrAh6b
Special forces have steadily risen in the public eye and earned the trust and confidence of US politicians through a series of high-profile direct action missions. While SOF will continue to conduct such missions, the DOD's recent strategic guidance suggests that in the future SOF's traditional competencies in indirect action will be of greater demand and on a global scale.	

Title	The Future of Special Operations: Beyond Kill and Capture
Author	Linda Robinson
Publisher	Foreign Affairs
Year	2012
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Purchase: http://www.foreignaffairs.com/node/135467
With the rise of endless irregular wars playing out in the shadows, special operations have never been more important to US national security. But policymakers and commanders focus too much on dramatic raids and high-tech drone strikes. They need to pay more attention to an even more important task these forces take on: training foreign troops.	

Title	The Year in Special Operations: 2012-2013 Edition
Author	-
Publisher	Defense Media Network
Year	2013
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/JbCYLu

A comprehensive assessment of all major SOF developments over the previous 12 month.

Title	To Serve the Nation: US Special Operations Forces in an Era of Persistent Conflict
Author	Michele L. Malvesti
Publisher	Center for New American Security
Year	2010
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://1.usa.gov/lAAUJu

US special operations forces are experiencing their most extensive use and greatest transformation of the modern era. In playing direct and leading roles in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as in the broader US effort to defeat al-Qaeda and violent extremism across the globe, these forces have become more operationally adept, endowed with more resources and organisational capacity, and are encountering greater demands for their leadership and expertise than ever before. SOF are in the midst of a resurgence, with their core capabilities aligning with the irregular and potentially catastrophic security threats of today's geostrategic environment.

Title	US Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress
Author	-
Publisher	Congressional Research Service
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/jwzV5U

Special operations forces play a significant role in US military operations, and the Obama administration has given US SOF greater responsibility for planning and conducting worldwide counterterrorism operations.

Books

Title	Elite Forces: The World's Most Formidable Secret Armies
Author	Richard M. Bennett
Publisher	Virgin Books
Year	2011
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Purchase: http://amzn.to/14iYM6E
Examines the overlap between elite forces and the hidden worlds of intelligence and counter-terrorism, and takes an objective look at the secret, controversial role of special forces and 'freelancers' in covert operations around the world. Contains over 500 A-Z entries.	

Title	Casting Light on the Shadows: Canadian Perspectives on Special Operations Forces
Author	Bernd Horn and Tony Balasevicius (Eds)
Publisher	Dundurn Group Ltd
Year	2008
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Preview: http://bit.ly/13qzlkk Purchase: http://amzn.to/13qyZKD
A series of essays on SOF-related issues written by individuals with specialised knowledge and expertise in the field. As well as providing a foundation for SOF theory, historical background and evolution, the book also highlights ongoing developments in SOF.	

Title	Choice of Force: Special Operations for Canada
Author	David Last and Bernd Horn (Eds)
Publisher	McGill-Queen's University Press
Year	2005
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Purchase: http://amzn.to/X4s9Xp
Military and academic researchers survey what political and bureaucratic leaders expect of special operations and analyse contemporary operations, new challenges and the factors that will shape Canadian special operations in the coming decades.	

Title	Jane's Special Forces Recognition Guide
Author	Ewen Southby-Tailyour
Publisher	Brassey's (UK) Ltd
Year	2005
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Purchase: http://amzn.to/YCMbV1
Comprehensive guide to the world's special forces and their equipment.	

Title	Masters of Chaos: The Secret History of the Special Forces
Author	Linda Robinson
Publisher	Public Affairs, US
Year	2005
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Preview: http://bit.ly/YRbUs5 Purchase: http://amzn.to/104XcQK
Describes the training, doctrine and methods of US special forces, and recounts their post-Vietnam missions in Panama, El Salvador, Somalia, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq.	

Title	No Easy Day: The Only Firsthand Account of Navy SEAL Mission that Killed Osama bin Laden
Author	Mark Owen with Kevin Maurer
Publisher	Michael Joseph
Year	2012
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Preview: http://bit.ly/16ToT3H Purchase: http://amzn.to/10F1f8u
First-person account of the planning and execution of the US raid to kill Bin Laden.	

Title	Special Operations and Strategy: From World War II to the War on Terrorism
Author	James D. Kiras
Publisher	Routledge
Year	2007
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Preview: http://bit.ly/WT5trN Purchase: http://amzn.to/X9o4C4
The root of effective special operations lies in understanding the relationship existing between moral and material attrition at the strategic level.	

Title	Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan
Author	Leigh Neville
Publisher	Osprey
Year	2008
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Purchase: http://amzn.to/13qYbAK
The special operations forces of the United States and Coalition allies that served in Afghanistan, including the US Delta Force, the British SAS and Australian and Canadian Special Forces as well as CIA and MI6 operational units.	

Title	Special Operations Forces in Iraq
Author	Leigh Neville
Publisher	Osprey
Year	2008
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Purchase: http://amzn.to/14q5OHg
The special operations forces of the United States and Coalition allies that served in Iraq, including the US Delta Force, the British SAS and Australian and Canadian Special Forces as well as CIA and MI6 operational units.	

Title	The Encyclopaedia of the World's Special Forces
Author	Mike Ryan, Alexander Stilwell and Chris Mann
Publisher	History Press Ltd
Year	2003 (2nd edition)
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Purchase: http://amzn.to/107PR17
Includes detailed listings and information on special force units, their tactics and operations around the world.	

Title	United States Special Operations Forces
Author	David Tucker and Christopher J. Lamb
Publisher	Columbia University Press
Year	2007
Expense	Purchase only
URL	Preview: http://bit.ly/YPQN9i Purchase: http://amzn.to/ZnDugw
An overview of America's sometimes turbulent experience with special operations forces and an analysis of how these unique forces can be employed to better effect in the future.	

Title	US Special Operations Command Factbook 2013
Author	-
Publisher	US Special Operations Command
Year	2013
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/YzLpv7
Provides information about the different elements of the US Special Operations Command	

Journal articles

Title	Canadian Special Operations Forces: A Blueprint for the Future
Author	Bernard J. Brister
Publisher	Canadian Military Journal
Year	2008
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/16daONs

Within the global family, Canadians tend to see themselves as champions of human security, individual rights and peacekeeping. However, the reality is that Canada is a wealthy, Western democracy closely identified geographically, culturally and socially with the United States. Canadians could thus be at risk by virtue of our proximity to the Americans from groups and factions intent upon forging a new world order, or simply destroying the one that now exists.

Title	Covert Action: Title 10, Title 50, and the Chain of Command
Author	Joseph B. Berger III
Publication	Joint Force Quarterly (National Defense University Press)
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/16cxltz

The Abbottabad raid on Bin Laden's compound highlighted the dangers and vagaries of departing from the traditional military chain of command. The Secretary of Defense was taken out of the chain and the CIA director was inserted. In contrast, the rescue of a US citizen in Somalia was carried out secretly but not covertly by joint forces under military command, maintaining individual servicemember protections that may be forfeit in the grey zone of questionable legality. Policymakers should reconsider the rejection of the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that the Department of Defense (DOD) be responsible for paramilitary covert actions, and when DOD acts in that capacity, the operation should be carried out as a traditional military operation with a military chain of command.

Title	Special Operations Forces: Relevant, Ready and Precise
Author	Lieutenant-Colonel Jamie Hammond
Publisher	Canadian Military Journal
Year	2009
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/14juyAk
<p>It can be argued that special operations are no longer very 'special'. Both the overall US-led campaign against terrorism and the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq were conducted using SOF as a primary tool. A recent internal report by one Commonwealth military force goes so far as to suggest that a key role now emerging for conventional forces is to support special operations forces, a reversal of the traditional relationship.</p>	

Title	Unified Effort: Key to Special Operations and Irregular Warfare in Afghanistan
Author	Christopher Lamb and Martin Cinnamond
Publisher	Joint Force Quarterly (National Defense University Press)
Year	2010
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://1.usa.gov/105bsbP
<p>The US Government strategy for success in Afghanistan unveiled by President Obama on 27 March 2009 emphasised a classic population-centric counterinsurgency approach. The novelty of this approach can be debated but clearly the emphasis has shifted under the Obama administration: securing the population and reducing civilian casualties are now the focus of attention.</p>	

Title	US Special Operations: Context and Capabilities in Irregular Warfare
Author	Eric T. Olson
Publisher	Joint Force Quarterly (National Defense University Press)
Year	2010
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://1.usa.gov/YttLcs
<p>The operational commitments of the US military have led to an increase in demand for SOF. America's SOF are popularly prescribed as the 'pinch hitters' of national security.</p>	

Other articles

Title	Beyond Top Secret: Undercover With Canadian Special Operations Forces In Jamaica
Author	Adam Day
Publisher	Legion Magazine
Year	2009
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/10cuE7s
A Canadian Special Operations Regiment unit helps train the Jamaica Defence Force's highest level special operations unit – a national-level counterterrorist force that would be the hierarchical equivalent of a Tier One special operations unit in the Canadian or American forces.	

Title	CIA's Global Response Staff Emerging from Shadows after Incidents in Libya and Pakistan
Author	Greg Miller and Julie Tate
Publisher	Washington Post
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/XsvBqw
Two of the Americans killed in Benghazi, Libya, were members of the CIA's Global Response Staff, an innocuously named organisation that has recruited hundreds of former US special forces operatives to serve as armed guards for CIA officers in high-risk outposts.	

Title	Defense Spending, Special Operations, and Secrecy
Author	Micah Zenko
Publisher	Council on Foreign Relations
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://on.cfr.org/zu1iYZ
The winners, unsurprisingly, of the Pentagon's core budget request for fiscal year 2013 are special operations forces, surveillance and strike drones, and cyber capabilities. In other words, by re-focusing spending on such 21st century tools, the big budget winner is secrecy.	

Title	Drones, Special Operations and Whimsical Wars
Author	Benjamin Friedman
Publisher	The Nationalist
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/LzxUDY
In addition to Afghanistan and the drone campaigns, 12,000 US special operations forces are distributed around dozens of countries, increasingly outside declared war zones, where they train foreign militaries, collect intelligence and occasionally launch lethal raids.	

Title	Inside Story of the UK's Secret Mission to Beat Gaddafi
Author	Mark Urban
Publisher	BBC
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-16573516
British efforts to help topple Colonel Gaddafi were not limited to air strikes. On the ground special forces soldiers were blending in with rebel fighters. This is the previously untold account of the crucial part they played.	

Title	Offshore Everywhere: How Drones, Special Operations Forces, and the US Navy Plan to End National Sovereignty as We Know It
Author	Tom Engelhardt
Publisher	Tomdispatch.com
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/ycjCrE
Along with skies filled with increasing numbers of drones goes a rise in US special operations forces. They, too, are almost by definition boundary-busting outfits. In the past, an American president had his own 'private army' in the CIA; now, in a sense, he has his own private military. Formerly modest-sized units of elite special operations forces have grown into a force of 60,000, a secret military cocooned in the military, which is slated for further expansion.	

Title	Reining in SOCOM's Alarming Ambitions
Author	Andrew Exum
Publisher	World Politics Review
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/Kcadox

In April 2011, Congress denied a request by the US Special Operations Command for new authorities to train security forces from Africa to the Middle East. The request itself, though, reveals the ambitions harboured by the command. Standing up to SOCOM is currently politically difficult, but Congress – and the White House – needs to continue to resist an expanded role.

Title	Special Forces, or the Danger of Even a Lot of Knowledge
Author	Andrew Exum
Publisher	World Politics Review
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/KBqlpB

It is easy to be impressed with US Army special forces' skills and training. However, both special operations forces and their commanders should be more humble about what these forces can and cannot do in complex operational environments.

Title	Special Operations Forces and the Army's Future
Author	Micah Zenko
Publisher	Council on Foreign Relations
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://on.cfr.org/zcPyEf

The US military does not need more special forces – since 11 September 2001, Special Operations Command has doubled in size to 60,000 personnel. Instead, what it needs is the highest quality and best trained conventional forces, especially as the Army is projected to be reduced from its current level of roughly 570,000 troops to 490,000 by 2017. With a smaller army, the US military should preserve special forces for truly special tasks.

Title	Special Operations Forces' Expanding Global Role
Author	Andrew Exum
Publisher	World Politics Review
Year	2012
Expense	For purchase (free trial available)
URL	Purchase: http://bit.ly/LG0Qao
US special operations forces are working to build a global network of special forces in partner countries to meet a wide array of threats. US special forces are also marketing themselves to policymakers as the 'weapon of choice' after the drawdown in Afghanistan.	

Title	'Top Secret America': A look at the military's Joint Special Operations Command
Author	Dana Priest and William M. Arkin
Publisher	Washington Post
Year	2011
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/XZ2s7E
The US military's Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) has grown from a rarely used hostage rescue team into America's secret army. JSOC the rare authority to select individuals for its 'kill list' – and then to kill, rather than capture, them.	

Title	UK must end Official Secrecy over Special Forces
Author	Richard Norton Taylor
Publisher	The Guardian
Year	2011
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://bit.ly/tcx62i
Britain's special forces are playing an increasingly significant role in conflicts abroad. To the irritation of the British government, and particularly the Ministry of Defence, General David Petraeus, former US commander in Iraq and Afghanistan, does not miss an opportunity to praise UK special forces. Why has such praise not been welcomed by British officials?	

Title	US 'Secret War' Expands Globally as Special Operations Forces Take Larger Role
Author	Karen DeYoung and Greg Jaffe
Publisher	Washington Post
Year	2010
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://wapo.st/bVQqX0
The Obama administration has significantly expanded a largely secret US war against al-Qaeda and other radical groups. Special Operations forces have grown both in number and budget, and are deployed in 75 countries, compared with about 60 at the beginning of last year.	

Title	War Without Accountability: The CIA, Special Forces and plans for Afghanistan's future
Author	Kate Clark
Publisher	Afghanistan Analysts Network
Year	2012
Expense	Free
URL	Read: http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2502
US special forces and CIA operatives are likely to remain in Afghanistan after 2014 and for the long haul as part of a plan by the Obama administration to rely on a combination of spies and special operations forces to protect US interests. This raises questions over human rights, accountability and Afghan sovereignty.	

Section III

Suggested sources to follow

David Axe, defence correspondent and blogger, www.warisboring.com.

Kate Clark, Afghanistan Analysts Network, <http://bit.ly/tDd4Sa>

Mackenzie Eaglen, American Enterprise Institute, <http://www.aei.org/scholar/mackenzie-eaglen/>.

Andrew Exum, Senior Fellow, Centre for New American Security, <http://www.cnas.org/exum>.

Bernd Horn, Canadian military author and educator, <http://bit.ly/ZnMaDA>.

James Kiras, Associate Professor, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, USAF University.

Fernando Lujan, US Army special forces major and Visiting Fellow, Center for a New American Security, <http://www.linkedin.com/in/fernandolujan>.

Anna Mulrine, Senior Editor, US News & World Report, <http://bit.ly/XDq68z>.

Rick Nelson, Senior Associate, Center for Strategic & International Studies, <http://csis.org/expert/rick-nelson>.

Linda Robinson, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/author/linda-robinson>.

Micah Zenko, Douglas Dillon Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, <http://on.cfr.org/Y8efiB>.



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