



FOREWORD, Presented by Colonel Kimberlee Joos, United States Air Force

Today, leaders must make decisions in an increasingly Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous, or VUCA world. While there are many frameworks for leaders at the strategic level to study and apply to whatever situation arises within their span of influence, I find that understanding history, reading examples from the ever-changing world around us, like the ones in this edition of *The Journal of Homeland and National Security Perspectives*, and applying time-tested principles of critical thinking and structured analysis keep me agile and able to react to whatever today's environment presents as the next challenge.

Fifty years ago, who could have predicted the grandson of Kim Il Sung would be behaving in ways so very similar to his grandfather and father before him, in an attempt to secure resources and gain international attention? Twenty years ago, as the U.S. was providing air power to keep the Saddam Hussein regime from harming its minority populations in the north and south of Iraq, who could predict the emergence of a hyper violent extremist state like ISIS, and, more improbably, its relative success in gaining support and territory in the ungoverned spaces of the Arab World? From the cyber-attacks against Estonia and Georgia a mere seven years ago, who could have foreseen the emergence of the cyber-attack being used to provide asymmetric advantage by both state and non-state actors alike against nations, corporations, or individuals on the scale seen today? And, more importantly, now that these realities have emerged, what are the right policy choices to shape the future in accordance with our own strategic objectives?

2014 has been a year of unprecedented global chaos: ISIS advances in the Arab World, Russian belligerence towards Ukraine, Boko Haram continuing its brutal assault on the status quo in Nigeria. Mass protests were seen in nearly every corner of the globe: Hong Kong, Bangkok and Kiev, Caracas and Ouagadougou, even in the Saint Louis suburb of Ferguson, Missouri. Backed up in many cases by cyber hackers and global financing—some from the illicit global drug trade, any of these destabilizing actions can and quickly do impact United States' security interests. It is only by undertaking a structured approach to studying history, a nuanced consideration of current events, and drawing appropriate linkages between the two that we can attempt to see the 'next big thing' headed our way in this VUCA world, and how to best handle it. As leaders, it is our moral imperative.