

**Chief of Naval Operations
Adm. Jonathan Greenert**

**21st International Seapower Symposium Opening Remarks
17 September 2014**

Admiral Greenert: Thank you and good morning. It was absolutely tremendous to see all of you last night, if not all of you most of you, and your better half, for many of you, your spouses as well. Gardner, thanks for the introduction, and Tom [Inaudible] thank you so much. Your collective staff has done a wonderful job putting this together, our hosts.

I'd like to thank actually Secretary Mabus who is a great partner, a great boss, and a man of great interest in what we are here to do, what we're about today as well as Deputy Secretary Work who sent us that good video.

I'd like to welcome and acknowledge Admirals Ferguson, [Gordy, Harris and Howard], my guys, if you will, your partners out there around the world. My Navy component commanders and my Vice Chief of Naval Operations. They'll be here through the week and I encourage you to engage with them. We're pretty close. They tell me what they need. They have no problem with that. So if there are needs, please share with them as well as the conversations that you and I will have.

I'm really in awe and appreciation to see so many heads of Navy here today and delegates, heads of Coast Guard and people representing their Navy and their country. Meeting you last night and looking at your bios, and the time I've had in my tenure to work with you makes it, it humbles me and I'm very pleased to work with you. We have, as Secretary Mabus mentioned, Deputy Secretary Work mentioned, we have a lot of work to do but there's no better group of people out there leading around the world and I wanted to be with you.

I'd like to welcome for the first time attendees, the head of the Republic of China Navy as well as, the People's Republic of China Navy, excuse me, as well as the head of the Madagascar Navy who are joining us for the first time. It's very good to have you aboard, joining the collective group here. And I want to thank you again, all of you who brought your spouses. It was clear to me, Darlene didn't say this particularly but I know what she thought because she knows what she thinks about me. I married up, and I'm lucky to be here. Well so are a lot of you.

It's very clear. [Laughter]. I'm not saying that's how you got your job. I'm not going to say that. But I like you all, so I thought I'd give you a little tip.

Some of you have found this little pamphlet in your welcome packet from the Navy Exchange, and I'm not hawking for the Navy Exchange. They make plenty of money. They don't necessarily need your business, but I chatted with some of you last night and I said so, you know, did you get out and around? Are you going to do any shopping? Some of you, like a lot of us, said oh well, I'm too busy or I just don't know where to do it. Some of you don't have your spouses here and you're going to go home with nothing. I don't know. I guess things are different [inaudible]. [Laughter]. But I would do that at my own risk.

So I happened to just notice here that one thing they have on sale are, well, women's [inaudible], women's glasses, women's handbags, women's jewelry, all 20, 30 or 50 percent off. Oh wait, there's women's perfume. Buy one, get 50 percent off. [Laughter]. Now we're just trying to help you out here, guys. [Laughter]. I'll leave that to you, a little bit of a tip and you all take it from there.

Another kind of -- On Friday Darlene and I have asked the spouses to join us for the particular lecture by Dr. Dave [Tibley] on the impact of the global change, I think a topic that interests all of us and will certainly interest our partners as well. So we're going to have him here Friday morning.

I encourage you to visit the ships that we have here. We have different types of ships for whatever catches your interest. They'll be here through the end of the week.

And as Gardner mentioned, the first International Seapower Symposium was in 1969. Forty-five years ago. And many of those delegates were veterans of World War II. Think about that. When this thing all started. So it was pretty darn different then, right? We were in a Cold War, the famous Cold War. But our predecessors recognized the value of international dialogue and Gardner put quoted Arleigh Burke who we feel really got us into this idea of international engagement and partnership and the value that it would bring to us. And the need is more critical than ever before. Secretary Work mentioned it, Secretary Mabus mentioned it. You all understand it.

But I want to underline, if you will, to talk about what I think we can do together a little bit today.

The International Seapower Symposium here is not a stand-alone. It's just part of a continuum that many of us attend. I see many who have [been at] other seapower symposia and they're very important too. I suggest we can build on the progress from these other forums that we have. The Inter-American Naval Conference, the Western Pacific Naval Symposium, the International Maritime Seapower Symposium, Regional Seapower Symposium, Indian Ocean Seapower Symposium. You get my point. [NDX], [DNDX], all of these have value and we can learn from each and bring these things forward. Bring the lessons learned forward as we move.

It's about networking, folks. It's about finding partners in and out of uniform that we know we can trust and we have confidence in working with. And building that trust and confidence and learning to take risks with each other. Sharing ideas in respect to this, disregarding the size of the Navy. Every single person in here, regardless of who they represent, the size and the location has value that we need as a collective group because many of you, all of you have fairly unique and different challenges from the other person. Everyone here is a leader and everyone here can learn from the other.

So let me touch on just a few things here, then we'll take a break and we'll start rolling into really the meat of this seapower symposium.

A little bit about what we have in common, what I think we can work on.

First of all, we do represent, the collective group here today, 113 different nations -- 112 plus your host here, the United States. But there are different languages, clearly, that's what the flags show us. Different cultures for sure. Different histories. Different governments. Different politics. And that brings different policies that we in uniform work under and work for. But that said, we have a lot in common. It's been said before, but the common environment is the sea. The common interest -- stability and economic growth. The common responsibility that I share and that you share with your nation, and that is the security in our homeland and the security of the sea.

And we have common challenges. They are numerous, but they're not [inaudible]. The environment, the physical environment is the sea, and while we here call her the cruel mistress, the one you can't be sure of, the one you really can't count on all the time. There's still politics with the sea. Agnostics with religion. There's no history there with [pots] in the sea and [inaudible] what your [inaudible] with her is. And we all marvel at the power and the beauty of the sea. But the fact remains, the fact that's out there, we have collectively, our countries have lost more ships at sea due to storms than in any battles. It's the international medium, and we'll frequently interact, our navies, because it is the international medium. We'll travel to an ungoverned space, the global commons. It's unique, as the Secretary said, among this business that we do, [inaudible] to go to the sea. It has no borders.

We have common interests, as I mentioned. All of us raised our hand and in some manner took an oath to your country to protect your homeland, and to protect the sea and security of the sea lanes. We all want prosperity. We want the global economy to grow. We all benefit from that. That global trade system. The Secretary said, 90 percent of the high volume of our trade goes by sea. And those shipping lanes are critical for the world economy and the structure. You disrupt it, any other part -- disrupt it in Asia, it affects Africa. Disrupt it in Europe, it affects South America. Vice versa. We are hyper-connected. We're not just regional. We can't survive alone in this one given region.

Again, we have common responsibilities to ourselves, and to our nations. We all organize, train and equip and we send to sea capable ships and crews. We all are responsible to recruit those people, retain those people, and to train and exercise them so they can go to sea and operate safely. It's our job to instill confidence in our sailors, to make them proficient as good sailors at sea.

But most important, we all promote good order at sea. We all abide by international law. And we are collectively the face of our nations. So how we react and act at sea is going to be a reflection on our nation and we should interact in a predictable and professional manner.

When our folks pass each other at sea, a small boat that doesn't have much, a merchant or whatever, I don't think they're looking for company, per se. They're looking at the flag on that, and we become the face of our nation.

So we have common challenges. Maritime terrorism; transnational criminal organizations; piracy; trafficking -- that's narcotics, that's people, that's weapons; natural disasters -- a lot of natural disasters recently; and the whole [inaudible] life at sea. Awareness in the maritime environment, that's what we all really are [vying] for. That's what we want. And protecting those sea lines of communication.

None of us can address it alone. We just can't do it. We don't have enough resources. So we need the resources collectively. The capabilities, the skills, and the awareness that each of us have, as I said before, and in some way uniquely in our area of responsibility and we need to [inaudible].

The common challenges bring us common opportunities, though. So let's look during these series of seapower symposia, these meetings, to find and unite in a common cause. Those opportunities we have to strengthen our individual and our collective skills, and the behavior of the profession of being a sailor. Many of us have unique ideas to, as I said, organize, train and equip, to recruit and to retain, to perform humanitarian assistance, disaster relief. Some are better than others. Let's bring them in here and share.

Search and rescue. Maritime security. Counter-piracy. Some do this incredibly well, others don't. And information sharing. Working together when a crisis hits. As we're finding, we're all finding time is of the essence in these crises. You wait two or three or four or five days to get organized, this is casualties at sea, this is loss of information.

So to seize these common opportunities we need a global network. The power of collaboration. Pull together the capabilities and the resources for the common good. We need a flexible and adaptable framework out there at sea.

The minimal requirements to participate, there's not much. You've got to be willing to collaborate. No special equipment, no formal agreements, although formal agreements could be made if desired. And anyone can plug and play if we stick together and talk about this.

We already are in essence a global network. I had my guys go out and just take a snapshot at sea. How many ships do we have out there, maybe greater than about 700 tons. How many ships do we have out there at any given time that we know about, are

involved in some sort of operation where nations are getting together? That number is about 800. Eight hundred ships. We have the old thing about a thousand ship Navy and somebody said well, that's just a number. [Inaudible] that number. About 800 ships on any given day are out there, and the linkages are pretty strong. They're out there in places that are still growing and coming together.

As the Secretary mentioned, after Typhoon Haiyan, the United Nations Interim Force to [Lebanon], Maritime Task Force, Coalition Task Force 150, 151, 152, and the 5th Fleet. The operation to search for Malaysian Airline 370. The operation for the prevention of chemical weapons. It goes on and on and on. Those operations go around the world. A variety of regional networks are out there. And they're forced to deal with local, sometimes region, sometimes global challenges and they're under no one single particular command and control [of a] power.

This week we're going to have lectures, we're going to have panels, we're going to have briefs, we're going to have regional breakouts. We're going to have sidebars. We're going to have tours. Heck we're even going to have a [feed], drink and dance. And let's take that opportunity to look at the fundamental issues. The future trends of maritime security, enhancing coalition operations, and maritime locations, and climate change. Let's go into the regional solutions and the initiatives and let's find out what you all have that we can apply elsewhere or that we can apply everywhere. Let's collaborate. Spend time together, get to know each other. Build those personal relationships. Share the insights, the listening and learning.

If you assume that each of you who is a chief, that's about 30 years of experience. We have about 2500 years of maritime experience here in the room and where we'll be for this week.

So let's chart the course, get the priorities and goals, put some things down and keep that continuity going as we move on.

On behalf of my Navy and my nation and the War College, I look forward to the upcoming dialogue. Thank you very much for coming. Let's have a great symposium. Enjoy yourselves. Thank you.

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