

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
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Good morning to all of you. And thank you, Admiral Richardson, our great CNO. Thank you for your leadership and your efforts, and those – the staff, for coordinating this incredibly important event. And thanks also to Rear Admiral Jeff Harley for the Naval War College, everybody here, for hosting this event.

This is – as the CNO said, I'm circling around bookends on my career. I was in the Navy in 1970 here in Newport, and then to come back 46 years later to my – to the International Seapower Symposium brings me a lot of just pure joy. This War College continues to serve as an international professional university, where our officers and officers from around the world come together to learn and to learn from one another, and to address the issues that affect us all. And that's precisely why all of us are here today.

So, welcome. You are the leaders of the world's navies. And thank you for being here at the 22nd International Seapower Symposium. And thank you for welcoming me here to my fourth and final address to this audience as Secretary of the Navy.

As the CNO said, I've been Secretary for more than seven years now. And I've had the privilege to serve with three Chief of Naval Operations, and four Commandants of the Marine Corps. During my seven-plus years, I've traveled 1.3 million miles to more than – actually, exactly – 152 countries and territories around the world to visit you in your headquarters, to visit you on your ships, to get to know you personally.

And I've hosted a lot of people in this room, at the Pentagon, or at our Naval Academy in Annapolis, or here at the Naval War College. And it's been one of the great privileges of this job to get to know so many of you as chiefs of navy around the world.

And I've done these travels and these meetings because as all of you know, and all the maritime leaders know, you can surge equipment, you can surge people, but what you cannot surge is trust. For nearly half a century, ISS has served as a foundation on which that trust can be built. As the CNO said, this is a chance to get together and be candid with each other, talk to each other, I believe in his words, mix it up a little bit.

And it reminds us that while we represent individual navies, we each belong to a greater fellowship, the fellowship of the sea, forged by the timeless bonds of wind and wave. It reminds us that we in the maritime services don't view the world's oceans as bodies of water that separate us geographically, but rather we recognize them as connectors, a source of opportunity for us to

work together. Through these partnerships, we promote our shared goals, things like freedom of navigation and freedom of the seas. And those partnerships are developed here.

When I was getting ready for this speech, I was reminded of what one of our former CNOs said: The Navy has both a tradition and a future. And we look with pride and confidence in both directions. I share that sentiment, so today I want to look in both directions. I'll look back at some of the significant progress we've made together over the past seven years. And I want to look forward to the horizon to recognize how partnerships developed here at ISS will enable us to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

I first took office in May of 2009. And only a few months later, I spoke at the 19th International Seapower Symposium. I pledged then that by working together we could combat terrorism, by working together we could deter piracy, by working together we could make the effort to stop weapons proliferation and arms smuggling, by working together we could counter illicit trafficking of all sorts, by working together we could protect fisheries and the larger ocean environment. And we have worked together in a lot of ways.

In the Americas, we've collaborated literally from the top to the bottom at sea, and at the Inter-American Naval Conferences. During ICEX 2016, we worked together with Canada, Norway, and the U.K. in the increasingly important northern waters. Here in North America, just last week I was in Mexico, where my host was Admiral Soberon. And by the way, Admiral Soberon is the only other person in the world that bears the title secretary of the Navy. So he's the only person I can have a counterpart visit with – (laughter) – unlike the CNO and all the rest of you.

But we talked about there the many ways that we train together and operate together, including joining forces on saving the critically endangered porpoise, the vaquita. As we speak here today, Panama is hosting this year's UNITAS, extending its legacy and the longest-running multinational naval exercise in the world. A little bit further south, last year Brazil hosted UNITAS 2015, where we joined Cameroon, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and the United Kingdom to train across a full spectrum of operations. And during Southern Seas, I got to go through the Straits of Magellan.

Going to Africa, U.S. Navy and Marine Corps placing a high priority on that region for our maritime engagements, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea. That's why I hosted more than 30 African and European ambassadors at the Washington Navy Yard last summer, why at the last ISS we had a day set aside for the Gulf of Guinea, and why we held a Gulf of Guinea maritime security dialogue at the Naval Academy last fall with more than 50 nations present.

At each of these, we talked about lessons from Obangame Express, the French-led NEMO exercise, the Angola-hosted International Conference on Maritime and Energy Security, and Naval Forces Africa Turn the Lights On exercise. During that last event, we increased real-time AIS data by 80 percent, illuminated more than 50 non-AIS ships a day, increased our sea vision, maritime domain awareness tool logins by 15 percent, and increased greatly our overall tracking ability.

As part of Africa Partnership Station in 2015, U.S. Sailors and Marines, working alongside their British counterparts, worked to build maritime capacity to counter piracy and illicit trafficking in Angola, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo. In the classroom, 33 senior naval leaders from the maritime countries across Europe and Africa get together in Naples for the Combined Forces Maritime Component Commander Forces.

Each of these officers returned to their respective navies with new ideas and a strengthened sense of partnership. All this was a result of increased cooperation between partner nations and a commitment to maritime domain awareness. As Commodore Yawson of Ghana rightly noted, no one nation can do it alone. Putting our effort together with the assistance of international partners in the right direction.

In Europe, we participated in the Regional Security Symposium in Venice. Discussions started there continue to be reinforced by actions we take at sea together. And throughout the Mediterranean NATO ships are patrolling commercial routes to deter, disrupt, and defend against terrorist and other illicit activities as part of Operation Active Endeavor, standing NATO maritime and mine countermeasure groups are participating in large cooperative exercises to facilitate integrated responses for regional crises of any sort.

The European Union's Naval Forces Mediterranean are working together in Operation Sophia to interdict human trafficking and stem the loss of life at sea. The United States Sixth Fleet maintains a presence in the Mediterranean, and also in the North Atlantic and the Baltic and the Black Seas, securing sea lanes, hosting multinational exercises as our carrier strike groups transit through that area. Our maritime patrol aircraft operating from Greece and Italy enhance maritime domain awareness and support counter-ISIL efforts from Turkey.

We stationed four Aegis guided missile destroyers, equipped with ballistic missile defense capabilities in Rota, Spain. And these ships are available for multi-mission endeavors. This spring the USS Donald Cook joined the Swedish Navy in conducting anti-submarine warfare exercises hosted by Poland. And later in June, as part of BALTOPS, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Poland and Sweden trained in multiple missions throughout the Baltic.

The U.S. Marine Corps Black Sea Rotation Force in Eastern Europe is conducting the regular mil-to-mil engagements, building the capacity to increase our interoperability so we can respond together quickly to anything. I witnessed the future of that interoperability when our Great Green Fleet, an entire carrier strike group steaming on nuclear power and blended biofuels unloaded these fuels when it ported in Europe prior to entering the Suez.

In the Indo-Asia-Pacific, we joined together at the ASEAN defense ministers meeting, the Shangri-La Dialogue, and WESTPAC Naval Symposium. We created a code for unplanned encounters at sea, we published solidified maritime norms and expectations. And since our Navy will have 60 percent of our assets in the region by 2020, opportunities to collaborate at sea will continue to grow. Things like Malabar, Talisman Saber, RIMPAC – RIMPAC, which was incredibly successful this year. Not only do we have more nations participating, but we've increased the complexity and the range of missions in the them.

We've also used these to find more ways to share technologies. I mentioned the Great Green Fleet earlier. In RIMPAC 2016 nine separate countries offloaded biofuels from United States ships for use and for testing in their platforms – just one example of how we create operational flexibility and strategic advantages by working together.

In developing these partnerships we've had a lot of successes, and I'm sure we've fallen short from time to time too. But as Winston Churchill once said: Success is not final, failure is not fatal. It's the courage to continue that counts. We have to have that courage to continue in these partnership efforts.

The demand for sea services will only increase in the years and decades to come. We are living in a maritime century - 80 percent of the world's population lives within 100 kilometers of the sea. Ninety percent of trade, more than \$9 trillion of trade a year, travels by sea. And 99 percent of all voice and data goes under the sea in cables. So it's clear that the global economy and, in fact, the very livelihood of our nations, depends on freedom of the seas. It's also clear that our navies have been the ones that keep those sea lanes open for everyone – everyone engaged in peaceful commerce.

But now, unfortunately, the sea is equally accessible to those who wish to do us harm. And despite our efforts here and elsewhere, we find ourselves witness to a very large array of emerging security threats: Terrorists that target us around the world, in places like Paris, and Brussels, and Istanbul, Jakarta, Borno, and San Bernardino, California. Refugees from Syria and elsewhere, creating a humanitarian crisis on a scale not seen in Europe since the 1940s.

Contemporary threats can't be characterized exclusively as diplomatic or military or economic or legal. They don't aim to attack any one nation or even a group of nations. Instead, they target us indiscriminately and target our values, which is precisely why a cooperative, multinational approach is the best way to provide for our common defense. A global network of navies is best suited to deter any crisis and respond whenever a crisis occurs.

And it's because navies uniquely provide presence around the clock, that unrivaled advantage on, above, under and from the sea, reassures, it deters, and it give our leaders options in times of crisis. Navies aren't just in the right place at the right time. We're in the right place all the time. There's no next-best thing to being there. In every case, from high-end combat to irregular warfare to humanitarian assistance to disaster relief, it's naval assets that get on station faster, we stay longer, and we bring everything we need with us.

So it's up to us as navies to lead. That's why the United States adheres to the international norms set forth by the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, and why President Obama had pledged to support its ratification, and to uphold those principles. It's also why we've committed additional resources to the maritime domain. Our fleet is growing. We're going to surpass 300 ships by the end of this decade. And as we allocate those ships to where they're needed the most, being there applies to more and more locations worldwide.

From the Northern Passage to the Straits of Magellan, from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea, from the Gulf of Oman to the Bay of Bengal, and throughout the Pacific, the U.S.

Navy will be present, as we have been for seven decades. But we can't limit ourselves just to thinking about geography. In our Navy, we're seeking to find new and innovative solutions to asymmetric problem sets. We're investing in a lot of technologies, as you are, like cyber, unmanned, 3-D printing, swarming vehicles, directed energy.

As we do, we're focusing on making these open architecture, so that we can ensure interoperability with our partners, from the language we speak to the tactics we employ. As we develop these new technologies, we will continue to work with partners around the globe. To better capitalize on our investments, all of us – all of us – have to invest in our own security. And that means more than just weapons and equipment. It means upgrading and standardizing critical infrastructure like ports and roads and airfields, that allow us to train and operate efficiently and effectively together as combined forces.

Integrating enables us to maximize economic prosperity, to maintain international order, to promote security. As a whole, we've become greater than the sum of our parts. We've accomplished a lot together. And we will continue to do so. We have to look for opportunities to cooperate at every turn, even when they seem unlikely or have been unattainable. The world is a more secure and a more prosperous place because of the partnerships we build here at ISS, and elsewhere.

While the challenges to those ties that bind us together will never cease, we cannot allow them to fray under stress. Sailors never do. That's what makes us unique. The head of one of our navies in the world told me several years ago that the difference between soldiers and sailors is that soldiers look down. They look at maps. They look at lines. They look at obstacles. Sailors look out. They look at the horizon. They see no obstacles. They see no lines. They see only opportunities.

This symposium is one of those opportunities. So I encourage you, look to the horizon. Do what is possible through partnerships. Talk to each other. Get to know each other better. As the CNO said, mix it up. Debate different courses of action. Learn our strengths and weaknesses. How can we work together? And finally, to all of you, our international partners, the fellowship of sailors, and my friends with whom I've met so often in so many places around the world, I wish you, for the last time in this role, fair winds and following seas.

And may you remain in the years and decades to come, as we say in our Navy motto, *Semper Fortis*, Always Courageous, and in the motto of the United States Marines, *Semper Fidelis*, Always Faithful. Thank you all very much.