

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL
RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

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COMMAND
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION OF FORCES OF THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
AND
THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION
OF THE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

A COOPERATIVE STRATEGY FOR 21ST CENTURY SEAPOWER:
FORWARD, ENGAGED, READY

18 MARCH 2015

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Introduction

Chairman Forbes, Ranking Member Courtney, Chairman Hunter, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, we are honored to be here today with our Coast Guard colleague to discuss our new tri-service maritime strategy. *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower: Forward, Engaged, Ready* explains how we will build and employ U.S. Naval Forces in support of national security interests. It describes a force built and ready for any challenge from a high-end war fight to humanitarian operations.

We would like to begin this statement by providing an overview of the strategy, and then some highlights of how this strategy describes warfighting, forward presence, allies and partners, global access, the Asia-Pacific rebalance, future force design, and the focus we are placing on developing a strategic continuum within the fleet.

Overview

A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower: Forward, Engaged, Ready explains how we will build and employ the Naval Forces of the future in support of national security interests. It describes a Navy and Marine Corps built and ready for any challenge from a high-end war fight to humanitarian operations.

The strategy was revised mainly due to changes in the geopolitical landscape including threats from violent extremist organizations like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), threats from North Korea and Iran, potential for opportunities and challenges with a rising China, and recent Russian aggression in Ukraine. Additionally, the strategy is aligned with the new National Security Strategy, the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, and the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance. Finally, the strategy recognizes our current fiscal circumstances.

Most importantly, however, this strategy continues to emphasize combat-credible forward presence that is “where it matters, when it matters,” and a commitment to allies and partners. We will continue to meet our historic naval functions of deterrence, sea control, power projection, and maritime security. But our strategy has adapted, starting with an emphasis on warfighting first. A new function, all domain access, enables us to get the access we need to be effective. The strategy balances forces and capabilities against regional threats. It embraces

innovation and efficiency in building a modern and capable force of more than 300 ships and 182,000 Marines that will overcome any challenge to fight and win.

Throughout the development of this strategy, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) has engaged a diverse audience of junior, mid-grade and senior officers, scholars, civilians, and retirees on strategy and strategy development. He said, “we need to approach this as a continuum, and we need a re-vitalized process, we need people, and we need a system for our strategy.” These principles factored heavily into how we completed our revision to the 2007 document, and our end state is an energized culture of strategic thinking. The strategy is just one piece of our strategic continuum to enable timely and comprehensive updates to the implementation of our strategy in a dynamic global security environment.

To describe our new strategy in greater detail, we will highlight the document’s key points of emphasis.

Warfighting First

Defending our Nation and winning its wars is the core task of the U.S. Naval Forces. The Navy and Marine Corps’ fundamental mission is warfighting. Due to the threats from violent extremist organizations like ISIL, threats from North Korea and Iran, potential for opportunities and challenges with a rising China, and recent Russian aggression, the Sea Services—the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard—must have the capabilities and capacities to defeat any adversary and defend the homeland and our allies and partners worldwide. The Services’ number-one responsibility is to deter aggression and, if deterrence fails, to fight and win our Nation’s wars.

Because the maritime domain supports the bulk of the Joint Force’s forward deployment and sustainment, as well as enables the commerce that underpins the global economic system, the Navy and Marine Corps team places a significant premium on warfighting. To safeguard U.S. and partner nation interests, the Navy and Marine Corps team, as part of the Joint Force, must be prepared to oppose any nation’s actions that jeopardize access to and use of the global commons or that may threaten the security of our allies. Above all, we must provide U.S. Combatant Commanders with versatile and credible maritime forces.

We will provide a modern and capable force that is “combat credible” because of its ability to project power against advanced air defenses, conduct and enable littoral/amphibious operations in opposed environments, and establish blue-water dominance against highly capable surface, sub-surface, and air threats.

The Navy guarantees strategic nuclear deterrence through its fleet of ballistic missile submarines (SSBN). These submarines provide the United States with assured, precise, nuclear second-strike capability. We are always at sea, patrolling undetected, in constant communication ready to provide strike options to National Command Authorities at a moment’s notice. The Navy operates the most secure and survivable leg of the nuclear triad, and will maintain it at peak-performance and readiness.

The Navy and Marine Corps team will remain dominant as compared to potential adversaries and challengers. This means the capability to exert sea control when and where needed, to sustain operations in these areas indefinitely, to support and influence operations on land, and to enable freedom of movement for a nation’s forces. It also means the capability to do high-performance tactical air operations, high-tempo surface and submarine operations, large-scale amphibious operations, power projection from the sea with precision strike (e.g., tactical aircraft, Tomahawk missiles), and joint and combined operations.

Where it Matters, When it Matters

The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps are forward deployed primarily to project power into critical world regions when needed like when the President needed immediate options to curb ISIL’s advance last Fall. Within 30 hours of being tasked, the USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH Carrier Strike Group was on station, and the Strike Group, together with the Marine Corps, then remained on station for 54 days as the only viable U.S. strike and power projection option. The Navy and Marine Corps also act to protect U.S. interests and citizens; reassure allies and partners of U.S. political and military commitment; deter potential aggressors; support humanitarian and disaster-response needs; conduct counter-terrorism and maritime-security operations; and respond to crises rapidly.

U.S. Naval Forces forward presence can be visible or invisible, large or small, provocative or peaceful, depending upon what best serves U.S. interests. The sight of a single U.S. warship in the harbor of a friend or a small rotational force of Marines can serve as tangible evidence of U.S. close relations with or commitment to that country. The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps can modulate presence to exert the degree and kind of influence best suited to resolve the situation in a manner compatible with U.S. interests. In a crisis where force might be required to protect U.S. interests or evacuate U.S. nationals, but where visibility could provoke the outbreak of hostilities, U.S. Naval Forces can remain out of sight, over the horizon, ready to respond in a matter of minutes.

Operating forward provides the President with immediate options to defend our interests, de-escalate hostilities, respond to crises, and keep conflict far from our shores. Additionally, our forward Naval Forces reassure our allies, build trust with partners, and protect the strength of the U.S. economy by deploying with the credible combat-power to enable the unimpeded flow of maritime commerce.

Forward naval presence is central to everything we do. To ensure we remain forward—where it matters, when it matters—we are increasing the number of ships deployed overseas from an average of 97 ships (today) to about 120 ships by 2020. To sustain this global presence, we will increase forward-basing of forces abroad (e.g., Guam) and forward-deploying forces overseas (e.g. Japan and Spain) to reduce costly rotations and deployments while increasing in-theater presence; we will forward-operate forces from overseas locations like Singapore and Australia; and continue rotationally deploying forces from the United States.

Forward naval presence allows us to focus our platforms and capabilities where they are needed most around the globe. We will continue rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific, maintain credible combat power in the Middle East, support our NATO allies and partners in Europe, and build partner capacity in Africa and the Western Hemisphere.

Allies and Partners

One of our advantages, as a nation and as a Navy, has been our extensive network of alliances, partnerships, and coalitions. By leveraging the robust capacity of Naval Forces

worldwide, we are better postured collectively to face new and emerging challenges in the 21st Century.

The value of a global network of navies is that it provides an open and adaptive architecture for facilitating both long-term cooperation and spontaneous, short-lived collaboration. This network can allow countries with converging interests in the maritime domain to form mission-focused goal-oriented associations to address common maritime-security challenges.

In the current economic environment, most navies are facing fiscal challenges at home. These challenges are forcing cuts or slowing growth in developing seapower to meet their respective needs. At the same time, security challenges in the maritime domain continue to grow. Accordingly, we will look for new ways to enhance relationships and form partnerships with traditional and nontraditional maritime partners who share a stake in international commerce, safety, security, and freedom of the seas. Operating together, the Sea Services will find innovative and low-cost ways to respond to these emerging threats to regional and global stability. We will conduct more combined, multinational exercises with foreign navies to build capacity and interoperability. We will integrate our allies and partners into cooperative deployments and real-world operations. By practicing how we fight in peacetime with our allies and partners, we are better prepared to win should conflict arise.

Assure Global Access

The Department of the Navy's increased attention on assuring global access is in consonance with the 2015 National Security Strategy, which states: "Collective action is needed to assure access to the shared spaces—cyber, space, air, and oceans—where the dangerous behaviors of some threaten us all."

The strategy describes a Navy and Marine Corps that will focus on assuring global access in order to thwart any effort to lock the United States out of important world regions and to enable us to fight and win should war be inescapable. To achieve this goal, the Defense Strategic Guidance unequivocally states, "the U.S. military will invest as required to ensure its ability to operate effectively in anti-access and area denial environments."

Advanced as well as not-so-advanced weapons pose an anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) challenge to U.S. military access to the global commons and freedom of action within contested littorals. In peacetime, the country possessing A2/AD weapons clearly has leverage over its neighbors, which could reduce U.S. influence in important world regions. In crisis or war, A2/AD capabilities can make U.S. power projection more difficult.

A2/AD threats comprise diverse capabilities including: ballistic and cruise missiles; sophisticated integrated air-defense systems; anti-ship weapons ranging from high-tech missiles to low-tech but still-dangerous mines and torpedoes; swarming boats; guided rockets, missiles, and artillery; an increasing number of fifth-generation fighters; low-observable manned and unmanned combat aircraft; and space and cyber warfare capabilities specifically designed to disrupt U.S. communications and intelligence systems. The United States and our allies and maritime partners must have the capability to carry out the full range of military operations in order to use the seas without threat or hindrance. Ensuring access and movements at sea is at the core of U.S. national security and remains an enduring mission for the Joint Force.

As a result, our strategy establishes a new essential function—all domain access—to ensure we organize, train, and equip our forces to overcome these threats and assure access and freedom of action in any domain (sea, air, land, space, cyberspace, and the EM spectrum). All domain access allows joint force maritime component commanders (JFMCC) to generate a range of options in all domains to defeat A2/AD measures through synchronizing and integrating the capabilities that provide battlespace awareness, assured C2, integrated fires, and electromagnetic maneuver warfare.

Asia-Pacific Rebalance

The 2015 National Security Strategy states: “The United States has been and will remain a Pacific power... American leadership will remain essential to shaping the region’s long-term trajectory to enhance stability and security, facilitate trade and commerce through an open and transparent system, and ensure respect for universal rights and freedoms.” The Department of Defense prominently emphasized India’s role in the Asia-Pacific rebalance in DoD’s 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,” which states that the United States’ “economic and security interests are inextricably

linked to developments in the arc extending from the Western Pacific and East Asia to the Indian Ocean region and South Asia...The United States is also investing in a long-term strategic partnership with India to support its ability to be a regional economic anchor and provider of security in the broader Indian Ocean.”

Moreover, the convergence of strategic maritime interests in the Indian Ocean region to include the security of critical energy and trade routes, the denial of free passage to terrorists and weapons proliferators, and the need for effective responses to natural disasters have led to a greater mutual desire for deeper naval and maritime cooperation between India and the United States.

Without question, China is building a modern and regionally powerful Navy with a modest but growing capability for conducting operations beyond China’s near-seas region. This creates both opportunities and challenges for the Navy. The issue at stake is the fundamental question of whether China will use its growing economic and military power to assert its interests without respect to international norms. The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) notes that, “the rapid pace and comprehensive scope of China’s military modernization continues, combined with a relative lack of transparency and openness from China’s leaders regarding both military capabilities and intentions.” This behavior contributes to tension and instability, potentially leading to miscalculation or even escalation. The U.S. Sea Services, through our continued forward presence and constructive interaction with Chinese maritime forces, reduce the potential for misunderstanding, discourage aggression, and preserve our commitment to peace and stability in the region.

Despite mounting U.S. concern, our Nation seeks a positive, cooperative, and comprehensive relationship with China that welcomes China’s ability to take on a responsible leadership role. The Navy and Marine Corps’ overall military concept is a balance of deterrence and encouragement, inviting the Chinese Navy to play a responsible and constructive role in promoting security and peaceful development and join in coalition operations, as it has in countering piracy in the Indian Ocean.

The combination of the Asia-Pacific’s economic importance to the world economy, its proximity to U.S. security interests, and its expansive geography require an increased U.S. naval

presence to maintain our commitment to the stability of the region. Evolving challenges in the region — including the activities of China's more modern navy and the proliferation of anti-access/area denial — require that the Navy and Marine Corps maintain a coordinated, leading role in the region.

Building the Naval Force of the Future

The new strategy describes how we will employ the Navy and Marine Corps and the principles we will use to build the Naval Force of the future. The employment of our Naval Forces remains innovative through forward basing, adaptive force packages tailored to regional environments, and expanded engagements with our allies and partners like when we integrate allied ships or staffs into our Strike Group and Marine Expeditionary Unit deployments.

Our new strategy also describes a fleet of more than 300 ships—including 11 aircraft carriers, 14 ballistic missile submarines (to be replaced by 12 Ohio Replacement SSBN) and 33 amphibious ships—to support our global requirements and ensure we have flexible, agile, and ready forces that deploy within a predictable employment model that has an ability to surge additional forces when required.

Anything less than this would increase our risk, decrease forward presence, and limit our warfighting advantages. If we were to return to sequester-level funding, Navy surge-ready CSGs and ARGs would be insufficient to meet requirements. Gaps in presence and theater engagement requirements would present challenges to meet the Defense Strategic Guidance. They reduce our ability to meet security commitments to allies and partners, deter aggression, and to conduct military operations. They also decrease our ability to be where it matters, when it matters. Some places you may see these gaps manifested include not being positioned to respond as quickly as in the past, not being able to take advantage of fleeting opportunities to destroy terrorist targets, and not being as responsive in HA/DR as in the past.

In building the future force, we will balance investments in readiness, capability, and capacity to ensure we remain a capable and combat-ready force. We will invest in innovative platforms and systems that allow us to accomplish our missions at reduced cost, but not at a

lowered capability. We will focus our resources on the capabilities that allow us to retain and improve our warfighting advantages.

Strategic Continuum

The new strategy is part of a larger effort throughout the Navy to energize our existing culture of strategic thinking that has led to innovation and an increase in operational excellence. The strategy has already been instrumental in aligning our budget requirements and operational concepts. Our strategic culture will continue to yield naval operational concepts such as the Air-Sea Battle Concept (now Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAM-GC)), as well as new concepts of operations for Electromagnetic Maneuver Warfare, space and cyber operations, and counter-swarm tactics. Additionally, the Navy is developing a Classified Annex to this strategy which will integrate existing efforts in expanding our warfighting capability in the demanding global environment that we see today. This Classified Annex will also exploit innovation and is expected to further inform the budget process.

The strategic continuum will be further enhanced by the recent creation of a Strategist Subspecialty Code which will ensure that Sailors with the appropriate background occupy strategic billets while generating long-term expertise to foster additional strategic thinking, alignment, and assessment. These subspecialists will form the foundation of our strategic continuum and enhance our strategic underpinnings through the alignment of strategic documents, iterative wargaming, new concept development, coordinated messaging and engagements, and further increase strategic linkages to the budget. The CNO has clearly met the challenge of energizing our culture of strategic thinking, and the new maritime strategy is just part of the continuum he has reinforced to generate the innovation and efficiencies required by our Navy today.

Conclusion

Changes in the world since 2007, updated strategic guidance, and our current fiscal circumstances compelled us to revise the maritime strategy. Security threats have become more sophisticated and widespread and we face new and evolving threats from violent extremist organizations, threats from North Korea and Iran, a rising China, and recent Russian aggression.

Additionally, we face new and evolving challenges that threaten our access in cyberspace and in the global commons.

To meet these challenges, we will continue emphasizing combat-credible forward naval presence – being where it matters, when it matters – as well as our commitment to allies and partners. We will continue to develop the global network of navies concept because we recognize that no one nation can meet these threats alone and every country can contribute in some way. Our historic naval functions – deterrence, sea control, power projection, and maritime security – remain essential to our strategy, but the security conditions in which we conduct them have changed.

Our strategy adapts to the new world we face by emphasizing warfighting first. We have created a new essential function for Naval Forces – all domain access – that will sharpen our ability to defeat the advanced technologies and strategies that would otherwise hold our forces at risk. In this manner, we will maintain appropriate freedom of action in any domain – sea, air, land, cyberspace, as well as the electromagnetic spectrum. We identify regional threats to guide how we will operate. We embrace innovation and efficiency in building a modern and capable force of more than 300 ships that will meet our national objectives.

This strategy describes a Navy and Marine Corps team that is ready to meet and overcome the challenges of an increasingly dangerous world. Now and for the years to come, this force is ready to fight and win.

We thank the subcommittee for your continued support and I look forward to answering your questions.