Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations  
Brazilian Naval War College  
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Admiral Richardson:

First, before I begin I want to say that it is an absolute honor and a pleasure to be here in Brazil and in Rio de Janeiro. It’s been a hope of mine since I became the U.S. Chief of Naval Operations to come here. It’s taken far too long, but it’s been a wonderful visit. We had a terrific time at the Naval Headquarters here in Rio learning about the Brazilian Navy and literally learning how much we have in common.

This relationship rides on the very good friendship that I share with my counterpart, the Brazilian Chief of Navy, Admiral Leal Ferreira. So I want to thank you, sir, for hosting me here. We became Chiefs of Navy at about the same time. We’ve become very close. However, Admiral Leal Ferreira is much wiser than me, and so I go to him very often for advice. So it’s great to be here in Brazil. Thank you so much for your warm hospitality.

On behalf of the Sailors and Civilians of the United States Navy I am honored to be here in Brazil. And again, thanks Admiral Leal Ferreira and Admiral Chavez for their kind hospitality.

It is a privilege to be here at the Naval War College. A real pleasure. And in the spirit of celebration that’s gathered us here today we celebrate the longstanding partnership between Brazil and the United States as we continue to work together to defend global maritime security.

We celebrate our inter-American values, our shared ethos in a prosperous, orderly and secure hemisphere. And we celebrate this institution, a center for advancing naval thought, for Brazilian and U.S. officers alike. This is an intellectual center which forms a foundation for the Atlantic partnership in the Western Hemisphere. The United States in the North Atlantic and Brazil in the South Atlantic. And institutions like this War College are a physical manifestation of the ties of friendship that binds our two services. In my mind, nation-to-nation relationships are very very important, particularly in these times. These partnerships. And we come together with our shared values, our shared Western values. And it has always been a military-to-military relationship which can serve to accelerate these international relationships.
In addition to sharing values we share so much of a common culture, our military culture, and I would have to say, although I’m a little bit biased, that among the militaries I would say the Navy-to-Navy relationships are first among equals. We can put to sea together; we can go out in international waters. We have to operate together. This is legitimate work that we must do to operate safely and effectively. And that shared understanding, the shared shaping influence of the sea, withstanding any seas, any winds, any weather. The Navy-to-Navy relationships serve as a strong and stable keel for the international relationship. This keel provides the underlying structure for stability, for naval cooperation. And we should say for American naval cooperation for indeed we are all Americans here.

This stable keel allows other elements of national power, the diplomatic elements, the economic elements, to do their work, while we in our military-to-military, our Navy-to-Navy relationship provide the stability and the commitment to stability that allows our ships at sea to sail together.

And as many of you know, here in this academic institution the United States and Brazil have worked and sailed together to defend the maritime security, our maritime security for hundreds of years. Indeed, as we were talking about at lunch today, our relationship goes back to the very early existence of the United States. The USS Constitution, one of our very first frigates, still in commission today. The oldest warship in commission in the United States Navy. It visited Brazil several times in the early 19th century for repair and refit and resupply. And it was shortly after taking provisions in Salvador that the Constitution went to sea during the War of 1812 and defeated the British ship HMS Java in one of the most noteworthy battles in the War of 1812. That would it not have been possible were it not for the hospitality of Brazil to get the Constitution ready to fight.

The U.S. chose Brazil as the first South American country to which to send a naval attaché in 1910. In 1914 U.S. officers worked together, shoulder-to-shoulder, with Brazilian counterparts to establish EGN which started decades of a partnerships and personnel exchanges.

And like the United States, Brazil remained neutral through much of World War I. However, eventually declaring war on Germany in 1917, the only South American country to do so, and began
working with our partners -- the United States, France and Great Britain -- to conduct convoy operations and security patrols. Brazil also forward deployed a naval position to Dakar and Gibraltar to patrol the approaches of the Mediterranean Sea. We continue our partnership and cooperate very closely as naval technology and operational concepts evolve in the inter-war period and through a system of personnel exchanges, again, we jointly develop and share technologies.

Now I’m a submarine officer. And one very personally meaningful example of our partnership is that of Admiral Charles Lockwood. Charles Lockwood eventually went on to lead the U.S. submarine campaign in the Pacific during World War II. In support of, as part of the U.S. naval mission to Brazil he worked with Brazilian partners to develop a new design for submarine escape in the 1920s. The United States incorporated this joint design, this joint technology into its submarine plans, preserving the lives of many submariners during World War II. And at the same time, Admiral Lockwood provided the U.S. technology with in the form of Momsen lung, an underwater rebreather. As I said, Admiral Lockwood later went on to command submarine forces in World War II.

And as you all know, during World War II the Brazilian Navy escorted more than 3,000 merchant ships with more than 16 million tons under their protection. During that time more than 3,000 ships, only three ships were lost -- a testament to the effectiveness and the professionalism of the Brazilian Navy.

The United States and Brazil jointly sank 15 enemy submarines. The German U-Boat, U-199 was sunk outside of Rio de Janeiro Harbor through a combined effort by U.S. Navy aircraft and the Brazilian Air Force. Maritime troop transport provided under the U.S. and Brazilian escort allowed the Brazilian expeditionary force to land in Italy where it fought with distinction and set an allied record for the number of continuous days in contact with the enemy. The Brazilian expeditionary force also accepted the surrender of a German division, helping to bring the war in Europe to a close.

Again, our partnership continued after the war. The U.S. and Brazil routinely conducted joint ASW exercises and other training exercises at sea. We continue to exchange technology and support regular inter-American dialogue on maritime security issues in our hemisphere and around the world.
Brazil and the United States continue to work together. We both support multinational efforts to promote maritime security such as peacekeeping operations in Haiti; Operation Gallant Phoenix in Jordan; and Exercise Time Lapse underway as we speak where Brazil has routinely occupied a command role.

For decades we have exchanged officers in our schools, in our staffs, on our ships. In fact, we have proudly trained our midshipmen under the inspection of Brazilian officers in ship navigation. Admiral Leal Ferreira and others provided that instruction during their time at our Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Brazilian officers study at Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, notably Astronaut Colonel Marcos Pontes. We also have a robust exchange with EGN’s sister college in Newport at our Naval War College. And Vice Admiral Frederico Giannini was a member of the first Naval Command Class in 1957, the first of 56 Brazilian officers who have attended in the past 60 years. A program that has included four Brazilian heads of Navy and 30 Brazilian flag officers who studied operations and strategy in the United States.

So clearly, this partnership between our two navies runs deep. These are strategic friendships that are formed by virtue of these exchanges.

We begin our friendships, we get to know each other as junior officers, mid-grade officers, and then your officers rise to leadership positions in the Brazilian Navy; our officers rise to leadership positions in the United States Navy. This makes that agile and responsive operations—joint—operations so much easier because you can pick up the phone, you can call your friends, and there’s a bond of trust and confidence there that has existed for decades. That makes everything so much easier.

That ability and agility in these times are so important, riding on that foundation of trust and confidence. Important to both Brazil and the United States. We’re continuing to build relationships through these exchanges, through these exercises, through this epic exchange of technology help both of our countries to adapt in a rapidly changing maritime security environment.

We are advancing that today, and I just want to provide a brief snapshot of the United States Navy and the world that both of
our navies operate in, around the world, in the North and South Atlantic.

As I speak to you today we have about 90 ships and submarines of the U.S. Navy deployed around the world, three aircraft carriers and three large amphibious assault ships, about 50,000 U.S. Sailors supporting our mission. And it’s a fair question to ask, what are we doing with this force? Well, a lot of it is working with our allies and partners. We have, for instance, the USS Gunston Hall, deployed for Southern Seas 2018, an annual collaborative deployment that includes a combined multinational staff, part of which consists of Brazilian naval officers. And while this deployment has been important for several reasons, one notable accomplishment of late is the incorporation of unmanned aircraft systems to increase the overall maritime domain awareness.

So just as Admiral Lockwood pioneered new technology during the inter-war period, so we continue that today.

The end result of these naval exchanges and exercises is overall the establishment of a collaboration between our inter-American institutions and a posture that helps us to confront shared security challenges and that keeps this hemisphere prosperous, orderly and secure.

The foundation of any good partnership, I believe, is a shared perception of the world. We must look at the same things and see them the same.

So in the interest of taking a look at how we might see the world, I thought I would share a few pictures and allow us to think together about our modern security environment.

We’re all professionals in both of our countries. There are lots of people who see the world like this. If you appreciate that, it’s a map of the world, and you can see almost all of the activity on this map is contained in the land. You have the political boundaries, you have the roads, you have the railroads, the cities. So much of the geography is described on the land. And there’s this vast blue connective tissue between the land which pretty much remains unlabeled and you might be lucky to get the name of the ocean put on the map.

I think to look out in the audience, most of us see the world much closer to something like this, where our attention is drawn
much more towards the oceans, the blue. In fact it’s more accurate that we view our world like this.

One has to appreciate the vibrant activity on, above and under the seas. We see the strategic areas where sea lanes converge. Many of them here in South America. Many of them on the coast of Brazil.

American prosperity for Brazil and the United States and our navies is directly linked to maritime security. We all rely on these sea lanes for the safe and secure transportation of goods, people, and information in the modern time. Both of our countries are maritime nations when it comes to trade. The vast majority of our trade travels by sea. Ninety percent of the world’s trade travels by sea.

So our world is shaped as much by our identity as naval professionals as it is by our sense of national identity. This is why Navy to Navy relationships remain so important. We share this knowledge and cultures and shared values and the love and respect for the sea.

Focusing on this world map we can understand intuitively as naval professionals, we can appreciate the dynamism in the maritime environment, which I would say many of our citizens consider to be, if it’s considered at all, a relatively stagnant and stable environment, but in fact just the opposite is true. People have been going to sea for at least 8,000 years, and in the last 25 years of that history, the amount of maritime traffic on the seas has increased by 400 percent, which is an amazing statistic.

Ninety-nine percent of our international information flows on cables that run across the sea floor. In the Indo-Pacific, 33 percent of global trade travels through the South China Sea. The share of the world’s fish production has increased from 67 percent in the 1960s to 87 percent in 2014, an increase of more than 146 million tons.

Free seas enable the global energy market. Twenty percent of global oil is consumed and 33 percent of the world’s trade on the sea passes through the Strait of Hormuz. The seas provide the vast majority of our communication paths. Ninety-nine percent of our intercontinental communication travels along undersea cables. Only three percent of that traffic can be reconstituted by satellites. So you can see it’s very dynamic.
If you look to the top of the map and the bottom of the map, the Arctic is the smallest than it’s ever been in our lifetime. The smallest it’s been since we really started measuring it from satellites. That opens new sea lanes of communication across the north of the Eurasian continent. It’s given rise to access to continental shelves, and resources on those shelves that were simply inaccessible before the ice receded.

You can see areas on this map shaded in blue and purple. These are, this is access to oil and natural gas off-shore, again, technology allowing us to reach deeper and deeper into the ocean floor to access energy resources.

So while the density of maritime traffic has increased by a factor of four in the past 25 years, this access has fueled the world’s GDP which has roughly doubled in the same amount of time.

Looking forward, the seas will only become more important in the next ten years. Coastal megacities, those cities with a population of ten million people or more are expected to grow by at least tenfold. There are 31 megacities in the world today, will grow to 41 by 2030. The majority, the vast majority of those megacities reside along the coast.

We’re going to continue to get more and more of our food from aquaculture. It will increase by more than ten times in the next ten years. The sea will continue to increasingly provide the resources in addition to the sea lines that fuel our trade. So whether that transportation is of physical goods in a shipping container or electronic data in the cloud. The demand for maritime resources and free movement across the seas is only going to increase going forward, only going to become more important to our national prosperity.

This prosperity for all nations rests on security and order in the maritime domain. And partnerships like those between the United States and Brazil provide the foundation on which we can create that security and that world.

Brazil has long understood the ties between maritime security and national prosperity. Ninety percent of your trade goes by sea. It’s because of this that Brazil is such a high-end naval power today, deploying west to the Indian ocean, east to the Gulf of Guinea, providing maritime security far beyond the Americas, exporting security, helping other nations to address
maritime security issues in their waters such as, drug and human trafficking.

There are incredible opportunities for Brazil and the United States in the future to continue working together.

So the United States Navy will continue to remain a steady and dependable friend to the Brazilian Navy. I look forward to continuing and building the longstanding relationships we’ve enjoyed for over 100 years. And as we continue to lead together on global security issues there will be more opportunities to cooperate on those systems and processes that can enhance our ability to secure the seas across the world.

Our two nations, our two navies, have just recently concluded a host of important agreements that govern information, technical and personal exchanges, and now I would say is the time to continue to fulfill the potential that those agreements provide. We have built a bridge, now is the time to increase the traffic across that bridge.

Brazil and the United States both depend on maritime security which underwrites the system of order and prosperity. The effects of our maritime partnership, our deep maritime partnership, represents a particular system of values that are critical to preserve. We must come in and support this system of values. Maintaining a strong partnership is going to be essential to perpetuating the prosperity for both Brazil and the United States.

So in closing, I want to thank you once again for the honor and the privilege of being here at the Naval War College. This is indeed for me a celebration of a great partnership.

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