CCDR key note address
Angola Maritime & Energy Security Conference
08 October 2015

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests....

I am delighted to be here today to participate in this international conference and speak about maritime and energy security.

I would like to thank President Dos Santos and the Government of Angola for hosting this conference on this very important topic. I can think of few areas of greater strategic relevance today than the maritime domain. It serves as an intersection for security, economic prosperity, and the environment. It is a topic where national, regional, and global interests converge. The number of countries gathered here today, representing all continents, is a clear confirmation that maritime security is an international priority.

In many important respects, African Nations have taken the lead in pushing maritime security toward the top of the international agenda. African leadership in this area reflects a profound change both in how security is understood and defined. The land-centric focus of security has given way to a broader focus that reflects the importance of maritime spaces. In 1781 General George Washington understood that his efforts on land required a strong maritime force to succeed. He said to the Marquis de Lafayette, "It follows then as certain as that night succeeds the day, that without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious." The broad attendance at today's conference reflects recognition of the important relationship between security offshore, and stability and prosperity onshore.

I view this conference, along with a growing number of regional and continental efforts to improve maritime security, as an important marker in a continuing shift in strategic thinking about the importance of Africa's maritime domain. A domain rich with resources and development potential for energy, shipping, transportation, food, and tourism, the maritime environment is also an area of insecurity which requires careful attention and wise responses. African nations are working together to develop solutions to the threats and challenges confronting them, and America continues to seek ways to assist and support.

The reason we stand together with African countries is straightforward. The United States, the countries of Africa, and the rest of the world, are inextricably tied together by the oceans and sea lanes of communication. We share common challenges, and opportunities due to our mutual connection — reliance on the sea. Freedom of navigation, mariner safety, marine environmental protection, and sustainable use of ocean resources are all fundamental maritime principles that we agree on. They bring us together because global security and prosperity are in all of our national interests.

We all seek appropriate responses, whether national, regional, or global — to piracy; trafficking in humans, narcotics and weapons; armed robbery and kidnapping; migration; illegal fishing, and marine pollution. As a result of globalization and economic interdependence what affects one of us, affects us all.

The growing complexity and sophistication of the criminal networks operating in the maritime environment, as well as the sheer size of the maritime domain and varying levels of capacity and capability at our disposal have led us to find new approaches to maritime security that rest on three main pillars: Regional Cooperation, well-crafted and properly resourced National Maritime Strategies, and Industry Participation.

Regional Cooperation

Cooperation between states is the lynch pin for progress toward a more secure maritime domain. Together, any group of nations is stronger than the sum of their parts. There is an old African saying that tells us, "if you want to go quickly, go alone; if you want to go far, go together." Together, we are translating into action the wisdom captured in this sage advice. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Gulf of Guinea Commission have been at the forefront of this effort. The work carried out by these institutions culminated with the signing of "The Code of Conduct concerning the repression of piracy, armed robbery against ships, and illicit maritime activity in West and Central Africa"; commonly called "The Yaoundé (Ya-oon-day) Code of Conduct".

The African leaders who signed this important document in June 2013 in Yaoundé (Cameroon) established a visionary framework for regional cooperation — a framework that institutionalizes the importance of sharing maritime information between neighboring states, developing pursuit-and-entry protocols to operate in the territorial seas of another state, establishing cooperative shiprider agreements for combined operations, and establishing Multi-National Maritime Coordination Centers. These ideas are all connected to the basic principle of strength and to the value of cooperation between states.

The effectiveness of the Yaoundé Code of Conduct was demonstrated earlier this year, when the motor tanker Mariam was attacked by pirates 63 miles off the port of Bayelsa, Nigeria. The Mariam was successfully tracked and monitored as it proceeded west across the maritime boundaries of Nigeria, Benin, and Togo, and then finally into Ghanaian waters where it was interdicted and boarded by Ghanaian naval forces, resulting in the arrest of 8 pirates.

The conditions necessary for operational successes like that of the Mariam, are founded on regional cooperation, and are created long before the response vessel is dispatched for the interdiction. It starts with training, it must be followed by exercises that tests

concepts and readiness, and ends in operations. Operational success is the validation of skills and capabilities learned through training and exercises.

African maritime exercises, like those conducted bilaterally between Cote d'Ivore and Ghana, or Senegal and Cabo Verde, or larger exercises such as Obangame Express or the French led Nemo are invaluable and serve to bring together maritime security professionals to advance regional cooperation. The relationships that develop through the planning and execution of maritime exercises pay big dividends when you can pick up the phone to discuss a real world operation with someone you already know and trust. Because training and exercises are so important in building the trust necessary for successful maritime security efforts, Africa Command has significantly expanded our interactions with African maritime naval forces.

Training is the baseline of exercises and operation. Because training resources are facing budgetary pressures worldwide, it makes sense to approach training from a regional standpoint. Efforts like that of the Joint Maritime Safety Training Center in Lagos that bring together several nations to train on common coastal surveillance equipment represents an efficient way to maximize resources, standardize training, and build relationships that lend themselves to regional cooperation. Recent efforts by the inter-regional coordination center in Yaoundé to develop and standardize watchstander training for maritime operations centers is another bright spot for regional cooperation that will serve to increase interoperability and develop the relationships that are so important to regional cooperation.

The same resource constraints that encourage us to find regional solutions also challenge us to find more efficient ways to manage resources. Any mismanagement of security resources at the national level has a direct and negative impact on security at all levels — from the individual, to the state, to the region, with implications to global security.

National Maritime Strategies

Regional cooperation is most effective, of course, when pursued within the framework of comprehensive and integrated national maritime strategies.

Developing an effective strategy is a challenging and critical element of maritime security. An effective strategy must articulate a desired end-state, based on national priorities. It has to marshal resources and align the apparatus of government towards achieving common goals; and it needs to describe a cohesive plan that looks beyond the horizon at the challenges and opportunities to come. A well-crafted strategy is powerful, because it forces deliberate thinking and decision making, and can unite the efforts of all elements of government. A good strategy steers us away from the easy road of focusing on the means to get the job done — which often simply translates into

obtaining equipment in response to a security incident only to realize later that those actions aren't nested within a greater strategy, aren't supported (or in some cases are duplicated) by other elements of government, and at times does very little to legitimately improve the overall security landscape. As the demand for security increases on the continent within a context of dwindling resources, the judicious management of scarce resources can be significantly improved through the effective implementation of national strategies.

Inter-ministry or inter-agency coordination is an important part of strategy development as well as the comprehensive approach that should be used to implement a maritime strategy. National level maritime planning committees, such as those called for in the Yaoundé Code of Conduct, are critical in bringing together the inter-ministerial stakeholders for strategy development.

As you engage in the process of developing and implementing national maritime strategies, Africa Command stands ready to assist and support you in any way we can. We are committed to enabling your continued effort to create a secure environment for the development of Africa's immense potential.

The Role of Industry

To succesfully exploit the potential of Africa's maritime environment, national and regional strategies must look beyond governmental and military efforts, to incorporate the critical role of civilian industry. I am encouraged by the robust participation of the energy sector at this conference, not only as attendees, but also as panelists and speakers. It is a clear recognition of the unique security and development relationships that exists between government services and the energy industry. For maritime security to continue to advance and progress throughout the world and in African regions, government and industry need to work together to find innovative ways to collaborate and partner together.

We need look no further than the excellent work of the Maritime Trade and Information Sharing Center (MTISC) in Tema, Ghana, which is fast approaching its one year anniversary. Financially supported by the shipping industry, staffed by a multi-national team of watchstanders from regional navies, and hosted by the country of Ghana, this innovative partnership between industry and government(s) has accelerated the development of a regional operating picture that provides for the increased safety of shipping traffic as well as improved response capabilities of maritime security forces.

We need to continue exploring innovative arrangements like the Maritime Trade and Information Sharing Center as partnering solutions between governments and industry, because in the end both government and industry desire the same thing; a secure

maritime environment, safe for all types of maritime activity, that enables the sustainable use of resources, and contributes to development and stability.

Maritime components of the economy depend on healthy oceans and ecosystems. Development and prosperity is important, but it needs to be balanced with a focus on sustainability. Government and industry both have a vested interest in the health of the oceans, and a role in protecting them. Government and industry need to inform each other and work together for responsible regulation based on science and technology, so that the health of the oceans and livelihoods that they provide are protected for future generations, while at the same time maximizing current use. Aquaculture, maritime tourism, marine biotechnology, offshore renewable energy, marine mineral resource mining....all represent tremendous growth and development potential, but should be balanced with improving the health of the oceans, coastlines, and ecosystems.

Conclusion

In closing, I once again want to thank the Government of Angola for sponsoring this event and bringing together so many maritime professionals, focused on a common cause. The importance of maritime security as an international imperative could not be more striking. Our collective challenge is to continue to work together as an international community. Much progress has been made, and we must continue to pursue cooperative regional approaches, like the Yaoundé Code of Conduct. We need to develop national maritime strategies that bring together regional and global partners to efficiently apply resources to common objectives, and we must continue to partner with industry to develop informed, innovative solutions to maritime security.

Thank you all for the opportunity to address you today. I look forward to answering your questions, and to the continued exchange of ideas with all of the participants here at the conference.