



ROBERT J.M. GADDIS

J5 Director

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Special Operations Command South

Mr. Robert Gaddis assumed duties in Special Operations Command South (SOCSOUTH) in February 2012, upon his retirement from the United States Army, after twenty-six years of distinguished service.

Robert Gaddis was born & reared in Indian Hill, Ohio. He graduated from the Ohio State University in 1986 with a BA in History and a Distinguished Military Graduate of the ROTC program. Following graduation, he attended the Infantry Officer, Ranger and Pathfinder Courses at Fort Benning, Georgia. In 1986, he reported to Fort Clayton, Panama for duty with the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 193d Infantry Brigade (Light). In 1987-1988, Lieutenant Gaddis deployed to Honduras, in response to the Sandinista Army incursions into that nation (Operations Golden Pheasant and Solid Shield).

In 1990, he was assigned to the 3d Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Group (Airborne), Fort Bragg, North Carolina. While in North Carolina he graduated from Troy State University with an MS in International Relations. In 1993, he was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and deployed to Panama to support Cuban Migrant Operations during Operation Safe Haven. Subsequently, he was assigned to the Multinational Force and Observer Group in El Gorah, Egypt for a one-year tour of duty as a peacekeeper.

In 1997, Major Gaddis was selected for Command and Staff College and studied at the French Army's Ecole Militaire in Paris, where he earned a brevet in advanced military studies. He was next assigned to Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg, Germany as the Plans and Operations Officer, G-4, V Corps, conducting planning for the Balkan interventions.

In July 2000, Major Gaddis was assigned as the Chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation, U.S. Embassy in Dakar, Senegal responsible for military assistance to the West African nations of Senegal, Mauritania, The Gambia, The Cape Verde Islands and Guinea-Bissau. During his tenure, Major Gaddis trained and equipped African military units for interventions in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL and Operation Focus Relief) and in Liberia.

Upon his return from Africa in 2002, Major Gaddis was assigned to US Southern Command, Directorate of Operations, where he served as Counter-Drug Operations Officer, Chief of Joint Surface Operations and Chief of Andean Ridge Ground Operations and served during crisis operations in Haiti and Colombia. He also managed the provision of US Southern Command military assistance and advisors to Colombia as part of Plan Colombia and Plan Patriota efforts.

In 2005, LTC Gaddis was selected to command the U.S. Military Group in Managua, Nicaragua. During his tour he improved Nicaraguan military capabilities and focused their employment against narcotics cartels. He also directed U.S. military support during four separate disaster relief operations in Nicaragua. In 2008, LTC Gaddis was promoted to Colonel and was selected for resident attendance at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, where he earned another Master's Degree in National Security Studies.

Subsequently, Colonel Gaddis commanded the U.S. Military Group in Ecuador, where he focused advisory efforts on denying safe havens to the FARC in northern Ecuador utilizing USSOF advisors to Ecuadorian units deployed on the border. He also managed disaster relief operations in Ecuador and the closing of the US Air Base at Manta.

In 2010, Colonel Gaddis was reassigned to US Southern Command and served as the director of security assistance for Latin America & the Caribbean, responsible for the provision of military education, training and the sale of military equipment to allies in the region.