

„The Maritime Security Situation – from a Navy Perspective“

Vortrag

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Distinguished guests of this year's Maritime Convention!

It is my pleasure and my privilege to inform you in the next 12 minutes about global and regional maritime security aspects from the perspective of the German Navy.

To treat this topic from my perspective it is mandatory to start with a short look on the worldwide importance of sea lines and maritime trade with a focus on the situation of Germany.

As the oceans are the source of and the path to global wealth, they are also attracting illegal participation on global trade and represent a huge gateway for any kind of threats. These threats I will shortly address.

The nature of these threats and the vastness of the area of interest require a cooperative approach of a wide range of national and international partners. According to the philosophy underlying the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention, oceans are

recognized to be an area that calls for an integrated management approach, which has to take into account certain legal and organizational aspects which may differ from country to country. I will focus on the particular German situation, highlighting the steps achieved as well as the progress that still lies ahead.

Maritime dependencies

To build cars in Germany, it is necessary to import about 40 different types of raw materials. As a rule, these materials are imported by sea.

When we export say luxury cars *made in Germany* to overseas, we indeed do this *over the sea*. To drive German cars ourselves we have to import fuel which we receive to a high percentage from overseas.

Germany's 380 shipping companies operate altogether 3,105 merchant ships with a gross tonnage of 62.1 million (by 30 April 2007).

Consequently, Germany is the world's third largest maritime location behind Greece and Japan.

Maritime trade is of existential importance for our industries and services. Just-in-time-concepts do only work if the flow of goods is ensured. Its interruption has direct consequences for many enterprises' production. While this phenomenon is not new in itself, the real difference is made by the tremendous growth of the global exchange in the last twenty years.

This growth is mainly owed to the issue of "globalization." Often disparaged as a phenomenon or buzzword, globalization is a fact, which determines our life in nearly all its aspects. Our Federal President Horst Köhler described globalization as follows:

*"In the 21st century, almost all nations have become neighbors to each other. They are connected by quickly growing streams of people, knowledge, images, goods and money."*In my

opinion, President Köhler described very aptly the increasingly rapid scientific, economic but also criminal networking of our world today.

Bearing in mind the issue of globalization, I would now like to come to the maritime aspects of security. Nationally as well as internationally, this topic has continuously gained importance in the past two years.

The threats

Let me now take a look at the dangers and risks threatening trade, infrastructure, and above all: personnel in the maritime environment.

Our security – as well as that of our allies – is increasingly being affected by international terrorism, organized crime, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and the consequences of regional crises and conflicts even if they take place in more distant areas. One of the predominant concerns for the future will be providing appropriate security for sea

lanes, offshore oil and gas installations and harbor facilities.

In this context, nongovernmental malevolent actors use the sea as means of transportation and communication and simultaneously threaten international maritime traffic and therefore German ships and goods. The typical terrorist objective – to inflict the greatest possible damage by using relatively simple means at and from the sea – can be achieved in a variety of ways.

Waterways navigable by sea-going ships, approaches to ports and maritime infrastructure can be easily blocked by naval mines and other cheap ammunitions, which can be moved by any type of vehicle. Submarines and aircraft can be used for attacks on merchant ships. The result would paralyze all maritime traffic in the respective region. The protection of the growing network of pipelines is another growing security concern, especially when pipelines cross sea beds.

The dimension of the economic consequences of a disruption of pipelines or a closure of the main seaways as for instance the Suez Canal, the Strait of Malacca or other passages can have a considerable and lasting impact on the worldwide economy.

Aside from the direct dangers for maritime traffic, there are maritime activities, which threaten our security in other ways. These activities include for instance the illegal proliferation of weapons and the corresponding technologies, illegal transfer of persons in the form of people smuggling or human- and/or drug-trafficking.

And even one of the oldest scourges to marine navigation – piracy – has in no way disappeared from the sea; quite the contrary: in some sea areas it is, unfortunately, common practice. Incidents that attract a lot of media attention such as the

hijacking of “M/V Faina” are only the visible tip of the complex issue of “piracy and armed robbery at sea.” The president of the German Shipowners Association has petitioned the German government twice this year for a mandate enabling the Navy to participate in Anti-Piracy operations. More than 30 German ships have been attacked by pirates in 2008 alone, 10 of which off the coast of Somalia. In 2008, 3 German ships have been hijacked and released only after the payment of ransom.

As stated in the Federal Government’s White Paper 2006 on German Security Policy, it is in our national interests to promote free and open world trade as the basis for the prosperity and development of Germany and its trading partners in the EU and worldwide. For this reason it is necessary to take appropriate action against piracy and armed robbery at sea.

Germany's concept of security and defence takes into account that today's security challenges can only be countered successfully through the implementation of comprehensive solutions. This is also true for the fight against piracy.

The international community can and should respond to this threat, by using such suitable means as an UN-mandated international counter-piracy operation of the kind currently under consideration in the EU as a European Security and Defence Policy measure.

In my opinion, however, piracy off the Horn of Africa is a result of regional instability, notably the instability in Somalia. The absence of law and order mechanisms provides warlords ashore and pirates at sea absolute freedom for their criminal activities. Fighting the symptom will work for the time being, but curing the malady can only be achieved through regional stability and good governance.

The aforementioned threats are only a small selection of security issues which are seaborne or use the sea as their main medium.

To counter these threats navies do not only need special means and training, they need information, partners, networks and legal authorization that differ fundamentally from those that are needed in full scale wars between nation state's navies.

What is the German Navy going to derive from given facts?

In short: the special legal and federal construction of country requires a combined approach: on one hand, combined and multinational with our partners at the international level and on the other hand combined at the national level with the respective federal agencies and the agencies of the federal states.

On the international level, the German Navy currently participates in various operations, among them three international operations, which are addressing the mentioned terrorist threat:

Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR is an allied contribution of NATO Navies and their partners in the NATO Euro-Atlantic Partnership and NATO Mediterranean Dialogue with the aim of conducting counter-terrorism in the Mediterranean Sea. In Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, the German task force is to conduct sea surveillance and protect the sea lines of communication in the area around the Horn of Africa. Moreover, it is to prevent the trade and transport of goods, which could help to support international terrorism.

The third operation with permanent German participation is UNIFIL. By preventing the misuse of the sea for arms smuggling and training and equipping of local maritime forces it aims on

enabling the local authorities to reduce regional threats at sea and ashore.

As for domestic waters, the efforts concentrate on an interagency approach. In this context, a deficit has become obvious in the past years with regard to a maritime situation picture, which now requires increased efforts.

Fortunately, Germany is not on its own in this respect but cooperates closely with its European neighbors. In contrast to a self-evident, nearly complete situation picture of the commercial and military air traffic, there is nothing similar at sea. Therefore, international cooperation in Europe has been focusing on the establishment of a maritime situation picture. In view of the aforementioned threats, a common need for an improved maritime situation picture was recognized by NATO, the EU and other states and regions. This leads to manifold initiatives. All in all, the development in

Europe is geared towards a “system of systems” for sea surveillance. The essential aim is to continue to establish and extend already available sea surveillance and information systems in individual European subregions. By interlinking them it should be possible to exchange information if necessary at such an early point in time that a chain of survival or defensive measures can be initiated in good time. However, the issue of maritime surveillance has already been addressed in this symposium and I do not want to expand on the idea.

At the national level, today’s threats to maritime security can only be confronted by means of a comprehensive national approach of so-called “networked security”. In this context, it is hardly possible anymore to make a clear differentiation between internal and external security. The Navy contributes to Germany’s defense with capabilities,

which other departments do not have. And vice versa: the capabilities of the German Navy are focused on the fields of conflict prevention and crisis management including the fight against international terrorism. Realizing such an approach, the nucleus of the Maritime Safety and Security Centre (MSSC) was set up in Cuxhaven on 17 January 2007.

In the MSSC, all federal agencies and agencies of the federal states who contribute to ensuring maritime security are represented. No single event can be expected to resolve the many complex maritime security issues that confront our community. But the concerted actions of our navies integrated in an inter-agency approach can provide a unique opportunity for a major shift in inertia required to put us on the pathway to a more secure and sustainable future. This is as imperative in terms of Maritime Security as it is in moral and humanitarian terms.

Thank you very much for your attention. I will now gladly answer your questions.