

Prepared Remarks of the Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
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Thank you, so much for that introduction. It is great to see Deputy Defense Minister Øystein Bø again. Just a few weeks ago we were together in Norway and I'm so glad to welcome him back to Washington.

In thinking about what I would say today, I was reminded what one of the international heads of Navy of one of our partners told me. He said there's one big difference between soldiers and sailors. Soldiers of every country, he said, by necessity are always focused on the ground; they see boundaries. They are constrained by things like borders, both natural and man-made boundaries, things like maps. But sailors of every nation look out over the ocean and see no boundaries, no barriers. They look out and see nothing but the horizon.

Over that horizon travels the world's commerce. We live in the most globalized economy in the history of man. Today, more than 90% of all world trade moves by sea. More than half of the world's oil shipments transit the ocean. Over 90% of international data transfer occurs not by satellite, but undersea cables. 80% of the world's population lives within 60 kilometers of the sea. In Europe about 90% of external trade, and 40% of internal trade, moves by water.

Clearly, freedom of the seas, freedom of navigation and security at sea is a strategic and vital security interest. And there is no questioning the direct link between global economic growth

since the end of World War II and the maritime security that has been maintained by the United States and by our European and other international partners.

Unfortunately, increased globalization also has meant increased risks of maritime terrorism, the illegal movement of drugs, weapons, and people, and the dangers of modern piracy. These challenges of maritime crime and the threats from both state-based and non-state actors are complex and dynamic and they are intertwined.

What our naval forces provide uniquely, what they provide in military terms, is presence. Presence means being at the right place not just at the right time, but all the time. Presence means being there to deal with whatever threats and challenges we may face. Presence helps deter potential conflicts, and it avoids escalating the situation when tensions rise. Naval presence is persistent. It does not infringe on national sovereignty. As a result, it offers leaders options, options from supporting diplomacy to providing stronger measures.

Our American maritime tradition has its foundations with our European partners. Throughout history European and Western countries, including our hosts here today, have launched fleets toward the far horizon, from the Arctic Circle and Baltic Sea, through the Straits of Gibraltar and from around the Mediterranean. Steeped in that history, from the earliest days of our Republic, those who founded the United States recognized the importance of the navy. In fact, in our Constitution, there is a provision that Congress “shall establish and maintain a Navy.”

The bonds between America and Europe, our common heritage and our shared values, remain as strong today as ever. The world is more secure, the world is more safe, and the world is more successful when Europe and the United States stand together and stand with all those who seek to advance the cause of freedom and mutual respect.

That is most concretely demonstrated in one of the world's strongest and most enduring defense partnerships: the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and our relationship with Norway and the nations of the European Union. It is true that America's defense planning calls for a new focus on the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans. But that same strategy also calls for renewing our commitment to our partnerships in Europe.

Our connection with the Royal Norwegian Navy is vital to our relationship with Europe. The history of your maritime forces, dating as far back as 955, is inspiring and our men and women have fought alongside each other numerous times. Your Sailors and Marines are some of the most professional in the world, and you have innovative and lethal ships and submarines. Time and again you demonstrate what superior trained people and superior platforms give a nation and a Navy. As President Obama recently said, you punch way above your weight class.

As the United States' Secretary of the Navy I am responsible for both our Navy and the Marine Corps. This combination of two services in one team is unique, in that we deploy not just in times of conflict, but equally in times of peace. There are no permanent homecomings for Sailors or Marines and they usually do their jobs very far from home. That is how we – and our

international partners – maintain that presence necessary to keep global stability and secure the sea lanes.

Creating and maintaining that presence requires four components that I think every naval force has to focus on as we develop our maritime approach to the 21st century. Those four – and I work in a building obsessed with acronyms, words that start with the same letter -- People, Platforms, Power and Partnerships. I want to talk for a minute about each one, but truthfully they all relate to one another.

It is our people that are most important to the success of a Navy or the success of anything that we undertake. No matter how technologically advanced our platforms, no matter how technologically advanced our systems, nor how insightful our strategies, in Navy terms, they are really just gray metal or words on paper if they lack the people with the ability to bring them to life.

This year we are exercising close to your home during BALTOPS, but also on the other side of the globe when your Navy joins us for the first time at the Rim of the Pacific Exercise. When our ships and Marines exercise with our Norwegian and international partners it is the connection between the people that is most important to our future ability to operate together. It is one of the reasons we send so many of our officers to war colleges in Europe, and conduct exchange programs. To operate together, in any capacity, we have to learn together and work together. In today's complex, highly technical world, People matter more than ever.

The second priority is Platforms. The United States and our European allies have the most advanced platforms in the world. Yet the reality is, as we've begun to realize, that quantity begins to have a quality all its own. That is why building up our fleet has been a focus of mine for the past five years. Our ability to deliver things like humanitarian aid to places as far away as Haiti and the Philippines, to work together to develop maritime security in places like the Gulf of Guinea, to meet a crisis no matter where it pops up in the world depends on having the platforms with the capability on hand to execute those missions, and being in the right place, all the time.

Like most countries, America is 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. In fact, even with fewer dollars, our Navy is building a more ships because we have changed the way we do business. We've made some tough choices, we've been tough negotiators and we've increased things like competition, we are building more ships for less money. And we are keeping our commitments to Europe and around the globe.

But to be effective together, all nations and people that seek freedom and security have to carry their own share of the responsibility. Collective self-defense is just that, collective. That includes having the right platforms, the assets that are required to make credible alliances and to have that effective deterrent. Maintaining that presence is why Platforms matter.

It should come as no surprise that as the Secretary of the Navy I'm concerned about Power, or energy. Being present takes energy to get there, and to stay there. And navies have always led

when we've changed sources of energy. We went from sail to coal, coal to oil, and then the U.S. Navy pioneered the use of nuclear to power our warships.

Price spikes have cost our Defense Department and the Department of the Navy billions of dollars over the past few years, more than what we budgeted for fuel. And even in the Pentagon, finding a billion dollars is not easy. We don't have many places to go to find the money from price spikes from fuel – so we go to operations and training, or if the bill gets too big, it means fewer ships and fewer aircraft.

Even if the United States were to develop all its energy needs internally, the price would still be set on the global markets, and it makes energy a security issue. When a crisis anywhere in the world occurs – just look at Syria, Libya, anywhere – the price of oil spikes. Oil traders call this a security risk premium. The people of Europe know all too well that energy not only fuels weapons, but it can be used as a weapon itself.

I have set a goal for the United States Navy and Marine Corps that by no later than 2020 half of all our energy both afloat and ashore will come from non-fossil fuel sources. We are making a lot of progress toward that greater energy security. Energy and fuel is a security risk that we have to address through greater cooperation and sharing ways to diversify our energy sources. And so Power matters.

The final priority and a critical one because it increases the reach and effectiveness of the rest, is our Partnerships. It is the very reason that we are here today. The idea of these partnerships is

that none of us stands alone. From a maritime perspective, securing the global commons is a mission that no country can do on its own. It is a mission that will only be successful through cooperation and contributions from countries large and small. The counter-piracy operations we have been engaged in off the east coast of Africa is a perfect example. The Royal Norwegian Navy has played a vital role in those operations. Working with our Navy and Marine Corps in the region, as well as the EU task forces and our partners from the industry, together we have returned security and stability to the Gulf of Aden.

Together the U.S. Navy and the Royal Norwegian Navy face challenges around the world. The melting of the ice in the Arctic and the effects of climate change, from your northern shores to our Alaskan waters, make up a very real issue in need of cooperation and partnership. Norway's shipping industry is vital to the global economy, and you are as reliant on the security of that global system as we are in the United States. You may have a small Navy, but it is one of the most professional, proficient, and capable in the world, and you are a critical ally for our Navy and Marine Corps.

An important example of how we are working together is the Arctic Council. The only way to deal with the issues of climate change, commercial interests, and national sovereignty that are raised in the cold north is to work together. The United States is about to take over the Chair of the Council, and we look forward coordinating with Norway and all the other members to ensure the security of this vital region.

Working with partners around the world, we become more inter-operable. Together we can provide key training and develop the operational capabilities of like-minded countries and navies. This in itself increases stability for the global system, distributes the burdens and costs of maritime security, and makes us all safer. In this interconnected world, where you know better than anyone, the threats know no boundary, no international lines, the burden of security has to be shared, meaning, our Partnerships matter.

In my time as Secretary of the Navy I've traveled more than 815,000 miles. We've visited 112 countries, and I do that to meet our Sailors and Marines where they are deployed and I also do it to reinforce those partnerships. Just last month I spent several days in Norway meeting with your military and government leaders, including Deputy Defense Minister Øystein Bø. On all of my travels what impresses me is the incredible relationships our Sailors and Marines construct with our partners worldwide, the friendships formed, and the value of shared responsibilities and shared burdens.

For centuries, naval forces have proven themselves the most immediate, the most capable and the most adaptable option in defending Europe and responding to a crisis. Whether exercising together in the Baltic, operating against pirates in the Gulf of Aden, or working together to provide disaster relief around the world, the strong partnership between the United States and Norway makes a difference all over the globe. Presence matters.

Together, by maintaining our presence through our people, platforms, power and most importantly partnerships, we will defeat any threat, we will meet every challenge that comes across the maritime horizon of the 21st Century.

We will remain, as the United States Navy motto goes, Semper Fortis, Always Courageous.
From the U.S. Marine Corps, Semper Fidelis, Always Faithful.

Thank you very much.