

After Action Review (AAR) of Attendance at the Brazilian Army Command and General Staff College

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Introduction

In 2005, I was the first member of the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG Corps) to attend a foreign command and general staff college (CGSC). This article provides a summary of my attendance at the Brazilian Army's Command and General Staff College—Escola de Comando e Estado Maior do Exército (ECEME). Through a unique series of events, I was selected and attended the Brazilian Army's ECEME, a ten-month CGSC equivalent, where I studied brigade and division level operations through the lens of a foreign military. This rare opportunity not only afforded me a unique and valuable professional development experience, it served as an extraordinary and effective engagement tool—both legal and military-to-military—with the Brazilian Army and the other foreign students attending the course. Participation in this program was consistent with the Secretary of Defense's Defense Language Transformation Roadmap (DLTR)¹ goal of incorporating regional area education into Professional Military Education and Development and should serve as a model for future JAG Corps' efforts to integrate into this transformation process.

Background

Pursuant to *Army Regulation (AR) 350-1*,² I attended and completed a ten-month course of instruction at the ECEME through the U.S. Army's School of Other Nations (SON) program. The ECEME, the Brazilian Army's senior educational institution, is located on Praia Vermelha in the Urca section of Rio de Janeiro at the foot of the famous Pão de Açúcar, or Sugar Loaf Mountain. The ECEME conducts a two-year staff officer course for majors and lieutenant colonels—the Curso de Comando e Estado Maior (CEEM) (Command and Staff Course)—and a year-long course for colonels—the Curso de Política, Estratégia e Alta Administração do Exército (Course on Politics, Strategy and High Level Administration of the Army), which is an Army War College level course. Additionally, the ECEME houses the Brazilian Army's Center for Strategic Studies.³

Currently, the U.S. Army selects one to three Army officers to attend ECEME each year. In addition, the U.S. Army assigns one lieutenant colonel to the ECEME as an exchange instructor. For Brazilian Army officers, selection to attend the ECEME is highly competitive, and attendance is a prerequisite for promotion to general officer. United States military officers who attend the ECEME can be assured that they are attending school with the future shapers and leaders of the Brazilian Army.

Selection

I was selected to attend the ECEME through the SON program as set forth in *AR 350-1*. Due to the unique nature of the assignment and unusual circumstances that facilitated selection of a judge advocate, however, I was not selected strictly through established procedures.

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¹ The DLTR is a major initiative to develop foreign language and cultural expertise among the Department of Defense's (DOD) military and civilian members. The initiative reflects a long-standing priority of the Secretary of Defense to achieve the following three major goals: create foundational language and cultural expertise in the officer, civilian, and enlisted ranks for both active and reserve forces; create the capacity to surge language and cultural resources beyond in-house capabilities; and establish a cadre of language specialists with advanced levels of proficiency. The DLTR also aims to improve the language skills of the officer corps in general as well as consider language ability in the promotion of general officers. See News Release, U.S. Dep't of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), DOD Announces Plan to Improve Foreign Language Expertise (Mar. 30, 2005), available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2005/nr20050330-2342.html>; see also U.S. DEP'T OF DEFENSE, DEFENSE LANGUAGE TRANSFORMATION ROADMAP (Jan. 2005), available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2005/d20050330roadmap.pdf> [hereinafter DLTR].

² U.S. DEP'T OF ARMY, REG. 350-1, ARMY TRAINING AND EDUCATION para. 3-34 (9 Apr. 2003). *Army Regulation 350-1* has been superseded by U.S. DEP'T OF ARMY, REG. 350-1, ARMY TRAINING AND LEADER DEVELOPMENT (13 Jan. 2006) [hereinafter AR 350-1]. The U.S. Army's School of Other Nations (SON) program is addressed in paragraph 3-39 and Appendix D of the new regulation. AR 350-1, *infra* para. 3-39 and app. D.

³ Brazilian Army's Command and General Staff College—Escola de Comando e Estado Maior do Exército (ECEME), <http://www.eceme.ensino.eb.br> (last visited Sept. 25, 2006) [hereinafter ECEME].

The SON and Normal Selection Procedures

The Headquarters, Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7 (Department of the Army Military Operations – Strategic Plans and Policy) (HQDA, DCS, G-3/5/7 (DAMO-SS)) is the proponent of the SON program. The program’s objective is “to develop closer U.S. Army/foreign Army relationships by placing U.S. Army Intermediate Service College eligible officers in foreign command and staff colleges and in war or national defense colleges that have been accredited as equivalent to [the Intermediate Service College] and [the Senior Service College].”⁴

Under the provisions of *AR 350-1*, the annual Human Resources Command message announcing the Senior Service College selection board will contain a listing of the foreign schools for which the board selects qualified students.⁵ Officers selected “must be outstanding representatives of the U.S. Army and the United States and desire to attend.”⁶ While a number of the eligible foreign schools are listed as branch immaterial, priority consideration is given to officers in the foreign area officer (FAO) specialty, and historically only FAOs, combat arms, or combat support officers have been selected.⁷ Eligible officers submit a letter of desire to their Senior Service College board, which then selects candidates.

My Selection as a Judge Advocate

Because the judge advocate CGSC selection board meets separately from the Army competitive category board, and because by tradition only FAOs and combat arms officers have participated in the SON, my selection required close coordination with the JAG Corps’ Personnel, Plans, and Training Office (PP&TO) and the SON program managers in the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (G-3). I expressed interest in participating in the SON program to PP&TO and the program managers beginning in the summer of 2003. In late 2004, the Judge Advocate General approved a concept plan submitted through PP&TO for allowing judge advocates to compete for and attend foreign schools, including CGSC equivalents. Coincidentally, G-3 informed PP&TO in early January of 2005 that a slot had unexpectedly reopened for the Brazilian CGSC course to begin in early February of that year. Because the slot was unanticipated, G-3 had not identified any FAO or combat arms officers to attend. With the support of my chain of command and The Judge Advocate General’s approval, PP&TO coordinated with G-3 and secured my selection to attend the course.⁸ I quickly out-processed my assignment at the U.S. Attorney’s office and reported for the course on 7 February 2005. While attending the course, I was assigned to the U.S. Army Student Detachment, Fort Jackson, South Carolina, with duty at the ECEME, and attached to the U.S. Army Military Attaché in Brasilia for administrative purposes.

The ECEME Course

The ECEME is the Brazilian equivalent of CGSC at Ft. Leavenworth, and upon graduation, students are awarded Military Education Level (MEL) Code 4.⁹ Because the course is conducted in a foreign language, officers are entitled to language incentive pay provided they have a current Defense Language Proficiency Test.¹⁰ Officers incur a two-year active duty service obligation for participation in the SON, which is computed from the date of course completion.¹¹

⁴ *AR 350-1*, *supra* note 2, para. 3-39a. The previous version of *AR 350-1* stated the objective of the SON program in a slightly different manner. “The objective of the SON program is to develop closer U.S./foreign Army relationships by placing U.S. Army board-selected officers in foreign command and staff colleges and in war or national defense colleges that have been accredited as equivalent to the [Command and General Staff Officer Course] for the MEL Code 4 and [the U.S. Army War College] for MEL Code 1.” *Id.* para. 3-34a.

⁵ *Id.* para. 3-39c.

⁶ *Id.* app. D-2.

⁷ *See id.* tbl. D-2.

⁸ This short-notice selection was helped by the fact that I had previously scored at the native-speaker level on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT).

⁹ Under the current regulation, selection for MEL-4 level foreign schools occurs during normal assignment rotations after officers complete [Intermediate-Level Education]. *Id.* para. 3-39c.

¹⁰ *Id.* para. 3-39e.

¹¹ *Id.* app. D-4b, tbl. D-2.

History

The ECEME marked its centennial during my year of attendance. The first command and staff school of the Brazilian Army was established by a royal decree on 2 October 1905.¹² Initially influenced by German military doctrine, the Brazilian Army turned to the French after the Germans' defeat in the First World War. French influence continued until Brazil's decision to join the allied effort in the Second World War and to send the Brazilian Expeditionary Force, a division task force that fought alongside the U.S. Army in the Italian theater under the command of the U.S. Fifth Army.¹³ The school was installed in its present day location in the 1940s, and U.S. military doctrine grew in influence.¹⁴ Although over the last several decades Brazil has distanced itself from its prior close ties with the U.S. military, its basic tactical, operational, strategic, and leadership doctrine is heavily based in U.S. doctrine, albeit somewhat outdated.

Course Structure and Student Body

For Brazilian Army officers, the CCEM is a two-year course, subdivided into the following distinct but integrated branch-specific courses:

1. The Command and Staff Course (Curso de Comando e Estado-Maior (CCEM) is the primary Command and General Staff Course at the ECEME. The objective of the course is to develop and prepare combat arms¹⁵ and ordnance officers to serve on brigade and higher staffs as well as to command. The course is open to senior captains through lieutenant colonels and lasts for two years. The first year of the course focuses on brigade and division level defensive and offensive operations, military history, strategy, and leadership. The second year focuses on corps and higher level operations.

2. The Staff and Management Course for Quartermaster Officers (Curso de Chefia e Estado-Maior para Oficial Intendente (CCEM/Int)) is no different than the CCEM. Quartermaster and transportation officers attend CCEM alongside combat arms officers for the full two years, with certain aspects of their course directed at logistics specific issues.

3. The Staff and Management Course for Physicians (Curso de Chefia e Estado-Maior para Médicos (CCEM/Med)), is a distinct course with certain blocks integrated into the CCEM, focused on medical corps specific issues. The majority of officers attend for one year, with a small number attending for two years.

4. The Command and General Staff Course for Foreign Officers (Curso de Comando e Estado-Maior para Oficiais de Nações Amigas (CCEM/ONA)), the course I attended, is intended to develop and prepare invited foreign officers to serve on brigade and higher staffs, facilitate the interchange of knowledge and experience, and to strengthen cooperative relationships with the countries represented. Foreign officers attend the first year of CCEM alongside their Brazilian counterparts, participating fully in nearly all aspects of the course. Additionally, as described more fully below, the ECEME organizes a number of specific activities and events for the foreign officers.

Approximately 120 Brazilian officers attend both years of the course. During 2005, eleven foreign officers attended the CCEM/ONA. In addition to myself, there were officers from Angola, Argentina, The Peoples Republic of China, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Curriculum and Course Requirements

As noted, year one of the CCEM focuses primarily on brigade and division level operations, dividing the academic year nearly equally between the offense and the defense. Almost all work is completed in a small group setting; students being broken down into groups of approximately fifteen officers, with four groups to a classroom. Foreign officers are integrated evenly into the small groups, and the groups are periodically reorganized to maximize experiential exchanges and group dynamics training.

¹² ECEME, *supra* note 3.

¹³ The Brazilians also sent a squadron of P-47 Thunderbolts that was commanded by then Lieutenant Colonel Nero Moura, who later served as a brigadier general and Minister of Aviation. He was also my wife's grand-uncle. By all accounts, the Brazilian forces fought valiantly throughout the war.

¹⁴ ECEME, *supra* note 3.

¹⁵ The five combat arms in the Brazilian Army are Infantry, Cavalry (Armor), Artillery, Engineer, and Communications.

For the foreign officers, there is a pre-course during the month of January that focuses solely on language training and is conducted at a different facility in Rio de Janeiro. Because I was not approved to attend the course until late January 2005, I did not attend this pre-course. Generally, it is a good opportunity to begin in-processing requirements at the U.S. Consulate and the ECEME which can be cumbersome and to acclimatize and begin looking for suitable housing. Following the pre-course, the foreign officers were given a one-day orientation at the ECEME prior to course commencement on 15 February 2005.

The school adheres to a fairly strict 0730 to 1630 duty day, with the exception of Fridays, which end at 1200. Generally, the last hour to hour and a half of one to two days a week were set aside for personal physical training. There were also a number of periods each week set aside for research and study, but students were generally not permitted to leave the classrooms during these times.

After approximately a week of orientation, the course began with four days of non-testable group dynamics exercises, which was a good opportunity to meet and interact with classmates. Interestingly, this second week closed with the only block of legal training taught during the entire course—a four hour block of instruction on international humanitarian law from an outside professor. This cursory instruction reflected a general weakness in the integration of legal instruction and issues into the course curriculum.

The following two weeks encompassed the first testable block of instruction—Geostrategy. Forty-two hours of instruction were presented on various theories of geopolitical and national defense strategy, followed by a four hour written exam. Because of perceived sensitivities in the test scenario presented to the Brazilian students, the foreign students were issued a different exam, one that was given to the Brazilian students of a previous year, and were permitted some additional time to complete the exam.

The next thirteen weeks focused on brigade and division defensive operations, presented through the study of various scenarios. A group mission analysis and planning process preceded each scenario. The first scenario presented included the answers to the problems, used in effect as the beginning phase of the teaching process. Each successive problem required greater independent student analysis and planning with greater time pressures. To conclude this period, the students were given a two-day-long individual and group exam, which required students to receive a mission, conduct a mission analysis, plan brigade and division defensive plans, make mid-battle corrective decisions, and present written and graphic plans and answers to a series of questions. The foreign students took the same exam as the Brazilian students but were allowed an additional thirty minutes on each individual session.

Following the exam, the entire class was issued another problem set in preparation for a week-long terrain exercise conducted around the city of Uberlandia in the state of Minas Gerais. New small groups were designated for this exercise, and the groups were required to develop brigade and division plans for a defense and to submit these prior to departing for the exercise. The terrain exercise was then used to ratify and rectify the plans with the benefit of a terrain reconnaissance.

Because Brazil is traversed by many large rivers, its doctrine is dominated by the idea of static-defenses anchored on rivers as major obstacles; the exercise was no different. The exercise was very well planned and organized, with a number of observation points spread out over ten kilometers of both sides of the Paranaiba River north of the city. Over the several days of the exercise, the work groups were bused and trucked on a rotational schedule to the various observation points to conduct in depth terrain analysis and mission planning. Although the substantive work of the exercise was hampered by some of the idiosyncrasies of the Brazilian Army, it was an excellent opportunity to observe the Brazilian officers work in a semi-field environment, to interact with the supporting motorized infantry battalion, and to test my knowledge and understanding of doctrine and tactics in order to contribute a U.S. perspective to the planning.

After a nine-day mid-course vacation, the students returned to the ECEME to begin a nearly identical process to learn offensive operations. Again, at the end of approximately ten weeks of studying brigade and division level offensive operations, the students were given a three-day-long exam. Immediately thereafter, we were issued a new problem set and corps operations order to begin developing plans for the next terrain exercise. We then flew to Cascavel, in the state of Parana, for a week-long terrain exercise similar to the exercise at the end of the defensive operations phase of the course, using the time on the ground to study the concepts learned in the classroom and to ratify and rectify the plans each group developed. Again, the logistical planning and execution of this exercise was excellent, but the substantive instruction and learning was hindered by too much focus on terrain orientation and other aspects more suited to junior level officers.

One very positive aspect of the week in Cascavel was a scheduled visit to both the Itaipú Dam and Ciudad del Este (City of the East) in Paraguay. In addition to these trips, the foreign students were also treated to a raft excursion into the massive Iguazu Falls.

The Itaipú hydroelectric power plant is the largest development of its kind in operation in the world.¹⁶ Built from 1975 to 1991, in a bi-national development on the Paraná River, Itaipú represents the efforts and accomplishments of two neighboring countries, Brazil and Paraguay. The power plant's eighteen generating units add up to a total production capacity of 12,600 Mw (megawatts) and a reliable output of seventy-five million Mw per hour a year. This output provides for ninety-eight percent of all of Paraguay's energy needs and about fifteen percent of Brazil's. It is an extremely impressive facility and operation, and obviously critical to the energy infrastructure of the two countries.

Paraguay's Ciudad del Este sits in the center of what is known as the tri-border region, an area of shared borders between Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina.¹⁷ Although subject to dispute, many cite this area as a point of convergence between organized crime, narco-trafficking, and Islamic terrorism.¹⁸ There is little question that this region, particularly in Paraguay, is afflicted with international crimes such as money laundering, gunrunning, migration fraud, and drug trafficking due to corruption and a palpable lack of government control. Of additional significance is the presence of an Islamic community of immigrants that represents a slice of the urban population in the tri-border area, mainly Ciudad del Este and Foz do Iguazu, estimated to be nearly 30,000. While this is an often neglected area, it is of critical importance to U.S. national security. Even a brief visit to Ciudad del Este confirmed the general state of lawlessness and the existence of conditions ripe for exploitation by criminal, and possibly terrorist, organizations.

This terrain exercise took us through the end of October. The remaining month of the course was dedicated to completion of writing requirements, study of military history, instruction on leadership, and sponsored travel for the foreign officers.

The writing requirements for the course were demanding. In addition to having to submit a book review in Portuguese, each student was required to write a lengthy scholarly paper. For the Brazilians, the requirement is to write either a thesis or a dissertation, for which they are given the full two years of the course and receive a recognized post-graduate degree. The foreign students are required to write a monografia, or paper, of at least eighty pages, to be completed within the ten months of the course. My topic was a comparative analysis of the U.S. Army JAG Corps with the military legal structure of the Brazilian Army. Although the school authorized the foreign students to submit the paper in either English or Spanish, I submitted mine in both English and Portuguese as a courtesy and to maximize its utility.

Specific Programs for the Foreign Students

In addition to the normal course requirements, the ECEME incorporated a number of activities specific to the foreign students. These included a number of field study trips to military units and institutions and to major industrial centers, as well as a travel program for the families.

1. Study Trips: Throughout year, the ECEME planned, funded, and executed a number of study trips for the foreign students.

a. A four and a half day trip to São Paulo during which we toured the following: the Academia Militar das Agulhas Negras (Brazilian Army's Military Academy), in Resende en route to São Paulo; Daimler Chrysler of Brazil in São Paulo; the Comando Military do Sudeste (Southeastern Military Command) in São Paulo; the Brazilian aircraft manufacturer EMBRAER (Empresa Brasileira de Aeronáutica) in São Paulo; Instituto Nacional de Pesquisa Espaciais (National Institute for Aerospace Research) in São Jose dos Campos; the headquarters and garrison of the 6th Light Infantry Battalion (6o Batalhão de Infantaria Leve); and the Army Aviation Command (Comando de Aviação do Exército) in Taubaté.

b. A four day trip to Brasília, the Capital of Brazil, to visit the Planalto Military Command (Comando Militar do Planalto), the functional equivalent of the Military District of Washington, and the 11th Regional Military Command

¹⁶ See Itaipu Binacional, <http://www.itaipu.gov.br/> (last visited Oct. 25, 2006).

¹⁷ See Posture Statement of General Bantz J. Craddock, United States Army Commander, United States Southern Command, Before the 109th Congress House Armed Services Committee at 2, 20 (Mar. 16, 2006), available at <http://www.house.gov/hasc/3-16-06SOUTHCOMTestimony.pdf>.

¹⁸ See, e.g., Jessica Stern, *The Protean Enemy*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (July/Aug. 2003); Colonel (Ret.) William W. Mendel, *Paraguay's Ciudad del Este and the New Centers of Gravity*, COMBINED ARMS CTR MIL. REV. (Mar./Apr. 2002), available at <http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/CA/milreview/English/MarApr02/mendel.htm>.

(Comando da 11a Região Militar), responsible for the federal district and the states of Goiás and Tocantins, and the historic city of Salvador in Bahia.¹⁹

c. A series of day trips to military schools and organizations in the Rio de Janeiro area, such as the Coastal and Anti-Aircraft Artillery School (Escola de Artilharia de Costa e Anti-Aérea), the Ordnance School (Escola de Material Bélico), and the historic 32d Motorized Infantry Battalion (32o Batalhão de Infantaria Motorizado).

All of these trips provided superb opportunities to observe the Brazilian Army up close and at work, to visit historic units such as 6th Light Infantry Battalion that participated in the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in the Second World War, and to see some of the highlights of the Brazilian industrial sector. They also afforded an excellent opportunity to interact on a social and professional level, and thereby deepen friendships, with the ten other foreign officers attending the course and the Brazilian officers who accompanied us.

2. Family Program: In addition to the study trips, the ECEME organized a series of weekend trips to various historic and tourist sites within driving distance of Rio de Janeiro. These trips were excellent opportunities for the families of the foreign students, and a number of Brazilian facilitators, to interact and cement bonds and friendships. Because my wife is Brazilian and I have a general familiarity with Rio de Janeiro and the surrounding areas, I took an active part in assisting with these trips and invited several of the other foreign officers on additional weekend trips in the area, all of which strengthened my contacts with these officers and their families.

Engagement Opportunities

One of the most valuable aspects of my time in Brazil was the exceptional legal and military-to-military engagement opportunities. I not only represented the United States Army each and every day of class, but I took every opportunity to interject operational legal issues into all aspects of the course. It quickly became evident that this perspective is sorely lacking in the Brazilian military mindset, and therefore in the ECEME curriculum. In general, however, the Brazilian students and instructors recognize this deficiency, want to see it fixed, and highly appreciated my perspective, experience, and insights. This recognition gave me the opportunity to offer my viewpoint almost daily in class and to have extensive follow on discussions. In addition to this very important general engagement, I had a number of specific opportunities, which are detailed below.

1. Sponsorship: Each foreign officer had at least one sponsor in the course. I was fortunate to have two sponsors—an artillery officer and an army physician. The sponsorship program quickly led to close relationships and the opportunity for many frank and open discussions about U.S. policy, the U.S. Army, and the role of attorneys in the U.S. military.

2. Representational Opportunities: Each foreign officer was required to make a presentation to the entire ECEME on the day of their respective national independence days. The foreign officers also participated in a Dance of Nations where each international student put up a table and display with items, information, and food from our respective countries.

3. Specific Legal Briefings: I was asked to provide several briefings on the JAG Corps, its role in the U.S. Army, and the relationship between the U.S. military and the U.S. judiciary. Specifically, I provided a two-hour brief to the students in the Course on Politics, Strategy, and High Level Administration of the Army (Curso de Política, Estratégia e Alta Administração do Exército) on the relationship between the U.S. military and the judiciary (i.e., Federal litigation). This is a problematic area for the Brazilian Army due to peculiarities of the Brazilian legal system and history of the army's role in internal affairs in Brazil.

In addition, I was flown, at the Brazilian Army's expense, to the Cabinet of the Commander of the Army (Gabinete do Comandante do Exército) to provide a similar brief to senior officers in the Army headquarters along with a class of new officers in the nascent legal support branch of the Brazilian Army. The brief was very successful and allowed me to establish important contacts with some of the few military attorneys in the force.

¹⁹ The trip to Salvador was a last minute substitute for the originally planned trip to visit Manaus, the Amazon basin, and the Military Command of the Amazon (Comando Militar da Amazônia), which was unfortunately cancelled due to lack of anticipated air assets.

Finally, I was invited to be a guest speaker at the 28th Seminar on Military Criminal Law, hosted by the Eastern Military Command (Comando Militar do Leste (CML)), with an audience of university students, academics, and military officers from the different services. The CML is one of the most important and influential regional commands in the Brazilian Army, with one of the most robust legal offices and an active criminal law practice. This brief was very well received, and again afforded me an opportunity to make significant contacts with military attorneys.

4. Airborne Operation: The Brazilian Army extended an invitation to all airborne qualified foreign students to participate in an airborne refresher course and jump with the Airborne Infantry Brigade stationed in Rio de Janeiro. Through special request, I obtained permission from the Department of the Army to participate in this training. I attended refresher training at the Brazilian Army's Airborne Training Center (Centro de Instrução Pára-quedista General Penha Brasil) on 16 November 2005, jumped (after typical scratches and delays) on 20 November 2005 along with five of the other foreign students and several other students attending the Brazilian equivalent of the Captain's Career Course, and was awarded Brazilian Airborne Wings at a special ceremony on 23 November 2005. This great experience allowed for military-to-military engagement and relationship building and served to reinforce the example of the soldier-lawyer ethos of the U.S. Army JAG Corps.

5. Defense Attaché Office/Military Group (DAO/MILGROUP) Support: As noted above, I was attached to the Army Attache's office in Brazilia while attending the course, with administrative support provided by the U.S. Consulate in Rio de Janeiro and the Assistant Defense Attache. There is a small, but active U.S. military community in Rio, many of whom are students. It is not unusual for the DAO or the MIL Group to rely on in-country students to assist in different missions and requirements, and the group as a whole operates very much as a team. Some of the assistance I provided included the following: accompanying the Deputy Consul General to the Brazilian Military's Victory in Europe Day celebration; serving on the escort team for a visit by the U.S. Southern Command commander; organizing a visit and lecture at the ECEME by the United States Army South commander; and serving as a Portuguese translator for the Southern Command commander during the 1st Southern Cone Defense Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

These activities, as well as the weekly interaction with the consulate staff and DAO and MIL Group community, were very positive professional development, giving great insights into this important aspect of U.S. military operations.

Conclusion

"Post 9/11 military operations reinforce the reality that the Department of Defense needs a significantly improved organic capability in emerging languages and dialects, a greater competence and regional area skills in those languages and dialects, and a surge capability to rapidly expand its language capabilities on short notice."²⁰ This critical recognition, based on the well founded assumption that "[r]obust foreign language and foreign area expertise are critical to sustaining coalitions, pursuing regional stability, and conducting multi-national missions especially in post-conflict and other than combat, security, humanitarian, nation-building, and stability operations,"²¹ is by no means inapplicable to the JAG Corps. To the contrary, recent experiences demonstrate that judge advocates are playing an ever increasing role in the full spectrum of military operations at both the planning and execution phases.

More and more commanders are reaching out to their judge advocates to perform non-traditional functions, especially in the post-conflict, nation building phases of our operations, and often tasking them as the lead element for planning and execution. Having a corps of language qualified, regional expert judge advocates will only serve to enhance the Corps' overall utility, capability, and force-multiplying value. There is no better mechanism to achieve this end than integrating judge advocates into the foreign-schooling programs.

Through my attendance at the ECEME, I exponentially strengthened both my Spanish and Portuguese skills. I gained invaluable experience and insights into not only Brazil's military, society, and government and political structure, but into several other Latin American countries and the region as a whole. I developed important contacts in the militaries of several Latin American countries as well as Angola and the Peoples Republic of China. I also established useful contacts within our own Foreign Area Officer community and gained valuable insights into the Defense Attaché, Military Group, and State Department organization and operations.

²⁰ DLTR, *supra* note 1.

²¹ *Id.* at 3.

This was a valuable investment for both the Army and the JAG Corps, and should be replicated in the future. In addition to the training and experience, integrating judge advocates into the foreign-schooling programs can serve as an excellent recruiting and retention tool and supports the specific goals of DOD's Defense Language Transformation Roadmap. For additional information, interested judge advocates should contact PP&TO.