

PRESIDENT'S FORUM



Promoting Global Maritime Partnerships

THE OCEANS OF THE EARTH cover nearly three-quarters of the blue planet's surface. They have long been the subject of reflection and study. At Tufts University's Fletcher School the oceans are being examined as *source*, *avenue*, and *arena*: a source for foodstuffs and energy; an avenue for goods, people, and ideas; and an arena for struggle and warfare. This is a simple but elegant rubric for studying this complex environment, one that aligns well with the educational focus we have at the Naval War College. As students of the oceans, naval officers are keenly aware of the centuries of armed conflict that have often turned peaceful waters into scenes of destruction and death.

Stability and progress in international relations are the goals on which the Naval War College's various Global Maritime Partnership programs are focused. Although the College's doors have been open to frequent international visitors since the end of the nineteenth century, the foundation of our current international academic programs can be traced to the desire of Admiral Arleigh Burke, as Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), to enhance the ability of NATO allies and other treaty partners to work together effectively on issues of common concern. Burke recalled discussions he had once had with a former Imperial Japanese Navy officer after the close of World War II. That officer bemoaned the possibility that despite their remarkable tenacity and operational excellence the Japanese had lost the war because of inadequate scholarship in military schools. Admiral Burke countered that more interaction among military professionals (at places like the Naval War College) might have prevented the war from occurring at all. To encourage such potentially beneficial contacts, he directed the formation of a permanent location for professional discussion and debate. In the

summer of 1956, officers from twenty-three nations gathered in Newport for the inaugural class of the College's first full-time international program, the Naval Command College (NCC). This yearlong course paralleled, to the degree that security restrictions would allow, the course of study followed by U.S. students. When highly classified topics, such as nuclear operations, were covered, the NCC students engaged in professional visits to military, industrial, and governmental institutions around the country.

Today's NCC welcomes top-performing officers from over sixty nations each year in a course of study that is almost fully integrated with the academic program of our U.S. students. In the fifty-five years that have passed since the first course, the Naval Command College has graduated nearly two thousand officers from more than a hundred friendly nations. With the success of this program as inspiration, in 1972 a tailored version of the yearlong program, to be completed in only five months, was established as the Naval Staff College (NSC). Over the years, more than 2,100 officers, many from the world's smaller navies, have graduated from this highly regarded program. The over 4,100 alumni from these two programs constitute a remarkable network of maritime professionals who share not only a love of the sea but also deep and personal appreciation for the strengths of their fellow mariners, their nations, and their cultures.

In addition to these on-campus international education programs, the College conducts conferences, symposia, and other research and collaboration initiatives on a recurring basis. Here are just a few.

The International Seapower Symposium. The largest gathering of naval leaders in history just occurred in Newport, when the twentieth International Seapower Symposium (ISS-20) was held at the College on 18–21 October 2011. Addressing the theme "Security and Prosperity through Maritime Partnerships," the ISS was attended by chiefs of navies and coast guards from 111 nations. This event, hosted by the CNO, has been held here in Newport every two years since 1969, the only exception being 2001, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. The symposium offers an incredible arena for the world's maritime leaders to discuss common challenges and to promote international maritime security cooperation. These discussions offer opportunities for future regional and international collaboration in seeking solutions to challenges facing the global network of maritime nations. The ISS is unique in that it is the only forum in the world that regularly brings together the heads of navies to enhance maritime security and collaborative operations. Leon Panetta, the Secretary of Defense, welcomed the delegates in a video in which he highlighted the purpose of the symposium: "Lifting all of our nations towards a better future is what this is all about. On behalf of President Obama, I want to thank you for your service and for your

collective efforts to promote a more peaceful, a more stable, and a more prosperous world.” The CNO, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, reiterated the value of mariners working together: “Maritime security is impossible for one nation. No one can do it alone. It’s a team effort. It’s a team sport.” In his keynote address, the Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus, encouraged the assembled leaders to “seek out ways to work together and take advantage of the common bond between sailors that share one culture and one sea-going tradition that has been two millennia in the making.” He went on to acknowledge the value of international maritime partnerships, declaring, “The best response [to any problem] is one heard from many voices.”

Discussions at previous ISS events resulted in many successful efforts to enhance cooperation in countering piracy, providing disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, coordinating search and rescue at sea (including submarine rescue), and planning and conducting coalition military and joint law-enforcement operations to counter arms, drug, and human trafficking, and fisheries and pollution violations. Building on a common understanding of the most pervasive challenges faced by the maritime nations, ISS-20 provided the delegates with numerous opportunities to foster trust and confidence.

Regional Alumni Symposia. Many of the advantages of the biennial ISS are realized on a more frequent basis through a series of Regional Alumni Symposia held at venues around the globe. Since 2005 the College has hosted eight symposia at various regional locations as opportunities to reunite alumni of our resident international education programs. The most recent event, cosponsored by the French Navy, was held in Toulon, France, in September 2011. It brought together alumni from throughout the European region. The symposium’s theme, “Enhancing Regional Stability: NATO’s New Maritime Strategy and Other Initiatives,” built on concepts for enhancing global maritime partnerships that had been discussed in depth during the International Seapower Symposium of 2009. In Toulon, symposium participants examined existing cooperative structures and investigated future possibilities for enhanced interoperability and information sharing in the region. The aim of this event, as for the other seven symposia held since the series began, was to use our alumni’s shared experiences in Newport to enhance trust and confidence and to facilitate ongoing cooperation. The meetings allow alumni to interact and exchange views with one another, with the College’s faculty, and with U.S. senior military leadership from the region. They support the goals outlined in the U.S. Navy’s “Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower” by promoting collaboration, sharing ideas, and encouraging and facilitating future cooperation. The Regional Alumni Symposia also provide unique forums at which regional and fleet commanders and their staffs can

engage directly and informally with a cross section of international graduates from both the NCC and NSC.

Regional Studies Groups. On our home campus in Newport, we have established six Regional Studies Groups (RSGs) to facilitate faculty and student research in support of the College's mission to provide direct support to the CNO and the geographical combatant commanders. The Regional Studies Groups now in operation are Europe-Russia Studies, Greater Middle East Studies, Latin American Studies, Africa Studies, Indian Ocean Studies, and Asia-Pacific Studies (closely associated with the Van Beuren Chair of Asia-Pacific Studies).

Each RSG comprises faculty members and students with expertise, experience, and interest in the U.S. policy and maritime affairs of the designated region. The RSGs act as catalysts, coordinators, and implementers of research that serves the needs of the Navy, combatant commanders, and other elements of the U.S. government responsible for formulating policy, developing strategy, and devising operational plans for each area. Within the College itself, the groups serve as focal points for information sharing related to major policy developments within the regions. The groups also perform important outreach functions by facilitating faculty participation in major conferences and research activities in the various regions and throughout the United States.

China Maritime Studies Institute. The maritime relationship between the United States and China will be particularly critical to the world's maritime security in the twenty-first century. China's rapidly expanding overseas commerce and the growth of the People's Liberation Army Navy are facts that deserve and demand considerable study and analysis. Just over five years ago the College established an organization, and recruited superb young Mandarin-speaking faculty, to enable such studies to take place. The China Maritime Studies Institute (CMSI), established to increase knowledge and understanding of the maritime dimensions of China's rise, supports the research needs of the U.S. Navy and the larger academic community. The CMSI conducts research in functional areas including energy, global commerce, law of the sea, maritime technologies, merchant marine, naval developments, naval diplomacy, and shipbuilding. The institute's many published books and monographs have become "required reading" for China scholars around the world. Its contributions to the body of knowledge in the field continue to grow each day.

Combined Force Maritime Component Commander Course. The recognition of the importance of allies being able to interact smoothly in operational situations created the demand for a specialized course that would enhance the abilities of senior offers to work together effectively. The Combined Force Maritime Component Commander (CFMCC) Course was developed to promote

understanding and regional awareness while cultivating positive relationships among U.S. and international flag and general officers. At least half of the students in these regionally focused courses, which are cohosted by the appropriate fleet commanders, represent the military forces of the region. To facilitate participation and reduce travel requirements, the courses are held in the respective theaters. CFMCC courses have explored the issue of command above the tactical level, looking at the art and science involved in operating naval forces in a multinational environment. They have focused on cooperation and collaboration using scenarios based on joint and combined exercises or humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations. The CFMCC courses have had a significant impact in helping regional teams address such challenges as piracy, earthquake response, and tsunamis. For example, graduates from New Zealand and Japan of the course held in Pearl Harbor in February 2011 returned home to find themselves almost immediately leading real-world missions in response to disasters in their countries. The shared experiences of that CFMCC course were in that instance of immediate and real benefit to the world.

This is only a brief overview of some of the ways the Naval War College is working, with many international partners, to encourage peace and stability. Individually, navies can accomplish much good for their nations, but collectively they can do much of the hard work required to make the ongoing globalization of benefit to all.

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