



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet  
Republic of Korea Navy 10th International Sea Power Symposium  
Seoul, Republic of Korea  
Admiral Patrick M. Walsh  
September 13, 2010**

It is an honor to be among so many maritime professionals gathered here today. I am especially grateful to our host and conference organizers who put together this excellent program. You have afforded all of us a unique opportunity – at an important time – to meet maritime and naval leaders, operators, practitioners and colleagues who see the need and sense the urgency to work the critically important issues related to maritime security.

I am here this morning to share the perspective of the U.S. Pacific Fleet on emerging challenges to maritime security, on the opportunities we see for maritime cooperation and the benefit we all derive from high seas freedoms...but I will also share with you that for my colleagues and my country, this time of year is also a time of a painful reminder in our past.

I was in Washington, DC and received some of the initial reports on USS COLE in October of 2000 – I was underneath the flight path of American Airlines Flight #77 that struck the Pentagon on 9/11/01. We were stunned in disbelief. The brutality of the attack was inconceivable. We were grief-stricken. For those of us in the armed forces, it was a time of shock, guilt, anger, a period of sad reflection, then finally...acceptance and with it, resolve. Once we moved beyond our own emotional response to the attack, we looked inward and examined ourselves, our readiness, our mindset, and determined that we were not prepared for strategic surprise...in short, we had failed to imagine the possibility of such a brutal attack as well as the overwhelming response from friends and partners that came with it. In the weeks and months that followed, what was most impressive was the demonstration of commitment through all forms of support, from a long, growing list of allies across the world.

From that point forward, in my personal opinion, we made a commitment to invest ourselves intellectually so that we could understand how to prepare for the era that the world had entered.

One of our single greatest challenges is to understand the nature of a changing security landscape – to recognize it and understand the resource implications and associated defense priorities derived from it. I would suggest that this requires an examination of the contours of the security environment, so that we understand not only the nature but the source of conflict. Those assessments serve to inform, develop and guide how we chart the course for the future.

I would offer to describe a global view and start with a world map that simply compares the number of countries that comprised the community of nations in the days immediately following World War II with the number of countries that exist in the international system today. It represents staggering growth (from 51 to 192) and exemplifies the dramatic impact that colonialism and dominion have had on a sense of historic grievance, identity, ethnicity, and sovereignty in world politics...these disputes and claims, have real tangible and practical consequences that continue to fuel nationalistic passions today.

If we were to focus that global chart on Asia-Pacific, we see its vastness represented by one-half the earth surface, 15 time zones.

And when examine nations in the region, we see the home of four of the world's largest economies (US, PRC, Japan, India), eight of the world's busiest container ports, and more than 70,000 ships...that bring trillions of dollars of economic activity through strategic choke points such as the Malacca Straits.

We also see the area influenced by six of the world's largest militaries (PRC, Russia, India, North Korea, South Korea, US).

In an area where the demographic data is staggering: experts predict a planet of six billion people in thirty years, soon India will have more males under the age of 5 than the entire population of France; Japan will age so rapidly that by 2040 over 40% of the population becomes senior citizens, and in the same period the population in Oceania will grow by 40%.

So, in our region resides one-half of the world population that is experiencing evolving political and military ties, increasing global demand for resources and raw material, rapid military modernization, competing national interests, and historic disputes in many forms related to national integrity, wholeness, and sovereignty.

Into the mix is the recognition that at another level of analysis, in the technically accomplished, globalized information and communication networked world of today, there are transnational problems that we can no longer expect to confine themselves to an artificial set of boundaries and borders. By any measure, transnational challenges [terrorism, avian flu, water shortages, energy, fish depletion, climate change, and poverty] have the potential to be real game changers.

The list of challenges for those who govern is long, daunting, and taxing, from security challenges across the range of military operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. It is simply not possible for one country to resource across the complete range of operations in an area as wide and as expansive as the world that we live. Yet if we miss or ignore these challenges then we do so at great risk.

We have learned the value, the importance, and the practical necessity for partnerships. Navies bring a unique perspective to this discussion because they are an eyewitness to the changing nature of our world and the evolving challenges and opportunities that change presents. Geography can facilitate or hinder the movement of people, commerce, and resources; history influences national values, grievances, and fuels sovereign passions; cultural and religious values can extend influence well beyond the national horizons depicted by coordinates and lines on a chart. All of these factors are in-play at once while the maritime domain serves as the essential conduit for the global economic system that enables 90-percent of world trade.

Communications, transportation, information technology and economics -- link all nations in every way, all the time - so the order and flow of information is often raw and unfiltered, and does not move from local to regional to national levels in an orderly method - it is more often viral. Therefore, it is possible to start/incite a movement in real time - local news can have

immediate regional implications with a direct impact to those charged with responsibility for security and stability.

Demographic challenges, the growing demand for raw materials, shifting spheres of influence, and the blurring of lines between national and transnational threats present a combination of factors that will stress and challenge the governance of the nation-state in new ways and call into question the role of government, the use of force, and the role and use of the Navy in an environment that continues to evolve.

Today the need for access and freedom of movement that we typically view through the lens of the national interest...is equally important to the interests of the international community as well. Now, more than ever before, the consequences of activities that impede freedom of movement and put at risk those vital resource connections no longer affect simply one nation, but rather the vital interests of the global community.

We see a direct connection and draw a direct correlation, between the security of the global commons and the stability and prosperity of nations. We share this mission at an extraordinary moment in history - when the movement of information, the shipment of energy, goods and commodities, combined with the ability to communicate beyond national borders and opportunities for travel... have resulted in linkages and connections that make us increasingly reliant on partners in the international community ... and dependent on the sea, and its security, for many elements of our daily lives.

As Sailors, we have the honor, good fortune, and responsibility to represent our nations at sea, at a time when the security and stability of the global commons has so much at stake for the community of nations. Mariners operate in one continuous body of water that covers 70-percent of the globe. Unlike land that others will fence, put up borders and protect by internal laws and defensive postures, we share the vast regions of the sea. Therefore, the very nature of the operating environment suggests a collective approach for the shared benefits and responsibilities of the sea.

No matter what advancements futurists predict for the movement of energy and goods...the bulk of the world market will continue to move in this domain where security challenges continue to cut across national boundaries and borders.

As we consider present and future challenges, and how we will respond, I think it is helpful to remind ourselves of the power of the past to inspire and instruct.

The prosperity and good fortune that we share today is founded in one idea...an idea that was, in its day, revolutionary in the history of the world. The notion that people could govern themselves and provide liberty for all people was without parallel, and mockingly referred to as the "great experiment." For many nations, blood was shed to transform this idea into the democratic way of life we enjoy today.

Ideas of freedom, liberty, and the right to live one's own life without threat, coercion, or fear of retaliation, was born in war and survived through the ages because of the inherent humanity embedded in them. We define who we are as a people by the value we place on human life, the honor, esteem, liberties, and rights of individual citizens, as well as the integral, reciprocal responsibilities for individual service that citizens must provide in return -- which has been essential to our form of government and to the formation of our armed forces.

These are more than lofty ideas that we admire, but principles that we put into action. These principles are the source of our strength.

You will also see these principles in play in how we respond to crises.

You will see these principles in play through the commitments that we make and the risks that we bear on behalf of our friends and allies...that is why alliances, mutual defense pacts, and other commitments and cooperation are so important to us.

You will see these principles in play in the way we conduct operations on the high seas...that is why access to the global commons and freedom of navigation in international waters is so

important ...because it is an environment where the underlying principles apply to everyone equally. Accordingly, we all recognize with great achievement and prosperity comes the responsibility for nations to contribute to security and stability around the globe.

The egregious attack on the ROKS CHEONAN affected Sailors everywhere...and the loss of Warrant Officer Han, a diver who despite 30 years of service continued to risk his life in the moments after the tragedy, touched the world with his commitment to his fellow man. Today, his immortal words, "I do it for honor," reminds us of the ultimate sacrifices made by honorable men to keep the sea free from threats. After the discovery that the sinking was caused by a North Korean torpedo, the remarkable restraint displayed by South Korea maintained stability on the Korean peninsula and honored him.

Our longstanding friendships in the Asia-Pacific region underpin the U.S. Pacific Fleet's role in regional cooperative maritime efforts. Later this week we will commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Inchon Landing, a battle that turned the tide of the Korean War in favor of the South and the United Nations. The Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of Korea and the United States signed after the war serves as a buffer to North Korea's destabilizing effect in the region. Moreover, the "evolving ROK-US alliance is emerging as a global partnership contributing to addressing regional and global challenges beyond the Korean Peninsula."<sup>1</sup> Sixty years after the outbreak of the Korean War, the U.S.-Korea alliance is strong, helping to underwrite peace and security and create the conditions for economic growth throughout the region.

In addition to our Navy operations together in the Pacific, we find ourselves working hand-in-hand with other international partners to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia where, most recently, Rear Admiral Beom-rim Lee commanded CTF-151 from onboard the ROKS Kang Kam-chan. With over 300 ROKN officers and Sailors deployed in support of this mission, this is a valuable opportunity for multilateral cooperation, interoperability with coalition forces, and defense of the global commons.

---

<sup>1</sup> Secretary Clinton, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Seoul, 21 July 2010.

Training exercises with our partners in the Pacific are an important element to our cooperative strategy. In one recent example, ‘Exercise Invincible Spirit’ served as a stalwart deterrent to aggression in Northeast Asia. It allowed our nations and navies to show the commitment we have to one another and to maritime security in the region, and the opportunity to work closely together during the exercise will pay dividends in future naval operations.

In July, the Rim of the Pacific Exercise, or RIMPAC, brought the world’s largest exercise of navies together to the Hawaiian operating area as it has every two years since 1971. RIMPAC provides a premiere training venue for 22,000 Sailors from around the Pacific - and serves to reaffirm our shared commitment to maritime freedoms and security, and to the prosperity our navies bolster for all nations.

Further, we are using our naval forces in many creative ways that make them more relevant and valuable in today’s security environment.

We’ve expanded bilateral training opportunities with nations interested in developing their navy’s capabilities. For example, Cambodia for the first time took part in this year’s CARAT exercise – the annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercise which originated in 1995. Building partner nation capability and developing relations among our Sailors at all levels provides mutual and regional benefit.

Building on our shared experience in bringing relief to areas affected by the tsunami of December 2004, we have begun a program of proactive humanitarian assistance known as “Pacific Partnership.” We do not have to wait for a disaster to do good works, and along the way humanitarian work fosters trust, mutual understanding, and goodwill.

The hospital ship Mercy sailed to the western Pacific three times in the past five years. Mercy provides a unique platform for international cooperation. This year, 14 partner nations and numerous non-governmental organizations participated in Pacific Partnership during visits to five nations. Over a four-month period, 100,000 people received medical treatment and engineers built water wells and renovated community buildings such as schools and clinics. The

participation by doctors from South Korea, Japan, Australia, and other nations enables the alleviation of suffering and fosters goodwill in host nations and throughout the region.

This proactive humanitarian work during periods of calm helps us prepare to work together in a crisis. Our presence in the region and the enduring relationships we've established enable us to respond quickly to disasters such as the recent, near simultaneous, flooding in the Philippines, the tsunami in Samoa, and the earthquake in Padang, Indonesia. The Republic of Korea also understands the importance of this mission, sending troops to Haiti to provide humanitarian assistance following the devastating earthquakes last January.

Recognizing the incredible value of partnership and cooperation, we continue to develop very important military-to-military relationships and exchanges to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of operations at sea. In the U.S. Navy, we are cultivating a cadre of naval officers who are regional specialists, with expertise in civil affairs and still others who perform important functions on the ground with Army and Marine forces – all in an effort to strengthen our support for our allies and partners. Further, we have officers who were refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia as children now in command of ships at sea – this is clearly a reflection of our model for diversity – but we also see these leaders as uniquely positioned to foster deeper understanding and cooperation with the people, navies and nations of the Asia-Pacific.

These important relationships – between nations, and navies, and individual officers – are absolutely essential to addressing the challenges of maritime security. These relationships are necessary to maintain a stable, reliable, and continuous dialogue among maritime forces.

The Pacific and Indian Oceans, adjacent seas, waterways, and merchant sea-lanes upon them are inseparable from the global economic system. History demonstrates the undeniable importance of the integrity of the global commons. Our ancestors knew this to be true. As the heirs to their legacy it is our privilege to serve our nations at sea. Our challenge is to forge a way ahead...to continually develop aspects of maritime security where we can share and cooperate. Ultimately, the stakes are very high and the role that navies play will affect more than simply the nations that we represent...we do it for honor.



Thank you again for the opportunity today to share the Pacific Fleet perspective on maritime security with -- our friends and allies -- and a mighty Navy, a first class Navy.