

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
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Since I have the honor and privilege of leading the United States Navy and Marine Corps, it's not surprising that I want to talk today about global security from a maritime perspective. But with this audience I want to focus on something that I've been thinking about a lot lately: the relationship between maritime security and political stability and economic progress.

In our world today, rapid change is more than just the new normal, the pace of that change increases with each passing day. Partly in response to both the pace and the change itself, our world is filled with increasing uncertainty. Amazing technological advances are expanding opportunities, lengthening our lifespans and bringing us closer together. But shrinking and flattening our world in some cases has led to increased friction, social disorder, political upheaval and increased risk from asymmetric threats.

The importance of the maritime domain in international trade and global affairs has, as Deputy Secretary of Defense Work said, has never been greater. You all know the statistics: eighty percent of the world's population lives within 60 kilometers of the sea. Ninety percent of all global trade goes by sea. In this internet-connected world, 95 percent of all voice and data go under the ocean by cables. And this isn't just phone calls and emails; this is all the data that keeps the world's financial system going. So even if you live in a landlocked country, in this 21st century you're dependent almost absolutely on the world's oceans.

We, as you all are keenly aware, live in an age of globalization and worldwide trade. The shelves of stores in the United States like Target, or the Lu Lu Hypermarkets of the Middle East, or Seibu Department stores in Japan, are stocked through “just in time” delivery with products that come from all over the world. Our commercial and economic success across the globe is still tied to the sea.

The economic success I’m talking about is jobs and prices and the availability of goods and services. Millions of people around the world have jobs tied directly to seaborne international trade. In the United States alone it’s almost 40 million jobs. It isn’t just people who work at ports or on ships. Farming and fashion, energy and electronics, manufacturing of all kinds are dependent on imports and exports around the world. We at Navy analyzed the impact if a major maritime chokepoint was closed restricting trade. Within about six weeks after such an event, gasoline could quadruple and a liter of milk would almost triple in price.

Many of the nations represented here today sit aside the world’s maritime transit routes and straits, but all of us understand just how vital these sea lanes are. Leading economists at some of our universities have linked the stability and smooth functioning of our globalized economy to the presence of our navies and their collective work in keeping those sea lanes open for legitimate, peaceful commerce for the last 70 years.

And I want to repeat that phrase: the presence of our navies. Uniquely, presence is what navies around the world provide, ready for any challenge that might come over the horizon. Unlike

garrison forces which are called out only in times of need, a Navy's tempo is not that different in times of peace compared to times of conflict.

As a result, naval forces can get to where they need to be very quickly, and a lot of times they're already there. Because our presence is so constant, we don't escalate tensions, we ease them.

We bring everything we need with us to accomplish the mission. Any mission that is given from deterring or defeating an adversary, to providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

And we can stay a long time. It is the job of navies to be where it matters, when it matters.

In the United States Navy and Marine Corps, I have focused on how we support our people, build the right platforms, power those platforms, and develop and strengthen international partnerships. Those four priorities – people, platforms, power and partnerships – are central to our successful execution of our mission and our ability to maintain a global presence.

In the 21st century, again as Deputy Secretary of Defense Work said, no single nation has the capacity to protect and defend the global system alone. To keep the sea lanes open. To protect peaceful commerce. All nations and all people that seek freedom of movement and trade and also security have to carry their own share of the responsibility.

A collective effort will ensure our navies provide that necessary presence. Whether in blue water or brown, we can help assure stability and security, creating and strengthening global relationships, providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, deterring adversaries when

possible, and meeting and defeating threats when necessary. We have to remember that collective security is just that, collective.

It isn't just the economic benefits in our individual countries that matter. We also benefit from the way that shared economic success helps us limit conflict and war. Maritime instability can contribute to unrest and violence, stoking the fires of conflict. By helping to secure the world's oceans, and respond to crises early to limit escalation, our navies and our marine corps play a vital role in the world.

Our world's maritime tradition is nearly as old as human history. From harbors near the Arctic Circle and around the Mediterranean, through the littorals of Asia to the shores of Africa, the Americas and Australia, human civilizations have launched one great fleet after another toward the horizon. In this country, those who founded the United States recognized the importance of the Navy. In fact, our Constitution mandates that Congress shall establish and "maintain a Navy."

Again and again naval forces have proven themselves the most immediate, the most capable and the most adaptable option when a crisis develops. Whether we're exercising together in the Baltic or in Southeast Asia, operating against pirates in the Gulf of Aden, cooperating in Asia to provide disaster relief as we did in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan, the strong cooperation between America and all the nations represented here today makes a difference all over the globe. Because our presence matters.

Let me give you just a few examples of our operations with many of you over the summer. I travel a lot in this job, one, to visit our men and women in uniform around the world, but also and very importantly to work with you and your government leaders. In my five years as Secretary I've been to 120 different countries and traveled over 900,000 air miles. This past summer I had the honor of visiting a lot of people in this room on two trips around the world.

In Hawaii, and the central Pacific aboard our new Littoral Combat Ship, I had a chance to see and to observe parts of RIMPAC and to see our navies working together at sea. The navies of 22 nations participated in the largest maritime exercise in the world, including friends and allies from Asia but also many of our friends from much further away like the Norwegian Navy who sent a warship all the way from the Baltic Sea. During the exercise these forces worked together on everything from search and rescue and humanitarian missions, to counter-piracy tactics and special ops training.

On that trip we stopped in Singapore and I was there for the start of the 20th annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercise, or CARAT, with the Republic of Singapore Navy. The connections between the nations of the Pacific and the Indian Oceans will be critical to maintaining security in that area and stability in the future. Exercises like these help build positive and trusting relationships.

While I was in Singapore, and seeing the start of the exercise, reminded me of two things. First, while there may be a lot of talk about our rebalance to the Pacific in reality the American Navy has always been there. Ever since our frigate USS ESSEX sailed for Southeast Asia in 1800 our

Navy and Marine Corps have worked with partners and friends in the region. And second, it demonstrates the vital importance of cooperation in the Pacific, in the littorals, all through Asia, through the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. Developing a code of conduct and building trusted methods of communication between the navies of the region is vital to future stability.

As we crossed the world I also stopped to meet with partners in Eastern Europe. While I was in the region, our Marine Corps Black Sea Rotational Force was involved in PLATINUM LION, a series of exercises on the shores of the Black Sea. Working with many of our NATO allies, and partners from Europe and Central Asia, these exercises help us build stability on the eastern frontiers of Europe and encourage security in a region that has been in turmoil for several months.

Our Marine Corps Black Sea force regularly moves between countries, training with our partners, monitoring security developments there and building our ability to operate together for future contingencies. Our destroyers, two of which are now based out of Rota, Spain, and two more will come next year, have also been conducting patrols in the Eastern Mediterranean and operating in the Black Sea, providing that ever critical presence. The annual multi-national exercise SEA BREEZE has just finished there, helping us all build security and stability.

Earlier in the summer I also visited BALTOPS and had discussions with navies and leaders in the region. Our continued involvement in the Baltic demonstrates how important the waters of Europe remain to international security, and show how the strength of NATO matters in the 21st century, just as it did in the past.

I've also had the opportunity this summer to visit a number of friends in Africa. The world's attention has been drawn to Africa, not the least of which is the challenges of maritime security along the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea. Africa as a whole has more than 16,000 miles of coastline on two oceans, one sea. It has four major maritime chokepoints, vital trade routes and fertile ocean resources. The growth and development taking place in Africa today has had, and will have, significant impact on the maritime world.

On that trip I went to see our Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force at their bases in Moron, Spain and Sigonella, Italy, and see first-hand how they are engaging with Africa and responding to crisis as they did recently by supporting our Embassy personnel in Libya. Just yesterday, here, a lot of West African CNOs met for a dialogue about security in and around the Gulf of Guinea, and developed forward looking plans to work together in the region.

Last month, I visited the USS AMERICA in South America as she made her way through Chilean waters, through the Straits of Magellan. And earlier this year I visited Australia and New Zealand and some of the islands in the southern Pacific to see how these nations, and many more, are working together on the concerns we all share.

Maintaining that naval presence for all of us is even more challenging because of the fiscal environment in which we live and operate. This is true for virtually everybody. Like just about every country, we're taking a much closer and a lot more stringent look at our budget. But a tighter defense budget doesn't – and shouldn't – mean a weaker defense or a reduced

commitment to security. In fact, even with fewer dollars, our Navy is building more ships because we have changed the way we do business. We've used some of the basics of sound business and are building more ships with less money.

But the reality of cooperative security, and maintaining this global system that we all rely on, is that everyone has a critical and important role to play. The world is safer, more secure, and more successful when we stand together.

A recent study by our Naval History and Heritage Command titled "You Cannot Surge Trust" reinforced that fact. Naval operations are fundamentally human endeavors. Success or failure is based on professional relationships and human decision making as much as it is defined by technology or hardware. People and partnerships matter just as much as platforms.

Many of those partnerships have been forged here. Over 40 years, the International Seapower Symposium has been hosted at the Naval War College. As the President of the War College said, so many of the people in this room have been here in other capacities; studying, learning, meeting each other, growing up together in our sea services. Engagement between our officers and engagement between our navies, engagement between the leaders of the world's naval forces is a central component of building those critical human connections.

Meetings between senior leaders and bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises are what build the international relationships, the inter-operability, and the trust which is central to our globalized world.

And Sailors have a lot in common with other Sailors. It doesn't matter where you are from. One of the heads of our partner navies in Asia, who is here today, once offered me his view which I have quoted many times, of the difference between soldiers and sailors. Soldiers, he said, by necessity focus on boundaries and obstacles, man-made or natural. They are constantly looking down at the ground. Sailors on the other hand, look out. They look to the open sea and see no boundaries, they see no obstacles. They look out and they see nothing but possibilities.

All of you here today are Sailors and Marines, you are focused on that horizon, on possibilities, on future opportunities. All of us in this room face a very similar task. We have almost the same job. One of the jobs that we have is explaining to our governments and our citizens why navies matter. Because when we are doing our jobs, usually we're a long way from home. And we are certainly out of sight of the people we are protecting and defending. We have to make sure they understand how important the maritime world is to our success economically and to our security. We have to encourage them to look outward, across the sea, to that horizon.

Working together, sharing our security responsibilities and maintaining our presence around the world to assure the continuation of growth in our international economy, I have no doubt that together we will meet every challenge that comes over that horizon of the 21st Century.

We have to remain, in the motto of the United States Navy, *Semper Fortis: Always Courageous.*

And as the U.S. Marine Corps motto proclaims, *Semper Fidelis: Always Faithful.*

Thank you.