

## Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Sea Power : A Professionalized Approach in Furtherance of national Defence

*transcribed plenary speech of*

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I will be talking about our strategy. It is important to understand why we revived this strategy. The world and its challenges have changed since 2007 when we had last written our strategy. There's threat from North Korea, Iran, the Russian peace issue with Crimea, violent extremism through ISIS and how do we deal with that. We have the rise with China, and the challenges in cyberspace. Anti access that is how do we maintain access to where we need to go with our ships. And of course the new strategic guidance from our government and the fiscal constraints we are under and all of us remember the 2008 fiscal constraints we encountered. These were all major drivers when we were thinking writing our new strategy. Then how do we write our new strategy?

We take national guidance from our civilian leadership, the White House and the department of defence, where they do a quadrennial defence review and then we show them that our strategy is in line with their strategy. And this all depends on how high or low these are on the strategic levels and guidance. We all collaborate with our sister strategies such as the Coast Guard and the Marine Corps to ensure we are cooperating in the challenges faced in the littorals and the maritime environments in a very coordinated manner. And then of course we vetted drafts of the strategy with select subject matter experts from academia, think tank communities and retired military officers. And this helped us get a second opinion on the strategy while we were writing it.

So what is enduring from our 2007 strategy? The first is the importance of a forward strategy. That means our ships are out there, where it matters, when it matters. And the next thing we maintain in working with our allies and partners. We are doubling down on the importance of allies and partners and I can't understate that. And we talk about a global network of navies. This is a concept for non-binding, informal, cooperative relationships based on shared security interests. And we are much stronger when merging individual capabilities with group capacities and producing a combined naval affect that is much greater than the sum of its parts.

And to talk about a few new revisions in the 2015 strategy. We describe a modern and capable naval force which is able to win when we need to. We talk about a fleet of more than 300 navy ships preserving an inventory of surge ready ships which means ships that are ready to go, on call when needed. Designing inter operable platforms that are also very adaptable and of course continuous innovation. And this is a great conference to discuss innovation.

The next part of our strategy was foremost in war fighting for us. It is a mindset we have from maintenance to training and it is a statutory role for us as a navy to be able to fight and win. The US George W. Bush conducted isle strikes in September and October 2014 when the President needed immediate options to curb ISIS advances in Iraq last fall. And the George Herbet Bush striker carrier was on station and ready within 30 hours from being tasked and it remained there for 54 days to give the President options in case the order for strikes was given.

I also want to talk about some of the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief we do. And something else new in this strategy is all domain access. Ensuring access to where we need to go. And it is a framework of this strategy that we man, train and equip to overcome any of the access challenges we face in sea, air, land and space, cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum.

Also new in this strategy is the Indo-Asia- Pacific. We very much focused on the Indo-Asia-Pacific. I want to emphasise that again and tell that we rebalanced to more than just a Western Pacific. This broadens the aperture to include the Indian Ocean and we have evolved our understanding of the region and also its challenges. The maritime expanse straddles two geographic commands and commandments and has the world's most populous country, obviously China and the world's largest democracy in India. Approximately half of the global population and will have contained potentially 70% of the global population by the middle of century and is also the centre of the global economy, with 40% of the global growth in the Indo-Asia-Pacific. This is a

maritime economy, that's what globalisation is running on containerships. The Indian Ocean is the world's most commercial and is the world's most important commercial highway. The Sea Lines of Communication that are pictured here run through the Indian Ocean from the Strait of Hormuz to the Strait of Malacca, Strait of Mandeb to the Lombok Strait. These Sea Lines of Communication underpin the global flow of communication and energy. Approximately two thirds of the world's oil shipments transit through the Indian Ocean to the Pacific. In 2014, this included more than 15 million barrels of oil per day transiting through the Malacca Strait alone. This continuing onwards in to the East China Sea. And also depicted on this slide are also the same areas marked by many of the world's most important navigational choke points. 90% of global trade travels over water and 15 of the world's top 20 busiest world container ports are located in the Indo-Asia-Pacific. So essentially, this is the economic lifeline of the world.

And I also want to emphasise that Sri Lanka with its strategic locations is of course at the centre of this very important region. Of course the Cooperative Strategy 21 talks about the posture of 60% of the ships and aircraft carriers to the region by 2020. This is not a new development and it is not specific to any one country. We have always had interest in the region like our forces deployed in Japan, in Guam, there are regional threats like North Korea we have to worry about. And missile testing which everyone was aware of couple of years back. And I want to emphasise that by 2020 we will increase our presence of ships from 52 to 65 in the Asia-Pacific region.

This slide is important as it's about cultivating those partnerships we so vitally talked about. We will strengthen our cooperation with our longstanding allies in the Asia-Pacific, Australia, Japan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea and Thailand. India's doing a lot of

great work by designing and producing indigenously built aircraft carriers and increasing their submarine fleet.

The United States has a good partnership with the Sri Lankan Navy and there is room to grow. Already we do very good work in the areas of maritime security, demining and disaster response. For example the US Navy exposal, the explosive disposal, the mobile unit 5 conducted humanitarian and demining engagements with Sri Lanka in coordination with demining requirements in 2012. Also in April this year as pictured on the slide we were happy to host a delegation of naval officers and high level dignitaries on board the USS Carol Vincent aircraft carrier in the Indian Ocean to tour the ship and see the combat manoeuvres on the aircraft. Our expanded region presence in the Indo-Asia-Pacific presents opportunities for greater cooperation with our Indian Ocean partners on maritime security and disaster relief. We have the LCS ships stationed in Singapore already making a great impact. And within two days of flight disappearance USS Samson, TDG and its destroyers and its helicopters were on station at the job at sea coordinating surface and aerial searches with Indonesia's National Search and Rescue Agency near the crash site and then a few days later USS Fortforth our newest stationed and deployed combat ship joined the efforts after embarking support from the diving and salvage units. In total these ships contributed a lot of hours to the mission.

We have a marine rotational force in Darwin, I want to mention that. We also have cooperative security missions with our US Coast Guard. We seek to strengthen our alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Asia-Pacific with improved operability, and here are examples of some of the ties that bind us. In disaster relief and humanitarian assistance we always respond with and will continue to do so in concert with international agencies and our naval partners as we have with Typhoon Hyan in the Philippines in 2013.