

## **“PAKISTAN NAVY’S ROLE IN REGIONAL MARITIME DOMAIN”**

1. Ladies and gentlemen! it is a matter of great privilege for me to be amongst this eminent gathering and discuss issues of maritime interest. I must thank Chief of the Naval Staff, Sri Lanka Navy for invitation to this forum and affording me the opportunity to express my views on **Pakistan’s Role in Maintaining Regional Maritime Security**. Scheme of the presentation is as flashed.

2. Ladies and gentlemen! In the new millennium, interdependence has gained prominence owing to cumulative impact of globalization, depleting energy resources and the asymmetric dimension of threats especially after 9/11. In the economic context, uninterrupted flow of trade and energy supplies, which is primarily through the sea, has also gained exponential significance. On the other hand, post 9/11 events have brought about a paradigm shift in the global security calculus and reshaped the 21st century's threat canvas. Unlike past, nations are confronted with issues such as transnational terrorism, insurgencies and organized asymmetric crimes. The extension of these new security challenges has forced the leading maritime nations of the world to re-strategize their maritime polices and force structures. The changed environment has also led to new alliances and power blocks.

3. In the ***global maritime context***, the end of Cold War has led to a shift in strategic focus for most naval forces with emphasis now on policing roles to counter nonmilitary, transnational and asymmetric threats. Maritime forces are ideally suited to operating in asymmetric environment not only due to their inherent flexibility, reach and sustainability but because of their ability to quickly blend with, and to support other maritime forces.

4. Threats to maritime security generally emanate from inter-state territorial disputes, political instabilities and transnational crimes including maritime terrorism, human smuggling, drugs and arms trafficking, piracy etc. In the wake of enhanced global economic activities, free flow of trade and energy resources has gained further significance. Wars for outright occupation of territory have generally given way to influencing events on land from the sea to achieve political objectives. This conceptual change has brought about a paradigm shift in the development and employment strategies of

leading maritime nations. Navies world over are increasingly focused on policing roles and maritime security operations against asymmetric threats. There is an increasing realization that no one nation can single-handedly cope with the quantum of threat prevailing in the maritime environment. This has led to the contemporary concept of **Collaborative Maritime Security**.

5. In our **regional maritime context**, Indian Ocean is home to some of the world's most important Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs). About half of the world's trade by value and a third of its oil consumption passes through this ocean. A total of 17 million barrels of crude oil passes through the Strait of Hormuz each day. With 72% of the world's known oil and 35% of the gas reserves estimated to be in the region, the Gulf, North Arabian Sea (NAS) and the western Indian Ocean have become 'maritime crossroads' where maintaining maritime security and stability has attained greater significance with respect to freedom of navigation and uninterrupted flow of trade, particularly through such key choke points as the Strait of Hormuz and Bab-ul-Mandab, have assumed vital significance for industrialised countries. Keeping in view their increasing energy demand, energy security has thus emerged as a vital national interest for the world's economies, both regional and extra-regional.

6. After having talked about the emerging Maritime environment, it is important to describe some of the most significant **Challenges to Regional Maritime Security in Arabian Sea**:

a. First the **maritime terrorism**. Maritime Terrorism is potentially the most ominous threat. Fortunately the world's oceans so far have not been a major focus of terrorist activities. Nevertheless, maritime realm is by design conducive to these types of threat contingencies. Given their vastness and largely unregulated area, the planet's oceans lie beyond the strict jurisdiction of any one state, meaning that they are by definition anarchic. There are real dangers of terrorists using relatively unguarded and vulnerable sea routes to undertake acts of maritime terrorism.

b. In addition to maritime terrorism, the increased incidence of **piracy** from East Africa to Malacca Strait has contributed to the spectre of escalating maritime crime. It has also become

the bane of modern seafarer despite the extensive technological advancements made by the shipping and security agencies. Piracy attacks, especially in the Horn of Africa and Somali coast, have increased significantly in the recent past and have forced a lots of nations to deploy their ships in the area to safeguard their international trade.

c. An important adjunct to maritime terrorism is **drugs and arms trafficking**. With huge profit margins, drug trafficking is by far the most lucrative means of making quick money, which is used to finance terror networks and arms trafficking. The unabated and record production of drugs and narcotics in Afghanistan makes it imperative to curb drugs and arms trafficking through the sea and for the international community to deny its trafficking to outside world. Gunrunning by sea is also the safest means for transferring arms and ammunition worldwide.

d. Another dimension to maritime crime is **smuggling** of commodities such as oil, consumer goods etc and human trafficking, which has grown phenomenally in recent years. There has been a progression over time from contraband in low value goods to high value items. The human trafficking has led to ingress of illegal immigrants in some of the regional countries, which has been a cause of increased social upheaval and crimes.

e. Finally a non-military challenge to maritime security forces is **Maritime Pollution and Environmental Disasters**. Oil-related disasters at sea are the major source of concern for not only environmentalists but mariners as well. The oil spillage incidents, which occurred in Pakistan in 2003 and on the South East Coast of Mauritius in Feb 2005<sup>i</sup> are relevant cases, which caused considerable damage to the maritime environment. Regional governments are deeply concerned with major oil spills or wrecks of oil tankers at narrow approaches to harbours and choke points, since such spills or wrecks can seriously affect the flow of merchant shipping traffic.

7. Ladies and Gentlemen! The world today has become simply too interconnected and interdependent. This makes it difficult for any

nation to single-handedly provide for its own security and economic well being. We, therefore, need to change with time; anticipate threats, develop strategies to respond and build the cooperation and trust at both the regional and international levels to deal with the growing maritime challenges. Accordingly, recent years have seen an increasing realisation of the utility of **maritime security cooperation** among regional nations and shared commitments to safety and security have become a high priority. However, these are tempered by a strong desire to carefully guarantee national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. Thus, such cooperation can only be developed through the process of mutual respect and confidence building.

8. The Indian Ocean Region has extreme economic diversities, where some of the fastest growing economies live in close proximity with some of the poorest countries of the world. The maritime security related problems that confront the region are not 'small' by any standards. However, if the problems of holistic security are enormous, so are the opportunities.

9. In addressing the question of how these opportunities may best be maximized, the most appropriate mechanism is '**Constructive-Engagement**' to counter the individual and collective challenges that we face. 'Constructive-Engagement' by regional and extra-regional navies enables sharing of operational and doctrinal expertise, generation of interoperability and the enhancement of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA). Coupled with this, progressive capacity building of the littoral states could transform their security-related fragility into self-sufficiency.

10. Ladies and Gentlemen, to highlight the significance of sea for Pakistan, let me say a few words on **Pakistan's Maritime Interests and Compulsions**.

11. More than 95% of Pakistan's trade being sea borne and most of our POL imports coming from the Gulf, the most **significant maritime challenge for Pakistan** is to ensure peace and stability in the region. Prevention of terrorism at sea and its linkages with trans-national crimes is also high on our agenda. Continuous flow of energy resources the Strait of Hormuz is essential for sustenance of our economy and daily life. The total area of our **Exclusive**

**Economic Zone** (EEZ) is 240, 000 sq km, which is rich in fishery, hydrocarbons and seabed resources. With the addition of continental shelf, which we are pursuing vigorously, an additional 55, 000 sq km of sea area will be added to our EEZ.

12. Additionally, the development of Gwadar port as a major transshipment port, located close to the Gulf, is expected to increase maritime activity off our coast and to and from our ports, which in turn will increase our dependence on maritime sector manifolds. The emerging maritime scenario in Indian Ocean thus necessitates a more dynamic role for Pakistan, so as to safeguard own maritime interests, which are key to our economic well being.

13. At **international level**, enhancing maritime security of the region through participation in the war against terrorism and contributing towards stability and peace in the area, especially of SLOCs in the North Arabian Sea, are the focus of our attention.

14. I would like to point out here that stability in this region is also essential for **securing the vital energy supplies** of the world which is a common interest of Pakistan and the international community. **Sustained and concerted efforts of coalition forces and regional players** are required to maintain security in the region.

15. Pakistan is significantly contributing towards regional maritime security through participation of Pakistan Navy in Coalition Maritime Campaign Plan (**CMCP**), the maritime component of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). PN, despite its resource constraints, has contributed significantly in CMCP and 35 PN ships, in rotation, with embarked helicopters have been part of Task Force 150 since April 2004. PN is also providing LRMP support to coalition forces through regular surveillance sorties. PN was the first regional Navy that joined the coalition, and that has routinely commanded the multinational Task Force -150. Presently, PN is in command of Task force-150 for the fourth time (15Apr-Oct 10). I may share that Command of TF-150 by PN has given due impetus to the concept of collaborative maritime security in North Arabian Sea.

16. PN's participation in the coalition has made it possible to effectively monitor and control drugs and arms smuggling in the North

Arabian Sea. PN ships in conjunction with the coalition forces have successfully created deterrence amongst nefarious elements and curtailed their liberty of action. Due to aggressive deployment of Pakistan Navy units in collaboration with other coalition partners in TF-150, there has been no act of maritime terrorism in our region, in the recent past.

17. In addition, subsequent to adoption of a resolution by UNSC to combat piracy in areas HoA/GoA and off Somali coast, Pakistan has also joined multi-national Task Force-151. So far, five PN ships with embarked helos have participated in anti-piracy operations under the ambit of TF-151. PN is also scheduled to assume the command of TF-151 in Dec 10.

18. **Collaborative Security.** In addition to joining the Coalition, Pakistan Navy in March 2007 organised a major multi-national maritime exercise **AMAN**, in which 28 countries participated. The exercise was a manifestation of Pakistan's commitment towards peace and stability through harmony and collaborative maritime security between navies of East and West. Owing to the success of AMAN - 07, it was decided to make it a biennial event; the second exercise of the series was conducted from 5 – 14 Mar 09. **AMAN – 09** was also a big success wherein ships, aircraft, Special Operation Forces and observers from 35 countries participated. The next AMAN exercise is scheduled in March 2011.

19. In the context of environmental protection measures, Pakistan Navy is also the lead agency in combating all types of marine disasters at sea. To effectively counter marine disasters, a National Marine Disaster Contingency Plan (NMDCP), prepared by Pakistan Navy, was promulgated by the Government in 2008, wherein the organisation and actions required in case of marine disasters encompassing all national stake holders have been articulated. Two comprehensive exercises have been conducted very successfully in this regard.

20 In addition, whenever required, Pakistan Navy has also actively contributed in disaster relief operations both in-country and abroad. To mention a few, PN ships and helicopters contributed significantly to rescue and relief efforts in Maldives, Sri Lanka and Indonesia during and after the Asian Tsunami in 2005 and during Makran flood

relief operations in 2007.

21 Ladies and Gentlemen, analysis of the preceding discussion reveals that the **Way Ahead** to address various challenges to regional maritime security is formulation of Collaborative Maritime Security Apparatus. However, a pre-requisite to make any pragmatic headway in this regard will be to resolve contentious issues and disagreements between the regional states through dialogue and political process. Such an approach could facilitate confidence building and trust between the regional countries, leading to furtherance of cooperation in combating maritime crime and enhanced Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA).

22 Finally to **conclude** I would say that Pakistan is a peace loving country that believes in promotion of peace and stability in the region. The contemporary era is characterized by interdependence and the need to work collectively for peace and stability. In line with our national policies, I feel that Pakistan Navy has an important **role to play in ensuring regional maritime security and stability**. Due to its **historic ties with most regional navies** as well as religious and socio-cultural affinity, Pakistan enjoys a unique position in the region. Pakistan provided crucial and meaningful support to the leading Gulf Navies in their formative years, thereby laying a solid foundation for mutual naval collaboration. Consequently there is excellent working relationship between PN and almost all other navies. Pakistan Navy's active participation in Coalition Maritime Campaign Plan, anti piracy operations off Somalia and holding of multilateral exercise AMAN biennially is a clear manifestation of our commitment towards peace and stability through harmony and collaborative maritime security between navies of East and West and will in turn facilitate close cooperation with other regional navies to achieve a secure maritime environment. PN will remain committed, in accordance with our national policies, to play its due role in the maritime domain and will continue to contribute significantly to regional maritime security.

Thank you.

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