

IWI Editorial's Year in Review: Looking Back at 2025

Description

Where else would you find [pirates](#), [space special forces](#), [sharp debates over Operation Spider's Web](#), [cultural heritage protection as a means of outcompeting China](#), and even an [AI chatbot designed to anticipate Beijing's next grand-strategic move](#) all under one roof? In 2025, that place was the Irregular Warfare Initiative.

As we near the end of 2025, the [fifth year of IWI's growth](#) from a podcast and an idea to the organization we are today, we wanted to take a look back at the year and celebrate the impact our writers, readers, and all-volunteer team have had for [advancing our mission](#).

We are thrilled to have published [over 90 articles](#) spanning six continents, multiple domains, and centuries of historical reference on our main page this year. IWI's [Summer 2025 Writing Contest](#) produced dozens of high-caliber proposals for leveraging Irregular Warfare in the Indo-Pacific, and our readers are still seeing the fruits of the contest as we have published 9 contest pieces already with plans to publish more. Engagement across our platform has been high and continues to grow as we set a year-over-year record for views of our page in August, and have not looked back.

This year has been a pivotal one for increasing our understanding and application of Irregular Warfare. From continued challenges in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, to rethinking approaches to Latin America and Europe, our articles have offered moments of analytical clarity and fodder for discussion on virtually every geopolitical topic of interest in national security. Our writers have applied unique lenses to the security challenges of today, often examining the intersection of technology and strategy, the related role of economics and other tools of national power, and lessons from history to draw deep insights for today and challenges in the future.

As we look back, we wanted to share the 10 articles that most resonated with our readers. Based on our review of traffic across our page and social media, these were our most-read pieces:

1. [Lessons from the Frontlines: Ukrainian SEAD Operations and Their Implications for Western Special Operations Forces](#) by Daniel Sullivan, Riley Murray, Rylan Neely, Feb 6, 2025
2. [Space and Ice: Envisioning Special Operations Forces' Role in Future Operational Environments](#) by Marius Kristiansen and Kevin D. Stringer, July 24, 2025

3. [Russia's Shadow Fleet: The Dangerous Tanker Network Threatening Global Waters](#) by George Janjalia, Aug 5, 2025
4. [Putting Operation Spider's Web in Context](#) by Ben Connable, June 20, 2025
5. [Do Total Defense Strategies Increase State Resiliency?](#) by IWI fellow [Robert Burrell](#) and John Collison, April 10, 2025
6. [Dominating Conflict's Leading Edge: Five Principles for an Assertive Irregular Warfare Doctrine](#) by Brandon Kirch, Feb 4, 2025
7. [Democratized Intelligence: How Open-Source Intelligence is Reshaping Asymmetric Advantage](#) by Josh Luberisse, Aug 18, 2025
8. [A New Playbook for Irregular Warfare: How the United States Can Win Without Fighting](#), by Christian Trotti, Jan 21, 2025
9. [Winning Without Fighting: Resilience as National Security Imperative](#) by Jacob N. Shapiro, May 2, 2025
10. [Development or Dependence? Rethinking China's Economic Playbook in the Americas](#) by Leland M. Lazarus and Guido L Torres, July 16, 2025

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We hope our readers enjoy the holiday season and the end of 2025, and take a moment to appreciate what the community has done together. Please join us in 2026 as we continue to advance the study and practice of Irregular Warfare.

Warm Regards,

IWI Editorial

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