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Securing the Maritime Commons: the Role of Regional Navies

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"Securing the Maritime Commons: The Role of Regional Navies"

DIGNITARIES, MINISTERS, CHIEFS OF DEFENSE, DISTINGUISHED ATTENDEES, GOOD MORNING AND AS WE SAY IN HAWAII, ALOHA ...

IT'S A GREAT PLEASURE TO BE HERE – AND, WHILE THIS IS MY FIRST "ASIA-PACIFIC ROUNDTABLE," IT'S NOT MY FIRST VISIT TO MALAYSIA ... IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK IN THE BEAUTIFUL AND VITAL CITY OF KUALA LUMPUR ... A FITTING PLACE TO HOLD THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE ...

... A GLOBAL CITY, WITHIN A NATION THAT SERVES AS A CROSSROADS OF ASIA ... THAT GEOGRAPHICALLY, AS WELL AS IN A MUCH LARGER SENSE, SERVES TO LINK EAST AND WEST.

IT'S ALSO A GREAT PLEASURE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS IMPORTANT ROUNDTABLE ... HOSTED BY ASEAN AND THE INSTITUTES OF STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (ISIS) ... ORGANIZATIONS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE ...

... EVENTS SUCH AS THIS ARE A CULMINATION OF MORE THAN 40 YEARS OF DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT BY THE NATIONS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA ...

THE ONCE-FIVE NATION ASEAN - BEGUN AT THE SIGNING OF THE BANGKOK DECLARATION OF 1967 – IS NOW AN ASSOCIATION OF TEN NATIONS WITH SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CREDIBILITY AND CLOUT ...

IT HAS BRANCHED OUT TO SERVE AS A MULTI-NATIONAL FORUM-OF-CHOICE FOR NUMEROUS COMBINATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS, AND ACROSS A WIDE-SPECTRUM OF ISSUES ...

CONSIDER THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM, THAT TODAY REGULARLY LEADS MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY EXERCISES TO “PROMOTE PEACE AND SECURITY THROUGH DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC” ... EVOLUTIONS THAT INVOLVE A HOST OF REGIONAL MILITARIES, AND NAVIES, AND THOUSANDS OF PARTICIPANTS ... INCLUDING U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND ...

AND IN RECENT YEARS, HAS FOCUSSED ON THE VERY TOPIC WE’RE GOING TO DISCUSS TODAY ... SECURITY IN THE MARITIME COMMONS ...

... AS A TESTAMENT TO THE IMPORTANCE THE U.S. HAS ATTACHED TO ASEAN, WE NOW HAVE A DEDICATED AMBASSADOR IN DAVID CARDEN ... WHO WE HOPE WILL BE EMBRACED BY THE ASEAN COMMUNITY AND LEVERAGED FOR WHAT HE CAN MAKE POSSIBLE WITH HIS BROAD INFLUENCE ACROSS THE U.S., INCLUDING U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND ...

THE FOCUS OF MY REMARKS IS SECURING THE MARITIME COMMONS, AND I NEEDN'T REMIND ANYONE HERE OF THE FACT THAT WE'RE JUST A FEW MILES FROM ONE OF THE MOST STRATEGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARITIME CHOKEPOINTS ON THE PLANET ... A BOTTLENECK THROUGH WHICH PASSES AN INCREDIBLE 70,000 SHIPS PER YEAR – CONTAINING MUCH OF THE WORLD'S COMMERCIAL TRADE AND ENERGY ...

... THE STRAIT OF MALACCA STRADDLES THE VITAL SEA LINES OF COMMUNICATION THAT STRETCH FROM AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST TO NORTHEAST ASIA AND THE AMERICAS ...

AND YET, IT'S JUST ONE OF A DOZEN STRATEGIC STRAITS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC ... ALL IMPORTANT FOR THE SEA LANES THAT PASS THROUGH THEM ... ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN FOUGHT OVER THROUGHOUT HISTORY ... ALL OF WHICH MUST BE MAINTAINED SECURE IF THE COMMERCE UPON WHICH WE DEPEND IS TO MOVE GOODS, UNIMPEDED.

MARITIME SECURITY – IMPORTANCE

AND STILL THE SCALE OF WHAT CONSTITUTES THE MARITIME COMMONS IS GREATER ... CONSISTING OF SOME OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST ARCHIPELAGOS, TRANS-PACIFIC AND TRANS-INDIAN OCEAN SEA LANES, AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MILES OF COASTLINES LINKING IMPORTANT PORTS-OF-CALL ...

THE ASIA-PACIFIC, IN ITS ENTIRETY, SPANS HALF-THE-EARTH ... IS HOME TO DOZENS OF NATIONS AND MORE THAN THREE AND A HALF BILLION PEOPLE ... IT SUPPORTS MORE THAN 5 TRILLION DOLLARS

OF YEARLY REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE AND SHARES AN ANNUAL TWO-WAY TRADE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES THAT EXCEEDS A TRILLION U.S. DOLLARS ...

SINCE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, IT HAS BEEN SAID IN MANY FORUMS AND BY COUNTLESS HEADS OF STATE THAT ASIA WILL PLAY THE MOST PIVOTAL GLOBAL ROLE IN THE 21ST CENTURY ...

LIKE IT OR NOT ... ASIA'S ROLE IS ALREADY EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY LINKED TO SECURITY IN THE MARITIME COMMONS ...

IS ASIA READY?

I MIGHT OFFER THAT INCREASINGLY IN THE 21ST CENTURY, SECURITY IN ALL DOMAINS - LAND, AIR, SPACE, CYBERSPACE ... AND MARITIME – WILL BE NECESSARY TO ENABLE THE FREEDOMS OF ACTION THAT ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO GLOBAL PROSPERITY IN THIS ERA ...

... AND THAT MILITARIES, AND NAVIES, MUST PLAY A PIVOTAL, COLLECTIVE, SUPPORTING ROLE ...

NAVIES ARE ONE OF MULTIPLE INSTRUMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER, AND MUST CONSISTENTLY BE A REFLECTION OF OUR RESPECTIVE NATION'S REGARD FOR INTERNATIONAL NORMS, RULE OF LAW, AND POLICIES ...

A COMMON CAUSE FOR ALL

DOMAIN SECURITY – PARTICULARLY MARITIME SECURITY – IS THE
QUINTESSENTIAL COMMON CAUSE AMONG NATIONS ...

... NOT ONLY FOR THEIR NAVIES ... BUT, FOR THE ABUNDANCE OF
AGENCIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SECURITY, ACROSS A BROAD
RANGE OF CHALLENGES ...

... COAST GUARDS OR THEIR EQUIVALENT, WITH LAW
ENFORCEMENT DUTIES, IN PARTICULAR, CAN CHALLENGE ILLEGAL
ENCROACHMENT AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES THAT NAVIES MAY
NOT ...

ATTAINMENT OF MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS – ESSENTIAL TO
SECURITY OPERATIONS - REQUIRES WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT
COLLABORATION ... BOTH WITHIN AND ACROSS OUR NATIONS

ACROSS GOVERNMENTS, JUDICIARY, COMMERCE,
TRANSPORTATION, TREASURY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGENCIES
ALL PLAY KEY ROLES IN ASSURING MARITIME SECURITY ...

IS THIS HOW YOU SEE IT?

IN PARTICULAR, OUR NAVIES PLAY A DIVERSE AND POWERFUL
SUPPORTING ROLE ...

FOR WITHIN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS, IN THEIR SHIPS, AND BY THEIR
CONTINUOUS PRESENCE AND STAYING POWER, NAVIES TEND TO BE
THE MOST SELF-SUFFICIENT, MOST POWERFUL AND THE MOST

RESPONSIVE OF MARITIME SECURITY FORCES ... ESPECIALLY,
ACROSS THE VAST REACHES OF THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION ...

... WHETHER CONFRONTING PIRACY, TRAFFICKERS, WEAPONS
PROLIFERATORS OR EXTREMISTS, MILITARIES, AND ESPECIALLY
NAVIES, POSSESS THE CAPABILITIES AND CAPACITIES TO DEAL
WITH THE MOST EXTREME CHALLENGES AND CHALLENGERS ...

PROPERLY SHAPED AND EMPLOYED, THEY'RE INDISPENSIBLE ...
IMPROPERLY FASHIONED, THEY MAY BE INEFFECTIVE, AT BEST ...

THESE ARE OFTEN THE SAME FORCES THAT ARE THE FIRST TO
RESPOND TO NATURAL AND MANMADE DISASTERS; INSECURITIES IN
THEIR OWN RIGHT ... AND MUCH MORE COMMONPLACE AND
WIDESPREAD ...

... AND TO HUMANITARIAN CRISES ...

... AND LAST, BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, TO DISPUTES EITHER ON,
OR PROXIMATE TO THE MARITIME SEA LANES THAT COULD
OTHERWISE FLASH INTO CONFLICT AND DISRUPT THE PEACEFUL
FLOWS OF COMMERCE THAT MUST BE SECURED ...

ASSOCIATIONS SUCH AS ASEAN PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THIS ...

... ASEAN AND OTHER MULTI-NATION FORUMS SUCH AS SHANGRI-LA
DIALOGUE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR NATIONS TO FRAME THE

CHALLENGES, SEEK COMMON AND EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO THEM, AND CONDUCT RESPECTFUL DISCOURSE WHEN NATIONS DISAGREE ...

LAST YEAR AT SHANGRI-LA, THE U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, BOB GATES, REITERATED THE IMPORTANCE OF BROAD DEDICATION TO PRINCIPLES ESSENTIAL TO PEACE, PROSPERITY, AND STABILITY...

... PRINCIPLES THAT INCLUDE COMMITMENT TO FREE AND OPEN COMMERCE, INTERNATIONAL ORDER AND THE RULE OF LAW, AND TO RESOLVING CONFLICT WITHOUT THE USE OF FORCE

HE WISELY STATED THAT “PURSUING OUR COMMON INTERESTS HAS INCREASED OUR COMMON SECURITY,” THAT “CONFRONTING THESE THREATS IS NOT THE TASK OF ANY ONE NATION ACTING ALONE,” AND COMMITMENT TO THESE PRINCIPLES “ARE THE KEY TO THE REGION’S CONTINUED PROSPERITY”

HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT “ALL OF US HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES WE MUST FULFILL, SINCE ALL WILL BEAR THE COSTS OF INSTABILITY ... AS WELL AS THE REWARDS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION”

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION UNDERWAY

TO THIS END, MUCH HAS ALREADY BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AMONG NATIONS AND NAVIES IN THE REGION ...

I MENTIONED THE SUCCESSFUL MULTI-NATIONAL EVENTS THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM REGULARLY LEADS ...

... IN MARCH THE FORUM LED A DISASTER RESPONSE EXERCISE IN INDONESIA, WHICH WAS THE SECOND IN A SERIES THAT BEGAN IN THE PHILIPPINES IN 2009 ...

THIS YEAR'S EVENT STRENGTHENED CONFIDENCE AND INCREASED INTEROPERABILITY AMONG THE CIVIL AND MILITARY AGENCIES AND ADVANCED REGIONAL CAPACITIES TO PROVIDE COORDINATED AND EFFECTIVE DISASTER RESPONSE ...

MULTI-NATIONAL PLANNING AND TRAINING EVENTS LIKE THIS ARE REMINDERS THAT THE NATIONS OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC ASSUME A SECURE AND ACCESSIBLE MARITIME DOMAIN TO EFFECTIVELY PREPARE FOR, OR RESPOND TO NATURAL DISASTERS ...

... AS WAS DEMONSTRATED EARLIER IN THE YEAR IN JAPAN, FOLLOWING THE CONFLUENCE OF EARTHQUAKES, TSUNAMI, AND NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS ...

THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE – BY A HUNDRED NATIONS AND ALMOST TWO DOZEN MILITARIES – CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THE IMPORTANCE OF COOPERATION AND INTEROPERABILITY ...

WAY AHEAD

IN CLOSING, I'D ASK YOU TO IMAGINE AN ASIA-PACIFIC WHERE SECURITY PREVAILS ACROSS THE GLOBAL COMMONS AND WHERE ACCESS IS UNINHIBITED...

...A REGION WHERE THERE ARE NO TERRITORIAL DISPUTES OR, IF ONE ARISES, IT IS RESOLVED PEACEFULLY AND EQUITABLY WITHIN AN AGREED UPON FRAMEWORK...

... A REGION IN WHICH THE ONLY CHALLENGES ARE TRANSREGIONAL OR TRANSNATIONAL AND ALL NATIONS WORK TOGETHER TO DEFEAT THOSE WHO THREATEN THE SECURITY AND ORDER THAT PROSPERITY RELIES UPON ...

... I'D ARGUE SUCH A REGION IS ATTAINABLE...AND IN SUCH A REGION, CONTINUED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GROWTH AND PROSPERITY ARE VERY LIKELY ...

... IF THE WORLD IS RIGHT ABOUT ASIA AND THE 21ST CENTURY, THEN SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGES WE DISCUSS TODAY MUST BE A FORGONE CONCLUSION ... SECURITY IN THE COMMONS MUST PREVAIL ... AND SUPPORTING NAVIES AND MILITARIES MUST COOPERATE TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION, NEVER BE PART OF THE CHALLENGE.

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK ... I LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR QUESTIONS.

[END]