

# Strategic Importance of Modern Technology in Building Maritime Security -- A Harmonious Sea

Speech delivered by Mr. Yan Lijin, China on Galle Dialogue 2012

## ● A harmonious sea is the common pursuit of the world

01. Today the Naval officers and experts from various countries gathered here for a common concern – “How to maintain the safety and security of the ocean through cooperation and collaboration”. This concern also reflects in the proposal made by Chinese Government in the last 10 years, the proposal of "**Building A Harmonious World, Building A Harmonious Sea**".

02. "Harmony" is a concept rooted in the Chinese culture with 5,000 years history. It originally referred to a harmonious artistic sense that expressed by an ensemble of different musical instruments, exactly like what is happening today, at this Galle Dialogue. "**A Harmonious World**" means mutual respect, mutual benefit and cooperation among countries, mutual equality and common development among countries, peaceful coexistence and sustainable development between human society and the nature, including the sea. Therefore, without harmony, peace and security can't be realized.

03. It is well-known that more than 70% of this planet is covered by the sea. The sea gives birth to the human civilization, and it is also the space for human survival and development. The harmony of the world could not be realized without a harmonious sea. A harmonious world is inseparable from a harmonious marine environment. The concept of "A Harmonious Sea" is a value system that can be pursued and accepted by all the countries, it shows a global view on peacefully coexistence despite difference of culture and religion, an integrated and supreme wisdom that can't be reached without maximum tolerance and flexibility, a culture that based on peace and intelligence. The Sea without human being's interference vividly illustrates what a Harmonious World is like, with most of the species exist at the same time in a limited space.

04. The current marine situation overall is peaceful and stable, but new security threats keep emerging. Terrorism, separatist and extremist forces are increasingly rampant; piracy, armed robbery, smuggling and other transnational crime become more and more serious for the establishment of A Harmonious Sea environment; the non-traditional security threats are growing.

05. How to counter those newly emerged security threats effectively? The direct interaction among Navies from different nations is a must and necessary method. The challenges posted by the non-traditional security threats in the vast marine environment cannot be resolved without a mutually cooperated scheme being established among the Navies. Therefore, I would like to

emphasize that the Navy is the backbone to promote and safeguard "a Harmonious Sea", I feel very proud of the distinguished naval officers presented today at this event.

## ● **Science and technology is the key to establish a Harmonious Sea**

06. From the historical point of view, the development of ocean civilization relies upon the progress of science and technology. For example, the invention of the compass, one of the four great inventions of ancient China, was the technical foundation for the navigation and helped people all over the world to explore the ocean. The emergence and development of traditional fishery and marine transportation mainly benefited from the progress of shipbuilding technology and the invention of steam engine and internal combustion engine.

07. The development of modern science and technology further facilitate the establishment of Harmonious Sea. For example, the Global Positioning System (GPS) could provide the accurate position of the ships anywhere anytime. The global ocean weather forecast system is able to prevent the ships from risky voyage. The Global Marine Distress and Safety System (MDSS), which includes the AIS, APRA, VHF, ECDIS, etc, enables the vessels to ship safer and get timely help in emergency. The development and application of the technology of marine biotechnology, marine satellite remote sensing, deep-sea drilling, marine farming, marine information, sea water desalination, underwater acoustic technique and other marine advanced technology have greatly speeded up the pace of ocean exploitation. Presently, a number of marine industries have been developed, such as seawater aquaculture, marine oil and gas, marine mineral. All the high and new technologies will provide technical support for the deep-sea mining, marine energy use, ocean recourses exploration and other future marine industries.

08. I would like to present another example to illustrate the importance of the technology for establishing a Harmonious Sea. In April 2011, oil leakage was observed in China Bo-hai Sea Region, however, the concerned foreign company refused to acknowledge the accident at the beginning. The State Oceanic Administration of China presented the aerial remote sensing photos and other evidences; this foreign company was forced to recognize the accident and has to make compensation based on the collected evidence.

09. It shows that modern technology not only provides the technical support for the establishment of harmonious ocean but also brings significant social effect and economic benefit. What's more, it also plays a positive role in boosting the marine civilization, changing the way of thinking towards ocean, promoting the harmonious sustainable development of the sea, resolving the conflicts between human being and the sea during development.

● **How to utilize the information technology better to serve a Harmonious Sea**

10. Nowadays, information technology is the fastest developing technology. The global village now is entering into the digital age gradually. A number of speakers have mentioned the establishment of a joint monitoring system, information sharing system and cross-border collaboration and quick response system in the previous speeches. The electronic information system is able to play a crucial role in establishing these systems.

11. First, a marine security and cooperation network of the concerned region shall be established based on the existing lifesaving communication network of each country. The countries, which are in the concerned region or have frequent activities in the region, shall establish a long term and stable information sharing platform and enhance the regular communication and collaboration to reduce misjudgments.

12. Second, the current ocean monitoring system shall be improved and shared among the related countries. Presently, every country has already established certain coastline, cross-strait surveillance systems to some extent. The information collected independently can be shared based on the peaceful utilization to form a relatively complete marine activity situation, which can serve the marine security. I believe openness and transparency on the utilization of the platform can further enhance mutual trust and confidence among related countries.

13. Third, one information sharing platform and public database shall be established. The timely announcement of significant events, disaster weather warning message, oceanic pollution message, piracy and maritime distress can provide water hydrological information, basic meteorological information and emergency rescue approach for oceanic activities.

14. Since an information network with unified standard and criteria is required for the above-mentioned activities, many specific technical aspects should be considered. Therefore, in order to realize the theme of this dialog --- strategic maritime cooperation and partnership to face the future with confidence, I suggest the establishment of Technology Advisory Committee of Maritime Security and Cooperation shall be the first step and organization established to plan, design and organize the epochal network system, which could resolve the phenomenon of 'information isolation', realize the information, resource and technology sharing and contribute to the peaceful, prosperous and green 'Harmonious Ocean'.

15. In the recently concluded 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Chinese government proposed that “China will firmly follow the road of peaceful development, unswervingly pursue a win-win opening up strategy, continue to promote equality and mutual trust, mutual tolerance, cooperation spirit in international relations, and jointly safeguard the international equity and justice.” Therefore, it can be translated into a long term national policy for China to establish a harmonious society and ocean. China is a cordial neighbor and friend of the countries on the Indian Ocean. We established the profound friendship and cooperation during the long-term interactions and carried out various forms of political, military, economic, and cultural exchanges.

16. In conclusion, we are willing to make concerted efforts with our friends to establish a peaceful, tranquil, prosperous, green and cooperative ocean. I believe we will embrace a glorious and better future for the Indian Ocean together!

Thank you all!