

Reden des Inspektors der Marine

Vice Admiral Andreas Krause

Galle Dialogue 2016

FOSTERING STRATEGIC MARITIME PARTNERSHIP

**Safeguarding the Global Commons - A European's Perspective on
the Role of Naval Cooperation and Maritime Governance**

14. November 2016

Sri Lanka

Redezeit: 18'

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is rumoured that when recently an American, a Dutch and a German naval officer were captured by pirates they were all granted a last wish before they were to be shot. The American asked to smoke – first and last time in his life – a Cuban cigar. The German instead asked to be allowed to give a short powerpoint briefing on the principles of German security policies. Well, and the Dutch simply begged to be shot before the German gave his brief...

But please, bear with me – as you see I haven't even prepared any slides.

But then, why might a European – and specifically a German - perspective on strategic maritime cooperation and maritime governance be of interest to Indian Ocean nations?

It is for **two reasons**, as I believe.

First of all, Europe – and specifically Germany, is **broadly experienced in fostering strategic maritime partnerships**. We want to share those experiences for the benefit of all maritime nations.

And, secondly, we have a **very personal interest in enhancing naval cooperation and ensuring maritime governance** around the globe and specifically in the Indian Ocean.

Therefore, I assure you, it is a great privilege for me to be given the opportunity to speak on this occasion. Not only to share our best practices, but to **present the German Navy as a strategic maritime partner in the area.**

Today, in our 60th anniversary year, the German Navy is **well embedded internationally.** Embedded into NATO, into the UN, into Europe and into many partnerships across the globe. And particularly in the Indian Ocean Region: We feel deeply honoured to have been granted the observer status within the IONS earlier this year.

That Germany should be an ally and partner has **not always been self-evident.** Especially not in the first half of the last century.

In a European setting that was marked by the aftershocks of two horrific World Wars, Germany, as a former aggressor, stood isolated and later, torn apart.

But only ten years after unconditional surrender Germany was not only asked to re-arm and become a member of NATO. Neighbours who only just recovered from German occupation and the consequences of a devastating war stretched out their hands, laying

the foundations for the European project that has brought freedom and prosperity to European nations since.

With the fall of the Iron curtain, Germany was again granted trust with the **gift of reunification in 1989**. Without any preconditions a Germany was accepted as a sovereign and united nation in the centre of Europe.

How come that neighbors who relentlessly fought against each other over decades, overcame their antagonism? What was the recipe for success in **developing from former enemies to partners** and moreover, to friends?

In the beginning of course, let's not be naïve, it was sheer necessity. Both, West and East Germany were granted the trust of sovereignty and re-armament because of the simple fact that they were needed. They were needed as strategic partners in the upcoming Cold War of NATO and the Warsaw Pact by virtue of their geography, demographic and economic potential. But in order to engage more was required than plain utility.

Because granting **trust always implicates the willingness to take risks**. Winston Churchill, and we as naval officers might recognize more than just a coincidence in the fact that he was a former 1st Seaford, laid down this strategic insight in a far-reaching speech, held 70 years ago.

He held the strong belief that a prosperous Europe could only be formed by completely **overcoming the past**, with a clear view in only one direction: forward. By holding on to mistrust and revenge, history would only repeat itself over and over again.

Looking back on the aspiring developments on the European continent in the last 25 years, Churchill proved right. **Granting and being granted trust and confidence remain the most powerful ingredients for good relationships and common success**, based on common interests.

Be it leaving the antagonism of centuries of war after 1945, be it the defense of freedom against the Warsaw Pact until 1989, or be it nowadays the freedom of the seas, that we see severely threatened in many regions on the globe.

Common interests are the glue of all working relationships.

Stability and prosperity are only two of many common interests European countries share with the Indian Ocean Nations.

As for our German perspective, it is no secret, that our **prosperity is based on being a maritime nation.**

To quote the **German Governments White Paper on German Security Policy** published in summer this year: “Securing maritime supply routes and ensuring freedom of the high seas is of significant importance for an exporting nation like Germany.”

In today's challenging, diverse scenarios, Navies need to work together – or fail alone. **Ensuring maritime governance by naval cooperation is a question of, let me use a term we all know very well, good seamanship!**

But the pivotal role and importance of Navies in building strategic partnerships goes far beyond the maritime domain.

Our history taught us that in order to make strategic partnership work, **three factors** have to be met:

- Reciprocal willingness to risk trusting each other and from there on, step by step, build confidence
- Mutual advantages and benefits for all actors, irrespective of relative size and power,
- and a common “language”.

Specifically the last point is distinctive for Navies, as it is of course what we all excel in: as proven in fighting piracy off the Horn of Africa or terrorism at sea. **This makes naval cooperation so promising** and cooperation easier than in many other fields.

Starting in our own neighborhoods, in ever **wider and overlapping circles of common interest, mutual trust and confidence**, strategic maritime partnerships may consequently be the seed out of which strategic political partnership may grow.

In our own neighborhood, the Baltic Sea, Germany has called two years ago called its partners, all democratic and free countries around the Baltic Sea and Norway, to form the **Baltic Commanders Conference**. Conducted annually under the chairmanship of one of its members the Conference and its various working groups have already come up with a vast number of practical work strands to improve interoperability, share facilities, reduce cost and exchange expertise. One striking result is that Poland and Germany now **share operational control of their submarine forces** through a common Submarine Operating Authority.

To meet its growing obligations in the Baltic and the Northern Flank and in order to sustain its contribution to international conflict management from the Mediterranean to the Horn of Africa, the German Navy, for the first time since the end of the Cold War, is now increasing the size of its combat fleet, adding another 5 anti-surface warfare corvettes – the K130 class which has already seen extensive operations at the Horn of Africa and off Lebanon.

And here already our circles of common interest start to overlap.

This is why **Germany is having a strategic interest in the Indian Ocean**. It is more than just the acknowledgement that current maritime threats have to be tackled by shared contributions. Far more than that.

The **German Navy recognizes that the global commons are indivisible** and all maritime nations have to take their responsibility in securing them. If the global governance of the maritime commons as it is defined by the United Nations Law of the seas is disputed anywhere in the world, it is **being questioned everywhere. Your neighborhood thus is our neighborhood.**

And if the principles of rules-based governance at sea are challenged, if peaceful dispute resolution at sea is given short shrift, than a stable and peaceful international order is at risk.

This is why the Indian Ocean with the **world's most important and yet so vulnerable sea lines of communication** is of utmost importance to Germany.

We are committed, willing and capable to contribute to their security. We are committed, willing and capable to contribute to the freedom of the global commons.

Indeed, this is no news to you, ladies and gentlemen.

Since 2002, so for 14 years, we have continuously shown presence in the area and we took responsibility – by holding command several times in the operations ATALANTA and Enduring Freedom. But also by participating in international exercises, fostering partnership through training and exchange of expertise.

And we seek to intensify our involvement.

To expand our contributions, we **adjust our fleet** - in order to even better fit the local conditions. Our newest procurement, the 7000 tons frigates of the F125 class, will be able to stay in theatre with multiple crews for up to two years; a concept which has specifically the Indian Ocean in mind.

For a vision like this, for making maritime strategic partnership the foundation of political strategic partnership, and here I quote our chancellor Angela Merkel, we need a reasonable sense of realism, continuous commitment and strategic endurance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

let me close by the following:

I spoke about the image, that a common interest is the glue of relationships.

Let a secure, free and global “mare nostrum” may be ours.

Germany will proudly contribute to this idea.

Starting in our own neighborhood and reaching out to the oceans of our globe.

Thank you very much.