



**Crisis Management:
The Importance of OSINT and Intelligence – A European Perspective**

Dr Peter Roell

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Abstract

In his statement the author focuses on the importance of Open Source Information (OSINT) and Intelligence as indispensable elements of crisis management. He then offers several examples to underscore his perspective.

Based on Open Sources and Intelligence information, he analyses the political and military developments in the Asia Pacific Region. With respect to the issue of China's rapid military modernization, a development which indeed does represent a potential threat, he also points out that for a balanced analysis, it is essential not to overlook the deficiencies within the Chinese Armed Forces.

He introduces, furthermore, the Intelligence Analysis Centre of the European Union (INTCEN) – an institution which plays a significant role in crisis management, and provides Open Source Information and Intelligence for European decision-makers.

In connection with crisis management, he makes a few recommendations – elements for a strategy – and ways in which to improve OSINT and Intelligence.

About ISPSW

The Institute for Strategic, Political, Security and Economic Consultancy (ISPSW) is a private institute for research and consultancy. The ISPSW is objective and task oriented and is above party politics.

The increasingly complex international environment of globalized economic processes and worldwide political, ecological, social and cultural change, brings with it major opportunities but also risks: thus, decision-makers in the private sector and in politics depend more than ever before on the advice of highly qualified experts.

ISPSW offers a range of services, including strategic analyses, security consultancy, executive coaching and intercultural competency. ISPSW publications examine a wide range of topics connected with politics, economy, international relations, and security/ defense. ISPSW network experts have worked – in some cases for several decades – in executive positions and thus dispose over wide-ranging experience in their respective fields of expertise.



Analysis

Preliminary Remarks

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to attend, now for the fifth consecutive occasion, the strategic dialogue organized by the Research Institute for National Security Affairs (RINSA), Korea National Defense University (KNDU), and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, in Seoul.

I would thus like to take this opportunity to thank the representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in South Korea, Dr. Norbert Eschborn, for inviting me to this high-level conference. Since the first dialogue in 2011 the conference has become a “brand”, characterized by its excellence, its farsightedness and its continuity.

I am, furthermore, very pleased that South Korea’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. YUN Byung-se and the Chairman of the ROC’s Defense Committee, National Assembly, Mr. HWANG Jin-Ha, both managed to participate in the Munich Security Conference (MSC) in February this year.

Today’s conference is very timely. Since our last conference in Seoul on April 16 last year, we have observed an increase in crises throughout the world with all the attendant brutality. I am thinking here of Boko Haram in Nigeria and its terror attacks in neighboring countries. I am thinking of the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq, Syria and in other North African States, and the general turmoil in the Middle East. Extremism is fueling barbaric violence across the region.

In Europe we are confronted with a dangerous pattern in Russian behavior. Russia continues to provide training, equipment and forces for the separatists, and continues to destabilize the Ukraine by using all the elements of hybrid warfare.

To manage and solve the challenges prompted by all these crises, Open Source Information (OSINT) and Intelligence are indispensable elements.

Over the next 20 minutes, my statement will center on assessments, institutions and strategies. Here we must keep in mind that good Open Sources Information and intelligence are prerequisites for managing potential crises prior, during and after the events in question.

Assessments – Open Source Information (OSINT) and Intelligence

Ladies and Gentlemen, if you would ask presidents of intelligence and security services anywhere in the world they would all invariably confirm the importance of OSINT and intelligence in providing valuable analyses for decision-makers in different crises scenarios. Permit me to give you a few examples.

Crash MH17

On October 20, 2014, the German magazine *Der Spiegel* referred to a secret briefing given by the President of the German Foreign Intelligence Service (BND), Mr. Gerhard Schindler, on October 8 before the German parliamentary committee. Mr. Schindler pointed out that pro-Russian separatists had used a captured Ukrainian “Buk”



system to shoot down the Flight MH17. He substantiated his report by providing satellite pictures and various other images.

He stated, furthermore, that “Russian claims [that] the missile had been fired by Ukrainian soldiers and a Ukrainian fighter jet had been close to the passenger jet were false”.

As early as July 22, 2014, the Los Angeles Times reported claims by an unnamed American Intelligence official stating that the Malaysia Airlines flight may have been mistakenly shot down by pro-Russian separatists, citing evidence that separatists launched a Buk1 surface-to-air missile that blew up the Malaysian Airliner. The L.A. Times added that it was possible the rebel was a former member of the Ukrainian Armed Forces who had defected to the pro-Russian separatists.

In an interview with the German magazine Focus last year (edition 20/2014), my colleague, Colonel (ret.) Ralph Thiele, who is with us here today, stated that German soldiers would need between five to seven years before being capable of operating such a complex missile system. The implication is that only fully trained military personnel are capable of operating such a system.

It is known that several airlines, such as Air Berlin, Air France, British Airways, Korean Air, Asiana Airlines, China Airlines, Qantas Airways, avoided flying over the Eastern Ukrainian airspace in early March 2014 in the wake of the 2014 Crimean crisis; others changed their routing only after the terrible incident had occurred.

Ladies and Gentlemen, available Open Source Information or Intelligence Information is helpful only when decision-makers make timely judgements.

OSINT and Space Imagery – Woody Island

Space imagery is a further key aspect in OSINT analysis. In an article dating from August 29, 2014, entitled *China Expands Runway, Harbour at Woody Island*, James Hardy of *IHS Jane's Defence Weekly* mentioned that satellite imagery indicates China having undertaken substantial land reclamation, harbour redevelopment and other infrastructural construction on the island since October 2013.

Similarly, the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI) of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington D.C., reported in late October 2014 that China had just completed the planned upgrades of its military airstrip on Woody Island, the largest of the Paracel Island group in the South China Sea. Recent work introduced extensions from 2,400 to 2,700-2,800 meters.

I concur with James Hardy's analysis that the decision to extend the runway and rebuild the harbour on the west side of the island will enhance Woody Island's utility as a military base for power projection in the South China Sea (SCS). The Paracel's strategic location close to the centre of the SCS also means that China can use them as a base for policing operations, whether this means enforcing fishing regulations unilaterally imposed by Beijing, or to potentially interdict shipping traversing the region, thus signifying part of Beijing's strategic move to ensure greater sea control.

I also share Hardy's opinion that in the short-to-medium term, it is unlikely that China would take any overt action, since the SLOCs in this part of the SCS serve its ports – such as Hong Kong and Shanghai – and, as such, freedom of passage is in China's interest.



Political and Military Developments in the Asia-Pacific Region

I would now like to give some additional examples as to how Open Source Information can help enrich the knowledge of intelligence services and decision-makers in government organizations, which also impacts upon the business sector.

In his speech at the 13th IISS Shangri-La Dialogue (May 30 –June 1, 2014 in Singapore), former U.S. Secretary of Defence, Chuck Hagel, stated that the U.S. intends to continue its aid to nations in building their respective humanitarian and disaster-relief capabilities, and in upgrading their respective armed forces.

For the first time Indonesia is to receive Apache helicopters to conduct counter-piracy operations, and control the free flow of shipping through the Straits of Malacca. What Hagel did not mention, however, was the number of helicopters and details of the delivery. Through the Internet I gathered that Indonesia is to purchase 8 AH-64 Apache helicopters, scheduled for delivery between 2014 and 2017 for 600 million US\$.

He further claimed that Washington plans to provide robust assistance to the Philippines' Armed Forces, and to strengthen their maritime and aviation capabilities.

But what are the specific ramifications of this? The following figures were available from OSINT:

142 M113A2 armoured personnel carriers (APCs) from U.S. army stocks will be shipped to the Philippines in 2014, and the U.S. will provide US\$ 50 million in military financial aid, plus US\$ 40 million for acquiring long-range maritime patrol aircraft. In this connection, the agreement between the governments of the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America on *Enhanced Defense Cooperation* of April 2014 is of interest.

Hagel added that South Korea is to receive "Global Hawk Drones" as part of efforts to substantially enhance its intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, though he did not provide further details. Internet research showed that South Korea plans to acquire 40 Lockheed Martin F-35A Joint Strike Fighter aircraft for US\$ 7 billion, scheduled for delivery between 2018 and 2021.

The U.S. Secretary of Defence said that the United States is poised to deploy two additional ballistic missile defence ships to Japan (though did not mention the date, namely, by 2017) and has deployed its most advanced capabilities – including two Global Hawks at Misawa Air Base, F-22 fighter aircraft at Kadena Air Base, and MV-22 Ospreys to Okinawa.

It was also possible to obtain additional information from the Internet, namely, that the first flight of the RQ-4 Global Hawk took place on June 6, 2014 at the Misawa Air Base, and that 12 F-22 "Raptor" Stealth Fighters, plus 300 personnel, will be deployed to Kadena Air Base.

This year the U.S. Navy are set to introduce the Joint High Speed Vessel in the Pacific and an additional submarine forward station in Guam. As many as four Littoral Combat Ships will be deployed in the same region by 2017. By 2018, the U.S. Navy's advanced multi-mission Zumwalt-class destroyer is scheduled to begin operating out of the Pacific. And by 2020, the U.S. plans to achieve its objective of operating 60% of both its navy and air force fleets out of the Pacific, while also flying the Hawkeye early-warning and unmanned Triton ISR aircraft in the region.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my firm believe that such Open Source Information (OSINT) represents an important source for military intelligence analysts, and clearly indicates that the U.S. is and will continue to be a Pacific



power. These military deployments will also be an important step to rebalance the military situation in the region and is also a remarkable sign of deterrence in times of increasing tensions and potential crises in the region.

In view of the limited time, please allow me to conclude with a view words regarding the Chinese Armed Forces. The military budget for 2015 will be about 10 percent bigger than last year, thus, approximately \$145 billion. It is reported that China's second aircraft carrier is under construction, and the country is rapidly building destroyers and frigates. Furthermore, China is also currently testing its new Y-8 anti-submarine aircraft.

Some analysts, and above all, the media like to paint a horror scenario when it comes to China's military modernisation. For a balanced analysis it is essential not to overlook the deficit of the Chinese Armed Forces. I would, therefore, recommend an analysis by the RAND National Security Research Division titled: *China's Incomplete Military Transformation – Assessing the Weaknesses of the People's Liberation Army (PLA)* of February 2015.

Two weaknesses were identified:

1. **Institutional:** outdated command structures, quality of personnel, professionalism, and corruption
2. **Combat capabilities:** logistical weaknesses, insufficient airlift capabilities, limited numbers of special-mission aircraft, and deficiencies in fleet air defence and antisubmarine warfare.

Ladies and Gentlemen, as we have seen, it is obvious that Open Source Information (OSINT) plays an important role in the intelligence domain, and is also of great value in times of crises.

Institutions – OSINT and Intelligence

Let me now briefly turn to one of the European Union institutions that plays an important role in crises management, and that provides Open Source Information and intelligence information, the Intelligence Analysis Centre of the European Union, EU INTCEN. The EU INTCEN has been part of the European External Action Service (EEAS) since January 2011, and is under the aegis of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy, Mrs. Federica Mogherini, Italy's former Foreign Minister.

As can be observed on this slide, the EU INTCEN comprises two divisions:

- The Analysis Division is responsible for providing strategic analyses based on input from foreign and security intelligence services of the EU Member States. It is composed of various sections that deal with geographical and thematic topics.
- The General and External Relations Division focuses on all legal and administrative questions, and produces Open-Source Analyses. It comprises three sections that deal with questions relating to IT, internal and external communication respectively, as well as with the open source office responsible for Open Source Analysis.

The Intelligence Analysis Center (INTCEN) plays a key role in the struggle against international terrorism. At INTCEN around 70 personnel evaluate and observe developments on a 24-hour basis. The present Director of the EU INTCEN is Ilkka Salmi, former Head of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service.

INTCEN has close contacts to the European Union Satellite Centre (EUSC) in Torrejón, near Madrid. EUSC has been an agency of the EU since January 2010, and provides satellite images which help the EU to analyse developments in conflict regions in order to provide humanitarian aid. Clearly, such images are a welcome input to the work conducted by INTCEN and are, of course, an important element in crisis management.



INTCEN also has contacts to the Paris-based Institute for Security Studies (EUISS). EUISS is an independent EU agency which provides decision-makers within the EU with strategic analysis based on OSINT and also organises a range of security-related conferences.

Strategies – OSINT and Intelligence

By way of conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to present a few recommendations – elements of a strategy – in the context of crisis management and how to improve OSINT and intelligence:

1. States should analyze how the different intelligence and Security Services and other institutions could improve cooperation.
2. Develop a watch list and establish priorities for analyzing present and future threats pertaining to the country and region in question.
3. Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) could strengthen the knowledge-base.
4. Bundling information could be a key to success.
5. Analyze Internet websites, email traffic and other means of communication of potential terrorists.
6. Improve information-sharing between selected countries in Asia, the European Union and other states, primarily with foreign intelligence and security services.
7. Use regional expertise on information regarding the maritime domain and other issues in “trading information” with foreign services.
8. Evaluate the US proposal for closer intelligence cooperation between Washington, Tokyo and Seoul. In December 2014, Japan, South Korea and the U.S. signed an intelligence-sharing agreement limited to North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile programs.
9. Dedicate more resources to counter intelligence.
10. Improve encryption systems.
11. More involvement of the private sector is necessary.
12. Raise the awareness among decision-makers in politics, in the armed forces, in the corporate and public sectors for potential threats in the field of economic and industrial espionage, including threats in the maritime domain.

I would like to end by citing Benjamin Franklin: *Investment in knowledge pays the best interest rates.*

Remarks: Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

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About the Author of this Issue

Dr Peter Roell has been President of the Institute for Strategic, Political, Security and Economic Consultancy (ISPSW) in Berlin since January 2006. His former post was Senior Advisor for Foreign and Security Policy at the Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the EU in Brussels. While in Germany, Dr Roell served the German Government as Director of the Asia-Pacific, Latin America and Africa (Sub-Sahara) Department and at German embassies in the Near and Middle East, and in Asia.

Dr Roell studied sinology and political sciences at the universities of Bonn, Taipei and Heidelberg. He gained his Ph.D. from the Ruprecht-Karls-University in Heidelberg.

Dr Roell is an Ancien of the NATO Defense College in Rome and the Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS) in Berlin.



Dr. Peter Roell