

Speech to the 2013 Galle Dialogue

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How Cooperation could Mitigate People Smuggling Activities in the Indian Ocean

Programed length is 25 minutes. This draft is 2071, which should be about 21-22 minutes.

- Foreign Minister Professor Peiris* , Defence Secretary Rajapaksa* , Chief of the Defence Staff* , (* *all as applicable*) Service Chiefs, in particular Vice Admiral Colombage, Commander of the Sri Lankan Navy, Excellencies, heads of delegations, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen –
- Good afternoon.
- Firstly can I, again reiterate the thoughts of the other international delegates and thank our SriLankan hosts for arranging this important dialogue and in particular for providing me an opportunity to make a short presentation today.

- My Chief of Navy Admiral Ray Griggs has often said that collaboration and cooperation are the keys to good order at sea, because the task is too great for any single nation. Maritime security is multi-faceted and of great importance to all of us. Only through transparent dialogue can we shine a light on key issues and navigate our way through the broad range of challenges that we face and must conquer.
- Today I have been invited to talk to you all on the subject of how cooperation could mitigate people smuggling activities in the Indian Ocean.
- It is indeed an issue of considerable interest to Australia.
- In my previous posting as Commander, Border Protection Command, I spent a large portion of my time focussed on this issue. I am only too well aware, not only of its importance to Australia, but of the human cost of such activities.
- So today I would like to talk to you about the issue both as a former Commander, Border Protection Command, and also from the perspective of my current role as Fleet Commander. I will look at the Australian approach to managing this issue and then examine the way in which it fits into a broader maritime security construct.

- Australia's Border Protection Command, or BPC, was established in March 2005 to coordinate national awareness and response efforts to protect Australia's interests in the Australian Maritime Domain.
- BPC is a multi-agency taskforce which utilises assets assigned from Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and the Department of Defence to conduct civil maritime operations. Assets assigned to BPC conduct law enforcement activities on behalf of other Australian Government agencies exercising powers under the Customs Act, Migration Act, and Fisheries Management Act.
- BPC is a maritime law enforcement agency and the primary government law enforcement organisation in Australia's maritime domain. It works with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, and other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies to deliver a coordinated national approach to Australia's offshore maritime security.
- BPC is responsible for coordinating and controlling operations to protect Australia's national interests against illegal exploitation of natural resources; illegal activity in protected areas; irregular maritime arrivals;

prohibited imports/exports; maritime terrorism; piracy, robbery or violence at sea; a compromise to bio-security; and marine pollution.

- Australia's approach to the illegal movement of people, to people smuggling, is what we would describe as a whole-of-government approach. This takes as its basic premise that we can only achieve our maximum effectiveness through the coordinated application of appropriate skills, powers and capabilities which are resident in different agencies of government.
- It is very similar to the joint military constructs with which we are all familiar, but applied across all arms and layers of government, not just the military.
- The most recent development in Australia's approach to people smuggling is Operation Sovereign Borders. The Joint Agency Task Force which is implementing the operation has been established to ensure a whole-of-government effort to combat people smuggling and protect Australia's borders. The on-water resolution of the people smuggling issue is not the principle aim, rather the coordination and alignment of government agencies is the principle task.

- The key lesson from my perspective is that while the on-water activities by maritime forces are crucial and necessary tasks, they are not on their own sufficient to address the people smuggling issues.
- In the same way that we have learnt that piracy off Somalia cannot be ended simply by suppression of their activities at sea – that we must also address the political, social and economic roots of the problem ashore – people smuggling cannot be solved by actions on the water alone.
- It requires the coordinated activities of all arms of government and cooperative activities with neighbours, partners and allies.
- In my current role as Fleet Commander, it is the cooperation and collaboration with regional maritime forces which has my attention, because, from a maritime perspective, I think people smuggling is only one issue in the broader maritime security context.
- Certainly, for Australia, the border protection forces, whose weight of effort is currently focussed on countering people smuggling, have in previous years been focussed on illegal fishing, environmental protection, asset protection and other maritime security issues.

- The fundamental issue of course rests on two basic matters – the sea is the great global commons, with few restrictions placed on it. This enables all nations to pursue commerce and communications. It is the backbone of the global maritime trading system on which all nations depend, for the pursuit of prosperity, to import vital supplies and to export those things required by other nations.
- It is the great global commons which produces resources which are of increasing value to us all – the global production of farmed fish recently exceeded that of beef and will probably exceed the wild fish catch within a few years. The power of the sea, the wind and the waves with which we as mariners are so familiar, shows promise as a source of energy, as anyone who has seen the wind farms around the North Sea can attest.
- But while the world's oceans are no longer the inestimable and unknowable expanses we have previously conceived them to be, they are beyond the capacity of any one nation to control.
- Cooperation and collaboration to ensure good order at sea is therefore a responsibility of all nations to the extent they are able.

- The list of activities for which are inimical to good order at sea and the challenges which face nations is regrettably long – the smuggling of people, arms, narcotics, money and other forms of contraband; the challenges of piracy, fisheries and resource protection; the movement of terrorists; the protection of the environment.
- The need for maritime forces shows no sign of reducing. If anything, it would seem to be increasing as humanity's need for marine resources and trade seems to be increasing.
- On top of this, while the sea provides part of the pathway for illegal activities, it also provides the means by which we are able to assist each other in times of need. The endurance and reach of maritime forces enables them to provide significant humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capabilities. In the Indo-Pacific region, there are many places where sea transport is the only effective means of reaching regions affected by natural disasters, as we are seeing with the response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.
- We therefore need to understand each other's challenges and find ways in which we can deal with them as we are able.

- It seems to me that the need to cooperate and collaborate in the Indian Ocean is likely to grow. The pattern and type of need is likely to evolve as the nations of the region develop. In essence, I am suggesting that we should not limit our vision to what we see in front of us today, but that we should try to anticipate the future needs of the region. Greater economic development will bring more complex shipping patterns, with more capacity and greater frequency. Whether these will be hub and spoke or liner services – or perhaps most likely a combination of the two – these evolutions will be important for maritime forces to consider and to ensure illegal actors do not take advantage of them.
- If we look at the growth areas in other parts of the world – offshore energy generation and fish farms are two obvious ones – what would the implications be for the Indian Ocean region if the trends are replicated to some extent?
- Just as our responses must be collaborative and cooperative if they are to be as effective as they can be, reaching an understanding of our circumstances and the ways in which we should act must also be a collaborative activity.
- This quest for common understanding is the reason why Australia sees so much value in the Galle Dialogue and gatherings like this.

- One good thing for the Indian Ocean region is that we have examples of maritime cooperation and collaboration from other parts of the world. These can provide us with ideas on how we in the Indian Ocean region might wish to further our own circumstances.
- The Shared Awareness and Deconfliction process off the coast of Somalia is one – it demonstrates an interesting model for the coordination of efforts by a diverse and loose collection of maritime forces. And of course it is one model for the incorporation of extra-regional actors.
- The Malacca Straits patrols have proven to be an effective approach to building interoperability and the capacity to collaborate. As distinct from SHADE, it has pursued a more specifically defined regional model. The pursuit of a common cause for the benefit not only of the coastal states, but for all stakeholders is a worthy example of what can be achieved.
- The ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus Experts Working Group on Maritime Security is another example which seems to show some promise. Again different to SHADE, this regional grouping has made good progress in the last two years. Australia has been fortunate enough to have been able to work with Malaysia as the inaugural co-chairs.

- The first ADMM Plus Maritime Security Field Training Exercise took place off Australia's east coast just prior to our International Fleet Review this year. The initial assessments are positive and we are hopeful this will continue fostering habits of practical and useful cooperation between the militaries of the ADMM-Plus countries.
- To see 13 ADMM Plus nations attend the exercise, with 11 nations represented by ships, was an important achievement and a stepping stone to further cooperation.
- The development work also included the creation of the ADMM Plus Maritime Security Community Information-Sharing Portal or AMSCIP. Along with the communications plans developed for the exercise, AMSCIP shows much promise.
- Of course, AMSCIP is not the only example of information sharing. The Information Fusion Centre in Singapore and regional counterparts are positive approaches to building common situational awareness on maritime security issues. The networking concepts are very promising, not only on the technical front, but in the people-to-people space as well.
- The Western Pacific Naval Symposium is an example of a regional grouping of long standing. Like ADMM-Plus it enjoys a wide, functionally

aligned membership. Originating from a discussion between Chiefs at the 1987 International Seapower Symposium, and first meeting in 1988, one of the elements which has made WPNS so durable and effective has been the way in which it has evolved, incorporating more members and observers as the needs and focus of the membership have evolved. It has been a very successful grouping to encourage trust and cooperation between members.

- Finally, and of most importance to all of us, in the Indian Ocean region we have the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium. It is one of the more recent developments for cooperation and collaboration, but one which is very timely and certainly welcome from an Australian perspective.
- I know my Chief, Vice Admiral Griggs is honoured to have the opportunity to become Chairman and to follow such distinguished predecessors.
- As we work to manage the growth in maritime activity in the Indo-Pacific region, Australia sees IONS as a very important organisation in the regional security architecture.
- IONS provides a very suitable vehicle for regional nations to further develop cooperation and collaboration. Given the flexibility of maritime forces, if we can increase our common understanding and

interoperability through IONS, then there are excellent prospects for us to be able to address maritime security issues of interest to us all.

- Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your attention. I look forward to hearing more of the valuable insights you bring and hope that I have been able to contribute as well.