



U.S. NAVY TITLE X WAR GAME

“IMPLEMENTING THE MARITIME STRATEGY”

4-8 AUGUST 2008, U.S. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE, NEWPORT, RI



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

During the period 4-8 August 2008, the Navy’s Title X War Game, Global ’08, was held at the Naval War College (NWC) in Newport, Rhode Island. The game focused on developing insights regarding the capabilities, capacities, and risks associated with implementation of *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower (CS 21)*. The game organizers assigned over 190 participants, including representatives from 19 foreign navies, to one of seven cells (six regional and one global), asking them to “parachute” into one of four alternative futures and consider a series of questions dealing with security threats, maritime roles and tasks, concepts, and capabilities for responding to the challenges arising in these futures. Initially developed for the Navy Strategic Planning Process (NSPP), the four futures were functions of two primary drivers: extremism and resource rivalry. The futures were not intended to be either comprehensive or predictive.

Time constraints limited each cell to assessment of a single scenario. Cells were thus assigned alternative futures as follows:

Alternative Future

Made in East Asia
Global Chaos
United We Stand
Tri-polar

Cells

Asia/Pacific & Latin America/Caribbean
North America
Central Asia/Middle East & Europe
Africa & Global

Game results/Maritime themes

The observations and insights from the game were organized around seven maritime themes which had relevance across all of the cells and are briefly discussed below.

Maritime Security: Game participants unanimously saw maritime security as an important mission, and it was a central focal point of game discussions. International players, in particular, considered maritime security primarily a law-enforcement rather than a counterterrorism function. Many of the participants also preferred U.S. assistance in the form of training and exercises. Finally, most participants perceived the facilitation of maritime security as an activity that could be leveraged to enhance trust between the U.S. maritime services and their counterparts in other countries.

Persistent Maritime Presence: Many participants regarded the regular and sustained presence of forward deployed maritime forces as a critical enabler for all other themes, and an important part of the Navy’s contribution to the national security objectives of the United States. Specifically, forward maritime forces allowed the Navy to meet the challenges identified in Global ’08 as requiring a timely response.

Credible Combat Power: Participants identified five key components of credible combat power: defeating anti-access strategies, providing integrated air and missile defense, achieving sea control, projecting power ashore, and aggregating and disaggregating forces. They further emphasized two key capabilities associated with credible combat power: the ability to exercise sea control and subsequently project power ashore, and deterrence.

Building Partnerships: For game participants, building partnerships meant developing relationships with allies, friends, and stakeholders across the full spectrum of maritime activities in order to create trust and effectively accomplish shared maritime goals. They applied this concept of partnership across all regions, futures, and the full range of maritime activities, indicating that foreign partners wanted the U.S. to be involved with their maritime security in most conceivable futures. From that perspective, the participants noted that the United States will have to make significant investments in maritime resources on a global basis to build partnerships that meet the expectations of existing and potential partners. As participants and others have stated, “you can’t surge trust.” Building

partnerships will accordingly require tolerance, patience, and some willingness to adapt and conform to partner standards.

Humanitarian Assistance (HA) / Disaster Relief (DR): All of the player cells agreed that HA/DR – defined within the event’s conceptual framework as the ability to “alleviate human suffering and contribute to regional security and stability through deliberate (HA) or immediate (DR) response” – was a valuable component of CS 21. Participants also felt that the role that conducting HA/DR operations and training played in building partnerships and improving coordination with non-U.S. forces was valuable. They articulated three important criteria for the successful execution of HA/DR efforts: timeliness, well-considered strategic communications (in particular, placing a local face on the operation), and preparation (including investment in physical infrastructure and personnel training).

Shared Awareness: Virtually all of the players viewed information sharing between stakeholders (both governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations) as vital to the development of improved situational awareness. They came up with five primary insights regarding shared awareness. First, information sharing is a key enabler, particularly for information-related concepts such as maritime domain awareness (MDA) and common operational picture (COP). Second, the barriers to the successful sharing and exchange of information are policy-related as well as technical, such that policy changes – not just technological advances – can lead to improved information sharing. Third, trust, developed through engagement activities such as coalition exercises and operations, would help expand the range and depth of interaction between the United States and partner countries. Fourth, information sharing must be a two-way street. Finally, ISR, particularly persistent ISR provided by maritime forces, is a key maritime requirement.

Strategic Communications: All of the cells considered effective strategic communications – defined as the sum of all actions and messages (intentional and unintentional) influencing target audiences – as an integral part of any successful U.S. strategy. An important corollary was that the Navy had to develop and disseminate coordinated and consistent strategic communications. Thus, to be successful, the Navy must establish the ability to design and implement a standardized process at the Navy component commander level for effectively coordinating maritime actions and messages so as to convey consistent U.S. government purposes and objectives.

Concepts discussion

One of the goals of Global ‘08 was to evaluate the contributions of relevant joint and maritime concepts to CS 21 implementation. The concept evaluation activity did not go as smoothly as hoped, as many of the players were unfamiliar with the concepts. Nevertheless, the cells did engage in several constructive, substantive exchanges. The three most robustly discussed concepts were the Sea-basing (SB) Joint Integrating Concept (JIC), the Global Maritime Partnership (GMP) concept, and the Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept (JOC).

The Africa Cell favorably reviewed the draft 2008 Naval Operations Concept (NOC), but noted that the United States needed to refine regional, state-to-state, or even bilateral approaches for specifically addressing disparate threats, challenges, and opportunities to fully implement the GMP concept. The Global Cell noted that their maritime tasks were well supported by today’s concepts, but that the concepts might assume more maritime access than may actually exist in future scenarios. The Latin America Cell cited the Global Fleet Station concept and the SB JIC as keys to the implementation of CS 21 in that region. The North America cell identified Global Maritime Situational Awareness as the one concept relevant to all five of its maritime tasks.

Additional observations

Aggregation – disaggregation: Global participants saw significant material and training challenges implicit in the requirement to disperse naval forces tailored for specific missions throughout a region and then quickly bringing them together in order to constitute credible combat power.

Sea-basing: Participants defined sea-basing as “forces based at sea” in a manner consistent with the SB JIC. Pursuant to that concept, the appropriate by word for forward-deployed maritime forces is “live

nearby, and visit often.” Regional participants preferred to see U.S. maritime forces exploit their ability to operate from the sea to relieve local governments of pressure to grant them access in the form of shore basing rights. Elsewhere, with respect to an anti-access environment created by a peer competitor, players determined sea-based, long-range penetrating ISR capabilities to be critical to effective operations. In a third region, they assessed sea-based forces as providing required credible combat power without the negative force-protection and strategic communication burdens of a land presence.

“Whole of Government” approach: Participants felt that the U.S. government needed to do a much better job of executing strategic communications and integrating activities across the entire range of government functions.

Conclusions

Without question, the Global 2008 Title X War Game was an effective tool for exploring CS 21 implementation and produced valuable feedback from a wide array of participants. The players’ discussions, activities, and briefs provided many useful insights that the U.S. maritime services should consider as they work to implement CS 21 in the coming years. In particular, the participants identified regionally-focused, mission-tailored responsiveness as the key to successful execution of CS 21, and concurred that the development and maintenance of that capability will be crucial to the Navy’s overall effectiveness for the foreseeable future. The game also highlighted the importance of coordinated strategic communications for CS 21 implementation. The upshot of this observation was that while CS 21 establishes the Navy’s role in implementing the United States’ basic maritime strategy, a comprehensive “whole of government” approach to maritime strategy execution will be required for success.