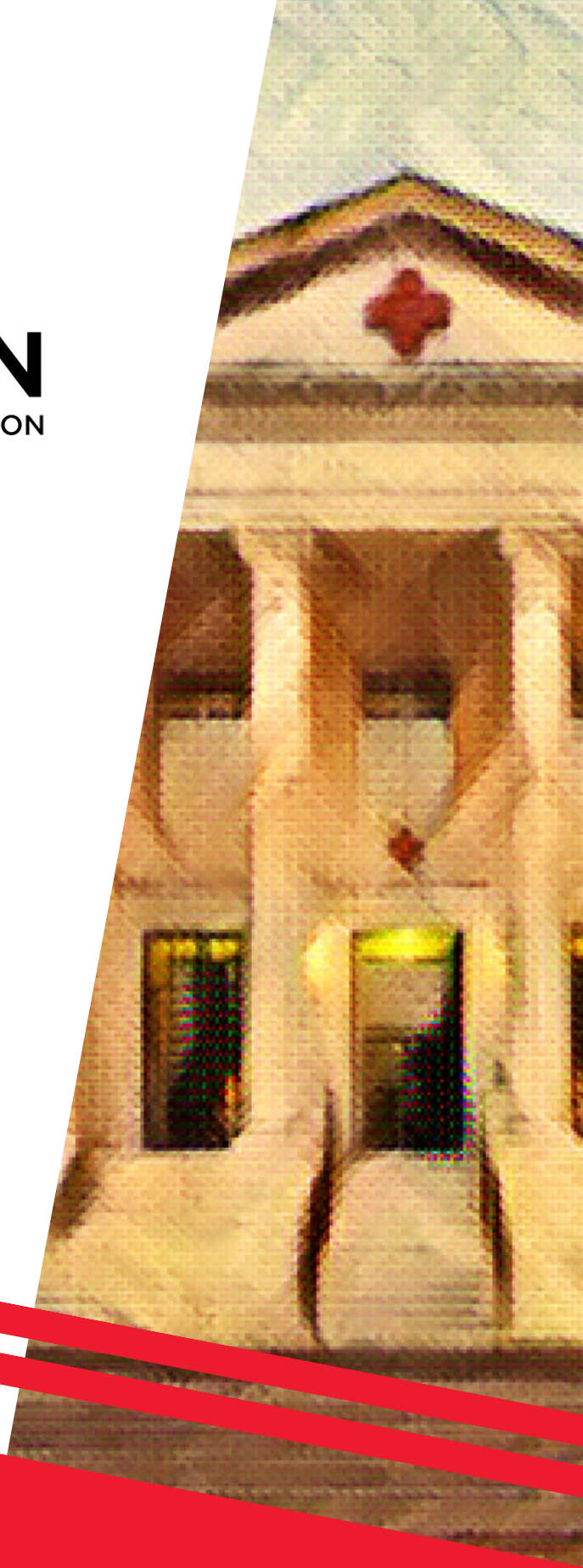




CLARA BARTON
INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMPETITION
10TH ANNIVERSARY

ROUND 4
MATERIALS
TEAM A



**American
Red Cross**

International
Humanitarian Law

Round 4 Roles (Two-Team Round):

Judge Roles	Hosts of “Eye of the Storm,” a hit cable news discussion show
Team Roles	Team A: Legal Experts from The Shield Institute for International Security (TSIIS) (Civilian think tank) Team B: The Harmony Centre for Conflict Transformation (HCCT)(Civilian think tank)

Round Background:

As temperatures turn colder in late fall 2023, Westphalia’s military losses continue to mount despite its distinct advantages in manpower and military technology. In a humiliating turn of events, Floraland drove Westphalian forces completely out of its northeastern most province after managing to pull off a daring joint operation with a large provincial armed group, The Makara.

As Floraland surveys the damage in its recently liberated northeast, Westphalian forces are on the defensive across the theater. Meanwhile, Floraland is becoming increasingly aggressive in its tactics to force Westphalia out of its territory, including rumors of shadowy operations reaching all the way into Westphalian territory. With Westphalia struggling to re-solidify public and international support for its military efforts, its President takes to the podium to share details of a recent controversial battle, hoping to ignite international fury against their foes...

Think Tank Background:

1. The Shield Institute for International Security (TSIIS) (Team A)

- a. This think tank traditionally advocates for a more expansive interpretation of IHL provisions, particularly those related to self-defense, military necessity, and proportionality, to justify military action in a wider range of situations.
- b. While the views of a pro-military think tank on IHL may be controversial and may face criticism from those who advocate for a more restrictive interpretation of IHL, this organization seeks to contribute to the ongoing debate around how to balance military necessity with the protection of civilians and other non-combatants in conflict zones.

2. The Harmony Centre for Conflict Transformation (HCCT) (Team B)

- a. This think tank traditionally advocates for a more restrictive interpretation of IHL provisions, particularly those related to self-defense, military necessity, and proportionality, to limit military action to only the most extreme circumstances.
- b. While the views of a pro-peace think tank on IHL may face criticism from those who prioritize military action as a means to achieve stability and security, this organization seeks to contribute to the ongoing debate around how to balance military necessity with the protection of civilians and other non-combatants in conflict zones. They strive to promote the idea that peaceful conflict resolution is a more effective and ethical approach to resolving international conflicts.

From: de Haan, Calvin P NBB <calvin.p.dehaan@nbb.com>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 3:48 PM
To: Brind'Amour, Rodney TSIIS <rod.brindamour@tsiis.org>
Cc: Staal, Eric NBB <eric.a.staal@nbb.com>, Raanta, Ann NBB <ann.raanta@nbb.com>, Ward, Cam T <cam.t.ward@nbb.com>; Aho, Isabella FSI <iaho@hcct.org>
Subject: EOTS taping plan of action – TSIIS team
Attachment: Background materials package

Mr. Brind'Amour,

Thanks to you and The Shield Institute for International Security (TSIIS) for agreeing to lend a few of your experts on such short notice for our special episode. It's been quite a while since we've featured anyone from TSIIS, but there's no better time to have you on given current events. You'll be joined at the taping by a similar team of experts from The Harmony Centre for Conflict Transformation (HCCT).

We are on schedule to tape your episode first thing tomorrow morning, so please come prepared to dive right in. As we discussed over the phone, the episode will concern the Westphalian outrage over a recent covert Floraland mission and Floraland's response decrying an alleged Westphalian attack on their Sunflower Valley. As you rightly pointed out in our phone conversation, this situation has sparked serious public interest in international humanitarian law. We agree, which is why we're planning to devote the entire episode to a discussion on these issues.

We're looking to your team to **lead the discussion on IHL implications with the covert Floraland mission**. Your counterparts from HCCT will take the lead in discussing IHL implications with the alleged attack on the Sunflower Valley. We'll invite both your teams to offer commentary and debate on each other's issues—our audience LOVES that sort of cross talk. We know TSIIS and HCCT differ in their approach to the law, which is why it'll be perfect to have you both on air.

You've no doubt seen Eye of the Storm, so you know our audience loves the sort of informative yet accessible information we give them. Our hosts may not be experts in your field, but they know entertainment, so take their lead. There's a reason why we're #1! We only have **30 minutes** for taping, so be prepared for things to go pretty quickly. The episode will air tomorrow night.

Our assistant to the executive producer, Dwight K. Shroote, will be in touch with parking and building security information for your team. Thanks once again for helping us—have fun!!

Warm regards,

Calvin

Calvin de Haan
Associate Producer
Eye of the Storm
NBB News Division

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FLORALAND JOURNAL EXCLUSIVE | WESTPHALIA'S WAR

TREASURED SUNFLOWER VALLEY IN FLAMES

Westphalian troops set fire to one of Floraland's most beloved and precious areas, risking total devastation



Photo: Jennifer Trexler/Bloomberg

By Maria Torres-Moreno

Updated October 19, 2023

A raging fire has engulfed the Sunflower Valley and is presumed to have destroyed at least a third of the Valley. The latest reports state that the fire is only 5% contained and forecasted high winds are likely to redirect the course of the fire and continue to hamper containment efforts.

The source of the fire has been traced to an attack by Westphalian troops. Westphalia released a report claiming reliable intelligence indicated that a Floraland militia was planning an attack on a Westphalian checkpoint situated at the edge of the Valley.

However, the Floraland government and Floraland citizens insist no such attack occurred and no militia exists to carry out any attack.

“This attack is an obvious effort to destroy an important and vital Floraland natural resource.” The President of Floraland stated in an emergency press release, “Westphalia has always been intrigued and envious of the Sunflower Valley. Westphalia has made an egregious violation of Floralandian law and international law by executing this attack in the Sunflower Valley.”

Over the past several years researchers at the University of Floraland have been studying the effects of the Sunflower Valley on soil pollution. Floraland has suffered from heavy-metal contamination and radiation since the Coastlandia-Lockivo war. University of Floraland researchers released a report recommending the expansion of the Sunflower Valley to combat this pollution. The Floraland government took this recommendation seriously and has instituted legislation protecting the expansion of the Sunflower Valley as well as funding a multimillion-dollar expansion and protection project.

The Westphalia government and media has claimed that the Westphalian attack was based on reliable intelligence and was not intended to destroy the Valley. However, Westphalia troops appeared to have waited several hours before attempting to contain or report the fire. Reports also state that Westphalian troops had been harvesting from the Sunflower Valley for their own research. An inside source of the Floraland government states concerns that Westphalia has taken enough of our pollution-absorbing Sunflower plants to serve their own purposes and are refusing to stop the raging fire in an unlawful attempt to prevent Floraland from benefiting from one of its many precious resources.

The head of the Floraland Intelligence Agency provided a statement rejecting the claim that a Floraland militia had been planning an attack. “We have no intelligence or record of such a militia existing nor do we have any intelligence of such an attack. Additionally, the Sunflower Valley is an odd place for a militia to plan an attack considering the small amount of Westphalian troops occupying the area. This creates even more doubt that Westphalia had any reason to believe a militia was planning an attack.”

As the fire rages on, researchers, government officials, and citizens are all worried about the future of the Sunflower Valley. The expansion of the Valley has taken years of hard effort, careful cultivation, and immense funding. Researchers are warning this fire may change the Sunflower Valley for the foreseeable future and effectively destroy its capabilities.

Floraland Penal Code § 1962 The Natural Environment

Article 1 Purpose

The purpose of this law is to ensure protection of the Floraland environment and ensure the long-term use and enjoyment of the environment for generations to come.

...

Article 5 Sunflower Valley

- (a) Harvesting of flora in the Sunflower Valley is prohibited except for one of the following reasons:
- a. To conduct research in conjunction with the expansion of the Sunflower Valley,
 - b. For other academic purposes that the Floraland government has approved and issued a permit for on a case by case basis, or
 - c. For non-academic purposes that the Floraland government has approved and issued a permit for on a case by case basis.
- (b) Any violation of this statute may result in a fine up to \$5,000 and/or criminal penalties.
- (c) For purposes of this Article, the term “harvesting” means the temporary or permanent removal of an organic item from its naturally occurring location.

Efficacy of Sunflowers as Natural Decontamination Tools

Rachel Writer,^{1,*} Eric Writer,^{1,†} and Emelia Writer^{1,†}

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Abstract

Sunflowers have been shown to dramatically reduce heavy-metal contamination and radiation in soil. After a two-year period, the unique local species of Sunflower, *Helianthus annuus Floralandus*, eliminated such contaminants from the soil, rendering it fertile and safe for food cultivation. *Helianthus annuus Floralandus* were grown in soils contaminated with various levels of heavy metals (10–2,000 mg/kg dry soil) and radiation.¹ We used induction and plasma mass spectrometry to estimate the degree of metal uptake by different parts of the biomass and the residual concentration in the soil.² We observed an almost 2.5-fold hyperaccumulation of Zn²⁺ in the leaf and flower biomass compared with the amount in the soil.³ Our tests show that phytoremediation through *Helianthus annuus Floralandus* is a clean, cost-effective, and environmentally-friendly way to reclaim and reuse land that has been contaminated.⁴ Moreover, our clinical trials demonstrate that *Helianthus annuus Floralandus* could have decontaminated the sites of Fukushima and Chernobyl in half the time that *Helianthus annuus* did.⁵

We recommend expanding Sunflower Valley and legalizing the export of certain amounts of *Helianthus annuus Floralandus* for decontamination efforts.

Introduction

Due to the environmentally damaging economic practices of our neighbors, Floraland has long-suffered from varying degrees of heavy-metal contamination. The Sunflower Valley is a natural basin of vast fields of *Helianthus annuus Floralandus* and has for many years formed a bulwark against contamination driving further into Floraland. This changed when the war between Coastlandia and Lockivo resulted in significantly increased heavy-metal contamination and as well as radiation in Floraland. This study was

¹ Dhiman SS, Zhao X, Li J, Kim D, Kalia VC, Kim IW, Kim JY, Lee JK. Metal accumulation by sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* L.) and the efficacy of its biomass in enzymatic saccharification. PLoS One. 2017 Apr 24;12(4):e0175845. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0175845. Erratum in: PLoS One. 2017 Jun 9;12 (6):e0179746. PMID: 28437478; PMCID: PMC5402931, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5402931/>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ Sherie Blumenthal, *SUNFLOWERS TO THE RESCUE!*, Farmers' Almanac, (Jan. 21, 2022), available at <https://www.farmersalmanac.com/sunflowers-to-the-rescue-15614> [last accessed Nov. 27, 2022].

⁵ Lauren Jones, U.VA. UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHER STUDIES SUNFLOWERS' POWER TO CLEAN UP SOIL, UVAtoday (July 9, 2014), available at <https://news.virginia.edu/content/uva-undergraduate-researcher-studies-sunflowers-power-clean-soil> [last accessed Nov. 27, 2022].

conducted to determine if an expansion of the Sunflower Valley would be an effective but economical and environmentally friendly way of restoring tainted Floraland soil.

Methods

[REDACTED – CLASSIFIED]

Results

Helianthus annuus Floralandus are highly adsorbent and have been used to bioaccumulate heavy and toxic metals.⁶ The flowers and leaves of *Helianthus annuus Floralandus* absorbed the most Ni, As, and Cd.⁷ In the case of Zn²⁺, as the initial concentration of the metal ion in the soil increased, its absorption by the plant also increased ([Table 1](#)).⁸

[REDACTED – CLASSIFIED]

Discussion

[REDACTED – CLASSIFIED]

Data availability

[REDACTED – CLASSIFIED]

Competing interests

The authors declare that there are no competing interests.

⁶ Dhiman SS, Zhao X, Li J, Kim D, Kalia VC, Kim IW, Kim JY, Lee JK. Metal accumulation by sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* L.) and the efficacy of its biomass in enzymatic saccharification. PLoS One. 2017 Apr 24;12(4):e0175845. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0175845. Erratum in: PLoS One. 2017 Jun 9;12 (6):e0179746. PMID: 28437478; PMCID: PMC5402931, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5402931/>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WESTPHALIA

OCTOBER 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Westphalian government has been alerted to the wildfire occurring in Floraland's Sunflower Valley. Westphalia is aware that reports are circulating claiming that Westphalian troops are to blame for the natural disaster. However, a combination of hot winds and dry terrain contributed to the ignition of the wildfire.

Westphalia's presence in Floraland is to ensure freedom and liberation from enemy forces within the country. Westphalia would not engage in activities that would harm Floraland or counter the agenda of freedom and liberation in the country. Westphalia has engaged as necessary to protect its own troops and the freedom of the Floraland people.

Any destruction to the environment has not been purposeful and has been an unfortunate byproduct of military necessity. Westphalia had reliable intelligence that a Floraland militia was targeting the checkpoint. Westphalia conducted an attack to deter the Floraland militia and was successful in deterring the militia attack which would have resulted in a countless number of deaths of both Westphalian and Floralandian citizens.

Although Westphalia is saddened to hear of the damage done to such an important and vital natural resource, Westphalia has full faith that the Sunflower Valley will recover. Westphalia is assisting in fighting the wildfire and does not believe this natural disaster will have a severely negative or long-term effect on the Valley. The Sunflower Valley has been expanded in the last several years and those same efforts could very quickly revitalize the affected areas.

The Stanusm Herald

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FLORALAND WAR

Westphalia President Condemns Covert Floraland Operation; Calls for International Action

BY SANTOS PEÑA *SPECIAL REPORT TO THE STANUSM HERALD*
NOVEMBER 11, 2023 6:30 AM



Floraland special forces detachments have been a key factor in the country's ongoing string of combat victories against Westphalia.

SOLLEU CITY As the balance the ongoing Floraland war continues to tip against Westphalia, its leaders have scrambled to shore up fracturing domestic public support and to rally other countries to their cause. With recent Westphalian opinion polls showing public support for the war dipping to 35% and the Westphalian legislature openly discussing measures to end the conflict, President Benjamin K. Ren has taken a series of dramatic steps of late. In a late October appearance before the Westphalian Senate, President Ren declared himself "Supreme Leader of Westphalia," vested with sole authority concerning the ongoing conflict.

While Ren's new designation remains a legally dubious but ultimately internal affair, the Westphalian government has intensified its efforts to confront Floraland on the global stage. President Ren took the unusual step of delivering a half hour primetime Monday night address to the nation concerning recent developments in the war. Ren used the podium to divulge previously classified details about a recent battle between Westphalian and Floralandian forces, which he condemned as "an outrage against the laws and customs of war," before calling for swift international action against the country.

President Ren devoted the bulk of his address to laying out key details of the operation, which occurred more than a week ago in eastern Westphalia. The President claimed that Floraland's "outrageous conduct" gave him no choice but to declassify certain information, including confirmation of a previously undisclosed secretive Westphalian military prison camp, which was the apparent target of the operation. Addressing the disclosures, President Ren stated, "[t]he Westphalian people and, indeed the world, must have a transparent account of Floraland's actions so that they may fully comprehend their trampling of international law."

"Operation Cyclone"

Using a variety of sources, including information released by the Westphalian government, leaked documents, and individuals with operational knowledge from both the Floraland and Westphalian militaries, the Herald has reconstructed a reliable timeline of the operation, dubbed "Operation Cyclone" by Floralandian military planners. Given the intense public interest and intrigue generated by Westphalia's allegations, the Herald has compiled this in depth look at Operation Cyclone to better inform the intensifying public debate on the matter.

Outpost Anaconda



The lush rainforest of eastern Westphalia, which serve as the hidden home of a secretive Westphalian prison camp targeted by Floraland.

Prior to the incident, “Outpost Anaconda,” a Westphalian military base and prison camp, was one of the country’s most closely guarded secrets. Situated deep in the dense eastern Westphalia rainforest, Outpost Anaconda is virtually cut off from the outside world, but for a network of small dirt roads connecting a series of fishing villages along the winding Fortis River, which runs the eastern length of the country. No known photos or videos exist of the site and its precise location remains a mystery.

Sources report that soon after the war began Anaconda quickly became Westphalia’s primary detention site for high value Floralandian prisoners. In the days prior to the operation, Floraland estimated that as many as 40 high ranking prisoners were confined there. Anaconda’s newfound use resulted in an even higher degree of secrecy around the site, with its small contingent of military guards purportedly hand-selected from some of Westphalia’s most hardline loyalist military units. A source within the Floraland Ministry of Defense reports that locating the prison was at the very top of Floraland’s classified military objectives.

A Change in Fortune



Ophiocordyceps unilateralis, more commonly known as cordyceps, the deadly fungus which opened the door to Operation Cyclone.

In late September, after spending months and countless resources on its search for Anaconda, Floraland’s chances suddenly changed following a routine prisoner swap between the two nations. The exchange, which involved about 45 prisoners of war, attracted little attention at the time. However, according to a Floraland intelligence source, the Floraland military caught a massive break during the standard POW debriefing process. It was discovered that one of the newly repatriated soldiers had been imprisoned for a short time at Outpost Anaconda. Given the site’s infamous reputation as a veritable black hole in which prisoners enter but do not leave, this soldier represented one of the most significant operational security lapses committed by Westphalian forces during the war. Floraland has refused to identify the soldier, citing ongoing concerns for their safety.

While the soldier was unable to pinpoint the outpost’s exact location, it was another bit of information that set the stage for Floraland’s opportunity. The soldier noted that a deadly disease outbreak had begun to rip its way through the outpost during their brief time at the

camp. Although the exact nature of the outbreak is unclear, leaked internal documents reveal that Westphalian forces were internally panicked about TLOO-23 variant cordyceps, a toxic fungus found exclusively in Floraland's Gnarltree Swamp. If left untreated, the fungus is known to cause a delayed-onset neurological disease that is fatal in approximately 90% of cases. Despite the treatability of the disease, the medication is relatively hard to come by, making it a prized medical asset.

Based on war records, Westphalian troops most likely first encountered the fungus during a failed operation to take over a Floraland military base in the swamp early in the war. Dr. Ellie Joel, a leading Mycologist from Stanusm University, reasons that Westphalian troops exposed to the fungus during that operation most likely unknowingly carried it as they moved to other posts later in the conflict before getting sick. Given its transmissibility, Dr. Joel notes that it would have only taken one or two infected soldiers spending time at Outpost Anaconda to spread the fungus there. This recent outbreak presented Floraland with the chance it needed to locate the base.

Panic & An Offer of Relief



Leaked top secret planning documents reveal that Floraland used the cover of a multinational aid agency as its way into Outpost Anaconda.

Floraland intelligence services began scouring for any Westphalian chatter about ongoing cordyceps outbreaks within their own borders. Within days the Floraland Central Intelligence Network (FCIN) intercepted Westphalian communications concerning a rapidly spreading outbreak of the disease. Although Anaconda wasn't mentioned by name, multiple encrypted communications revealed panicked Westphalian forces urgently requesting specialized medical assistance at a remote outpost inside Westphalian territory. According to the transmissions, multiple individuals were already sick, including the high-ranking outpost commander. Transmissions indicated that several prisoners were among the infected—crucial information that caused Floraland to conclude Outpost Anaconda was the site in question.

FCIN and Floraland military planners, who viewed the outbreak as a narrow chance to finally locate Outpost Anaconda, then quickly devised a plan to infiltrate the camp. Known internally as Operation Cyclone, the Floraland military, posing as aid coordinators from the Multinational Relief Agency (MRA), a multinational humanitarian organization, established contact with the Westphalian armed forces, offering a range of mobile medical services, including cordyceps treatment. If Westphalia accepted the offer, a Floraland Special Forces Operational Detachment, also known as an "A Team," would then enter the camp posing as

MRA field workers to enter the base, administer cordyceps inoculations, and gather intelligence for a future liberation operation. According to classified mission planning documents leaked by an anonymous whistleblower in the Floraland government, the A Team planned to administer only a sterile and harmless saline injection into sick Westphalian troops on site, as opposed to the actual cordyceps inoculation, which would be given only to Floraland POWs.

The team would travel with medical equipment and clothing matching that of the real life MRA, as well as two pistols equipped with noise suppressors, also known as “silencers,” which would be stored in a hidden compartment built into the lid of one of their supply containers. Additionally, the team deployed with remote listening devices and sophisticated video-capture devices built within the frame of glasses—a previously unknown piece of advanced Floraland technology.

Westphalian forces quickly responded, requesting that a team of MRA delegates be sent immediately with plans to treat the infected. Westphalia did not name the site, nor did it disclose the precise location—it instead required the MRA to rendezvous with a Westphalian convoy at a small port about 25 kilometers up the Fortis River, whereupon they would be driven to the site in Westphalian Army vehicles. The operational plan drew intense debate internally within the Floraland intelligence and military communities, according to several familiar with the discussions. Floraland has publicly maintained that the operation was planned and conducted in full compliance with the laws of war, but the sources indicate tensions existed amongst planners on that very point. Despite those concerns, Floraland moved forward with the mission.

While MRA is an active humanitarian group, there is no evidence that it had anything to do with the planning or execution of Operation Cyclone. Reached for comment, MRA Public Relations Director Kino Loy unequivocally denied the organization’s involvement in the operation, stating “the MRA had absolutely nothing to do with this mission and we are abhorred that any government would use our organization as cover for any type of military operation.”

On the Ground



Floraland Special Forces soldiers made use of a cordyceps treatment as they secretly gathered intelligence about Outpost Anaconda.

Through a combination of declassified after-action reports, mission debriefing documents, and still/video footage, the Herald is able to offer a comprehensive and unprecedented peek into how Operation Cyclone unfolded.

Dressed as MRA delegates, with their signature white coveralls, the traditional MRA blank bright orange vests, and forged MRA credentials, five members of the A Team were escorted onto Outpost Anaconda in a Westphalian convoy. Three team members carried out the inoculation mission, gathering what information they could from POWs via a form of Floralandian military code speak. During this period, the two other team members were able to slip away and plant several listening devices surreptitiously around the compound, while collecting video of the outpost layout via their eye ware-embedded devices.

The Escape



An M997A3 Field Ambulance served as the Floraland A Team's method of escaping the base.

According to partially declassified A Team debriefing interviews, the team soon became aware that a Westphalian guard had stumbled upon one of the listening devices. As initial confusion gripped the Westphalians, the A Team quickly pivoted to a contingency escape plan. Interviews reveal that the team seized several weapons from an unsecured site on the outpost before making their way to a small nearby motor pool. The Team Leader reports engaging and killing two Westphalian soldiers posted at the motor pool using silenced pistols.

According to the Team Leader, the A Team then located an operational Red Cross marked M997A3 field ambulance, which appeared to be the only vehicle capable of carrying the entire team. Donning Westphalian medic uniforms found in the back of the truck, the team members then used the disguises and vehicle to exit one of the compound's manned entry control points without incident shortly before chaos broke loose.

Firefight and Aftermath

Soon after the A Team departed the outpost Westphalian forces pieced together what had occurred and mounted a furious military response. Unclassified footage from a Floralandian unmanned reconnaissance drone appears to show a Westphalian military helicopter and two Westphalian military trucks catch up to the field ambulance. It is unclear who fired first, but a moving firefight erupted, with Floralandian troops firing from the ambulance while attempting to evade small arms fire from the trucks and helicopter. Drone footage then shows the helicopter suddenly going down under heavy fire from the Floralandians, destroying both Westphalian trucks in an explosion that was heard well upriver. The Floralandians ultimately abandoned the ambulance in the jungle before rendezvousing with a riverine extraction force.

With the bulk of these details just surfacing in recent days, it is uncertain what will happen next. President Ren concluded his speech in dramatic fashion, with his staff unveiling a backdrop of 15 photos of decorated Westphalian soldiers in their dress uniforms. President Ren declared that the photos were both those killed in action during the firefight and several soldiers who died from cordyceps, despite believing they had been inoculated. “These heroes are casualties of Floraland’s treachery and appalling disregard for international law”—victims who must be avenged. He ended his speech with a stern call for sweeping international action against Floraland, including criminal investigations, sanctions, and the immediate provision of military aid to Westphalia.

Floraland wasted no time in responding, acknowledging the operation while claiming it was conducted in full compliance with the law. Prime Minister Kado Peavey issued his own statement, highlighting a recent alleged Westphalian attack against the prized Sunflower Valley in northeastern Floraland—an attack which he said was the real violation of international law deserving of condemnation. The fiery accusations from both sides have stirred an intense global debate, setting high stakes at a critical point in the war.