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**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.**

**THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY –  
GLOBAL MARITIME PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE AND THE  
NECESSITY FOR COOPERATION AND COALITION**

**by**

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**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**23 April 2008**

## **Abstract**

"A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower," as released in October 2007 by the heads of the United States maritime services, envisions a cooperative effort by nations with maritime interests in order to "police the global commons and suppress common threats." The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative, or GMPI, is intended to play a major role in this effort as one embodiment of the cooperation envisioned. This paper seeks to examine the organizational structure of GMPI, compare GMPI with other existing organizational models of cooperation (alliance and coalition), and through analysis of illustrative examples of these models suggest several ideas in order to actualize the benefits that are inherent in a truly cooperative effort toward maritime security.

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## INTRODUCTION

At the Seventeenth International Seapower Symposium, held in September 2005 at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, then-Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Mullen introduced the concept of the Thousand Ship Navy – the genesis of what has evolved into the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative. In speaking to the collected chiefs of navies and coast guards and other delegates from over 70 countries, Mullen stated “I am thinking about a global network that focuses on making the maritime domain safer for everyone’s use, in most every nation’s self-interest, by leveraging the unique capabilities that all your organizations bring, no matter how large or small.”<sup>1</sup> He continued in the same vein, “... unlike the past, in today’s interconnected world, acting in the global interest is likely to mean acting in one’s national interest. In other words, exercising sovereignty and contributing to global security are no longer mutually exclusive.”<sup>2</sup> In these simple statements, Admiral Mullen set the stage for the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative (and for his overall vision of early 21<sup>st</sup> century maritime security) by succinctly framing the proposed partnership in the context of globalization, acting in one’s own interest, and maintaining sovereignty – concepts that arguably are widely understood and would meet the approval of all nations with a maritime interest.

But the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative is not without detractors who claim that Admiral Mullen’s nominal “free-form, self-organizing network of maritime partners”<sup>3</sup> can achieve maritime security on any large scale without being ripped apart by political and

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Mullen, “A Global Network of Nations for a Free and Secure Maritime Commons,” in *Seventeenth International Seapower Symposium*, ed. John B. Hattendorf (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College, 2006), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Mullen, Admiral U.S. Navy. Opinion in Honolulu Free Advertiser (Oct 29, 2006) quoted in Christopher P. Cavas, “The Thousand Ship Navy,” *Armed Forces Journal*, December 2006, <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/12/2336959/> (accessed 11 April 2008).

strategy differences, legal concerns, capability gaps and even the appearance of American imperialism<sup>4</sup>. With its inception less than three years ago, it is impossible to gauge the level of success or failure so soon, but questions remain that must be answered if the Global Maritime Partnership is to become a reality. Is there a leader in the effort to “police the global commons and suppress common threats”<sup>5</sup> in this era of growing globalization and trans-national threats? Should there be one, and if so, what is that leader’s role? Does a framework currently exist that can help assuage political and strategic differences when they arise, or is it enough to act in one’s own national self-interest and trust that any differences will pale in comparison to the global benefit reaped by a more secure maritime commons? Is the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative something we have been doing already (e.g. coalition partnering, theater security cooperation) but is now being packaged with a new name and fancy PowerPoint slides? While some of these questions are beyond the scope of this paper, they raise numerous concerns about the legitimacy and potential efficacy of this wide-ranging initiative. However, the merits of the proposed cooperation in its broadest form are overwhelming and incontrovertible if political, legal and social issues do not derail the effort in its infancy.

Through analysis of the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative’s organizational construct, and comparison with existing alliance and coalition structures, and through the use of illustrative examples, I intend to demonstrate that cooperation in the maritime commons, based on national self-interest, can and should be the future of peacetime maritime security. This cooperative effort must be framed within, or have its roots in, some of the current constructs in place today. The place to start building (or rather, continue) this partnership is

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, *A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower*, (Washington, DC: October 2007).

at the regional level where the roots of cooperation have a foothold. Application of a revised operational vision and focused leadership at the Combatant Commander level can help achieve the objective which underpins the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative: increased homeland security through global cooperation in the maritime commons.

## **BACKGROUND – GLOBALIZATION, THE CHANGING THREAT, AND THE CALL FOR COOPERATION**

“The changing nature of the international security environment was made abundantly clear to Americans on 11 September 2001.”<sup>6</sup> The events of that tragic day clearly brought home the nature of the changing threat and the increasing importance of understanding globalization, not only in the economic field but as it relates to national security.

Globalization, in a simplistic context, can be described as “the worldwide integration and increasing flows of trade, capital, ideas and people.”<sup>7</sup> These increasing flows become all the more obvious when examining some key statistics from the maritime domain. According to the International Shipping Federation / International Chamber of Shipping:

Over 90% of world trade is carried by the international shipping industry ...  
As at 1st January 2008, the world trading fleet was made up of 50,525 ships  
... The world fleet is registered in over 150 nations, and manned by over a  
million seafarers of virtually every nationality.<sup>8</sup>

These facts, when coupled with the realities that “four-fifths of the world’s countries have littoral borders ... (and) an estimated 50 percent of the world’s population lives within 48

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<sup>6</sup> John G. Morgan and Charles W. Martoglio, “The 1,000 Ship Navy Global Maritime Network,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, November 2005, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas P. M. Barnett, *Blueprint for Action: A Future Worth Creating* (New York, NY: Putnam and Sons, 2005), xvi.

<sup>8</sup> International Chamber of Shipping and International Shipping Federation official Web site, <http://www.marisec.org> (accessed 10 March 2008).

miles of the shore, and that number is expected to reach 75 percent by 2030,”<sup>9</sup> clearly demonstrate the importance of the maritime environment in geographic, demographic and economic terms. By inference, it is clear that the maritime commons will become increasingly important in coming years not only in relation to trade, but as a probable avenue for parties increasingly interested in the disruption of an expanding global influence.

Thomas P. M. Barnett, a noted author and national security strategist, refers to those parties (or societies) opposing increased globalization as a “non-Integrating Gap” disconnected from the global economy, and he says it is this disconnectedness that creates the probability of bad actors and defines the “security task of our age.”<sup>10</sup>

Increased recognition of globalization’s importance and impact on our society and security has led the United States to redefine what a threat looks like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In an article in the United States Naval Institute’s *Proceedings*, Admirals Morgan and Martoglio recently characterized common maritime threats as “piracy, smuggling, drug trading, illegal immigration, banditry, human smuggling and slavery, environmental attack, trade disruption, weapons proliferation including weapons of mass destruction, political and religious extremism, and terrorism.”<sup>11</sup> While many of these threats have existed for centuries or longer in the greater maritime environment, in very general terms, the United States has remained relatively insulated from most of these threats until recently. The end of the Cold War (and the subsequent cementing of America as the lone world “superpower”) and the rapid rise of globalization (and Barnett’s non-Integrating Gap mentioned previously) led to a

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<sup>9</sup> James Jay Carofano, Martin Edwin Andersen, James Dolbow, and Mackenzie M. Eaglen, “Securing the High Seas,” Heritage Foundation *Special Report SR-20*, 12 March 2008, [http://www.heritage.org/research/nationalsecurity/upload/SR\\_20.pdf](http://www.heritage.org/research/nationalsecurity/upload/SR_20.pdf) (accessed 31 March 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Thomas P. M. Barnett, *The Pentagon’s New Map: War and Peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (New York, NY: Putnam and Sons, 2004), 8.

<sup>11</sup> Morgan and Martoglio, “The 1,000 Ship Navy Global Maritime Network,” 15.

need for a new national security strategy, and in turn, a new maritime strategy in order to confront the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century threat. The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative is a direct result of our recognition of globalization's impact and the changing nature of the threat.

## **DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS**

Unilateral military superpower? Meet the post 9/11 world, where multilateralism means never having to say "quagmire." Yes, America can fundamentally go it alone in wars, but it can't go it alone in peace.<sup>12</sup>

Since the advent of the Thousand Ship Navy concept in late 2005, the importance of international cooperation has been prevalent in national policy documents and official U.S. Navy strategy. Admiral Mullen's idea that "No nation today, can go it alone – especially in the maritime domain,"<sup>13</sup> was echoed in the 2007 National Strategy for Homeland Security: "Security at home is related to security abroad: as partners protect and defend their homelands, the security of our Homeland increases."<sup>14</sup> The National Strategy for Maritime Security also reiterates this call to continue and increase international cooperation: "the United States will continue to promote development of cooperative mechanisms for coordinating regional measures against maritime threats that span national boundaries and jurisdictions."<sup>15</sup>

To date, this cooperation has remained largely undefined, which in part has created the impression that "little progress seems to have been made in constituting this 'navy-in-

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<sup>12</sup> Barnett, *Blueprint for Action*, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Mullen, "A Global Network of Nations for a Free and Secure Maritime Commons," 5.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. President, National Strategy for Homeland Security (Washington DC: White House, 2007), 6.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. President, National Strategy for Maritime Security (Washington, DC: White House, 2005), 12.

being’.”<sup>16</sup> Is a partnership of willing nations toward a global, peacetime goal of maritime security a reach too far? One answer to this question largely lies in defining and examining the method of cooperation envisioned by the initiative. The free-form cooperation of partners has only recently been considered as a model for operations internationally. Traditional models of alliance and coalition have long been viewed as the “means” to reach a desired end state for international issues, including those which involve military participation. However, the limitations inherent in these Cold War era organizational structures create numerous issues when posed with “wicked” problems like maritime security in the current operating environment.

### **Alliance – United Nations, an Illustrative Example**

Joint Publication 3-16, Multi-National Operations, defines an alliance as “a relationship that results of a formal agreement (e.g. treaty) between two or more nations for broad, long-term objectives that further the common interests of the members.”<sup>17</sup> By nature of its organizational structure, the United Nations (UN) is a superb, albeit a singular, illustrative example of a Cold War alliance which has a potentially long reach but limited facility and capability when faced with a modern, “wicked” problem due largely to its organizational construct.

The UN Charter was written in the wake of World War II and charged its Security Council with maintenance of security and peace – certainly a broad, long-term objective in the common interest.<sup>18</sup> While this charge was a noble cause and arguably a “wicked”

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<sup>16</sup> Ronald E. Ratcliff, “Building Partners’ Capacity: The Thousand Ship Navy,” *Naval War College Review* 60, no. 4 (Autumn 2007): 46.

<sup>17</sup> Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Multinational Operations*, final coordination, Joint Publication (JP) 3-16 (Washington DC: CJCS, 7 March 2007), I-1.

<sup>18</sup> Searchable Web site on UN Charter, Chapter 5 Article 24, <http://www.uncharter.org/chapter/5> (accessed 21 April 2008)

problem in itself, the structural organization and composition of the UN Security Council (and other bodies) has limited its effectiveness in responding to international crises. This council is composed of five permanent members, each of whom has the power of veto. In the wake of World War II and with the onset of the Cold War, frequently two members (the U.S. and USSR) disagreed over policy which caused a stalemate in decision making and potential action on the part of the UN.

When the UN decides to get involved in peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations (alluded to in the UN Charter, chapter VI or VII respectively), it must also rely on member states to “make available” their armed forces in support of the mission.<sup>19</sup> There is no obligation on the part of a member state to participate, but there are monetary dividends for those who do. This lack of obligation has created an alliance where there is the possibility of an “unwillingness of countries capable of responding to do so.”<sup>20</sup>

These structural issues have caused an inability to act rapidly, or at all in some cases, and an inability to rely on member states to meet a treaty obligation. The examples from recent history are clear and illustrate recent shortcomings in the face of a more complex environment. Rwanda, in 1994, was a clear case of UN Security Council inaction in the face of deteriorating security conditions – the end result being the genocide of more than 800,000 Rwandans.<sup>21</sup> Bosnia, from 1992-1995, demonstrated the lack of clear direction issued by the Security Council with over 70 resolutions being passed, some of which contradicted each other – this was largely caused by the lack of the council’s ability to agree on a direction for

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<sup>19</sup> George Oliver, “Evolution of International and UN Peacekeeping,” NWC 3008 (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press), 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

Bosnia.<sup>22</sup> It is impossible in a paper of this size to completely cover the structure of an organization with the history and scope of the UN, but it is possible to demonstrate some of the issues arising from a large multi-national alliance with a broad scope and mission and the inherent difficulties that its formalized structure, with roots in an era long since passed, imposes on member states. This is not to say that the UN has no place in today's complex environment, nor should it be implied that the UN is becoming irrelevant. According to the 2006 Princeton Report on National Security, "it remains the world's principal forum for addressing the most difficult international security issues."<sup>23</sup> It does face major calls for reform though including expanding the Security Council to more accurately reflect current world actors and ending the veto for all Security Council resolutions authorizing direct action in response to a crisis among numerous other suggestions.<sup>24</sup>

### **Coalition – Combined Task Force 150, an Illustrative Example**

Joint Publication 3-16, Multi-National Operations, defines a coalition as "an ad hoc arrangement between two or more nations for common action. Coalitions are formed by different nations with different objectives, usually for a single occasion or longer cooperation in a narrow sector of interest."<sup>25</sup> Combined Task Force 150 is one example of a coalition whose organizational structure is less defined than a formal alliance; its membership changes often as does its commander, whose tour lasts approximately six months. CTF 150 has the expressed goal of maintaining maritime security in the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, Gulfs of Oman and Aden and portions of the Indian Ocean as well as the area off the Horn of Africa. This

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>23</sup> G. John Ikenberry and Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Forging a World of Liberty Under Law*, Final Paper of the Princeton Project on National Security (Princeton, NJ: Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, 2006), 7.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> CJCS, Joint Publication 3-16, *Multinational Operations*, I-1.

common interest (maritime security) defines the nature of the relationships between the coalition partners involved – partners deploy to the area and come under the command structure of a coalition command, though they often report to national authorities as well. This partnership has a limited scope in a regional area in order to promote a specific sector of interest.

CTF 150's coordinated operations have been crucial to increasing maritime security in the areas listed above in part due to the unity of effort that the participating ships and countries have brought to the mix. Vice Admiral Kevin Cosgriff, Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. Fifth Fleet/Combined Maritime Forces, speaking recently at the Doha International Maritime Defense Exhibition and Conference told the assembled audience that the U.S. and Coalition both "believe maritime security is the essential condition for regional stability ... (which) is essential to local prosperity."<sup>26</sup> This unity of effort toward regional stability has enabled numerous successes in interdiction, enhanced regional security efforts, and built relationships in the maritime community.

The coalition's structure demonstrates a more ad hoc nature than previously discussed under the UN example: CTF 150 is shorter in scope having only been around just over six years; it is focused in only one area of the world; it focuses on unity of effort in order to meet a stated objective. Noted author and historian Milan Vego offers more on the structure of a coalition when he says the combined task force can be established quickly, can be tailored to the mission, has a simple and effective chain of command, and can be changed in size and mix of forces rapidly.<sup>27</sup> Those traits apply to CTF 150 and are among its strengths.

### **Partnership – Proliferation Security Initiative, an Illustrative Example**

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<sup>26</sup> Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command's Web site, "U.S. 5<sup>th</sup> Fleet / Coalition Forces Continue to Build Partnerships in the Region," <http://www.cusnc.navy.mil/articles/2008/037.html> (accessed 15 April 2008).

<sup>27</sup> Milan Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare*, (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 2007), VIII-11.

“I think that a model for the future of maritime relationships and security can be seen today in programs like the Proliferation Security Initiative, or PSI.”<sup>28</sup> When Admiral Mullen proposed the idea of the Thousand Ship Navy in 2005, he likened it to a fledgling program which had shown some degree of success: PSI. PSI was created under the auspices of rooting out weapons of mass destruction and the proliferation. The organizational model for PSI is what made it unique at the time – “individual states contribute as their capabilities and laws allow, using their diplomatic, military, economic, law enforcement and intelligence tools to combat the trade in proliferation creatively within the context provided by a shared commitment to the principles on which we are all agreed.”<sup>29</sup> The language therein sounds very similar to the phraseology used in the introduction of the Thousand Ship Navy and its progeny, the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative.

Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Robert Joseph, in a speech presented in Poland in mid 2006, elucidated on three major challenges to the initiative: sustained commitment, broadening global participation and creating actionable information.<sup>30</sup> Commitment and participation are of particular interest in this forum as they have to do with the organizational structure of the initiative. More than 80 nations have participated in PSI meetings or exercises, according to the State Department, and over 30 interdictions had taken place between its inception in 2003 and 2007.<sup>31</sup> The commitment of partners in this activity is a point of contention and goes to the heart of detractors’ issues with PSI. Like the UN model, PSI calls on support from participating nations who would not be

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<sup>28</sup> Michael Mullen, “A Global Network of Nations for a Free and Secure Maritime Commons,” 6.

<sup>29</sup> Robert G. Joseph, “Broadening and Deepening Our Proliferation Security Initiative Cooperation,” *Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management Journal*, February 2007, 32.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-34.

<sup>31</sup> Mark J. Valencia, “The Proliferation Security Initiative: A Glass Half-Full,” *Arms Control Today* 37, no. 5 (June 2007): 17.

obligated to interdict vessels or aircraft "... and might well decline doing so. Thus, in a pinch, such 'support' could easily evaporate."<sup>32</sup> This lack of obligation, when coupled with weak support for the initiative in certain geographic areas (especially in many Asian nations), calls into question the ability of PSI to affect interdictions globally – in other words, its legitimacy is in question. This ad hoc activity has also been seen as a U.S.-led initiative which has led some nations to question its real purpose and if this effort can truly be for the purpose of preemptive self-defense.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is just because in that process of adjusting the parts to be played by each nation, upon which a satisfactory cooperation can be established, a certain amount of friction is probable, that I would avoid all premature striving for alliance, an artificial and possibly even irritating method of reaching the desired end. Instead, I would dwell continually upon those undeniable points of resemblance in natural characteristics, and in surrounding conditions, which testify to common origin and predict a common destiny.<sup>33</sup>

Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan's words published in 1906 seem prescient when looking at the organizational structure of alliances, coalitions and ad hoc partnerships. Arguably, his point was that common goals of like-minded nations should be America's aim when dealing with international issues instead of entering into artificial organizations bound by treaties which often impinge on cooperation vice fostering it to achieve a common objective. Winston S. Churchill took a different, yet strikingly similar approach, when he stated "there is only one thing worse than fighting with allies and that is fighting without them!"<sup>34</sup> His obvious frustration with allied partners belies a more important point: clearly

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>33</sup> Alfred T. Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co, 1906), 113-114.

<sup>34</sup> Churchill Centre official Web site. Quotations, <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=398> (accessed 18 April 2008).

alliances are important in a wartime environment in lending legitimacy and providing cooperation. While impossible to say for certain, I would posit that neither Mahan nor Churchill would question the value of alliances in the correct circumstances and for the right reasons.

Alliances – a very structured legalistic means of achieving a common ends -- have had and will continue to have a place in international relations today. There is little doubt that the legitimacy brought to bear by any treaty organization acting with a mandate from its membership goes a long way in the international community toward creating the conditions in which cooperation toward a common objective may be achieved. Legitimacy and unity of effort are certainly notable advantages of an effective alliance united against a cause. The cause itself however may create other issues for the structured alliance. Churchill was referring to allies in a world war when he stated his famous quote; quite obviously, the global situation has changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This has created a need to reevaluate the benefits and disadvantages of alliances in today's age. Alliances in today's environment have often proven to be slow to react, unable to achieve a mandate for action, and when they do act "water down" the abilities of their action forces in order to avoid legal issues, sovereignty debates, and the appearance of attempting to create a world ordered only to their design. There are numerous examples within the United Nations alone that demonstrate its reticence to act over legal concerns or its inability to act based on its structure (Security Council membership and veto power as discussed previously).

Coalitions have existed for millennia and typically provide a less structured organization comprised of interested nations / parties toward achieving a limited goal in a particular area. Coalition concerns often focus in a single area of the world vice an alliance

which can intervene in situations world-wide if mandated by its membership. This limited scope and regional participation is notable in the ability of a coalition force to achieve an objective; in general terms, regionally interested parties join together in a more ad hoc relationship that enables members to define their roles and utilize their capabilities to the extent they are able by national mandate. While there are generally memoranda of understanding / agreement in place for coalitions of today, there are fewer stumbling blocks toward action in a particular region. Alliances present more of a challenge in this arena – for they are generally charged by their governing body and limited in how they can react based on whatever end state can be agreed to by member states. Coalitions, on the other hand, usually have a specific set of rules (like an operating order, or OPORD) for the region of concern and are acting with a specific mandate from member states for a specific purpose. The example of CTF 150 demonstrates the point – it is charged with maritime security in a well-defined area and includes members who have specific interest in the region operating under a coalition structure doing what they are able to do, but always keeping in mind their own national interests. This emphasis on acting in national interest is debatably one reason that coalitions continue to be called into action today.

The new model of international organization, what I will refer to as an ad hoc model (as exemplified in the illustrative example of PSI), shows great promise while it raises numerous concerns due to its free-flowing cooperative nature. The very nature of an ad hoc organization is cooperative without the underlying structure associated with alliances and even coalitions. It does not rely on members, but participants who simply avow support for

the principles of the initiative.<sup>35</sup> This creates the potential of partnerships acting both for their own interests and for the global good. Admiral Mullen quoted then-Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan, echoing that sentiment referring to PSI as “... an example of the type of cooperation necessary to counter today’s threats: nations acting in their own interest but also for the common good.”<sup>36</sup> Ad hoc structures like PSI have their advantages and disadvantages, just as alliances and coalitions do. Logically, a free-form structure like PSI (and the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative) challenges the necessity for and effectiveness of current models of organization through its very existence.

Ad hoc partnering, focused on national self-interest, for a greater good is an abstract concept. Long held animosities, mistrust, secrecy of information, capability and capacity challenges, jurisprudence issues, and lack of communication are often cited as critical issues with the ad hoc partnership idea expressed by the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative.<sup>37</sup> The ad hoc partnership described certainly has its critics, but logically this type of arrangement focused on today’s realities has the potential to bring historically uncooperative nations into an arrangement to benefit the global good (not only the U.S- perceived global good) while allowing them to maintain their national self-interest – this will be the key to its realization.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Downplay U.S. Role in Creation and Functioning of Global Maritime Partnership:**

The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative is widely seen as a U.S. led and brokered initiative – this is a serious flaw and needs immediate attention. A lesson learned from PSI

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<sup>35</sup> James R. Holmes and Andrew C. Winner, “The Proliferation Security Initiative: A Global Prohibition Regime in the Making?” *Defense and Security Analysis* 23, no. 3 (September 2007), 282, <http://www.ebsco.com/> (accessed 15 April 2008).

<sup>36</sup> Michael Mullen, “A Global Network of Nations for a Free and Secure Maritime Commons,” 6.

<sup>37</sup> Ronald E. Ratcliff, “Building Partners’ Capacity: The Thousand Ship Navy,” 54.

should have been that other countries are not always interested in following a U.S.-led initiative on a global scale simply because we see a need and advance a strategy. We, as a country, arguably do not understand the political and social (and economic to an extent) realities that face other countries when we advance or lead an initiative. Growing uneasiness with our foreign policy, especially since the Global War on Terror under the Bush administration, has created an impression that America is willing to go it alone despite world opinion. We, as a country, do nothing to assuage that concern; in fact, we generally embrace it. Our doctrine even states that we will “lead” the way internationally to improve cooperation at the bilateral, regional, and global level.<sup>38</sup> In order to advance the partnership, the U.S. (and the U.S. Navy) needs to distance itself from any perception of leading the effort or having created the effort. While this may seem counter-intuitive since we are militarily the most capable nation in the world, it does not play well in other countries that are less capable and are concerned about being seen as puppets of U.S. national strategy. We must be available to assist those nations but must also insist that we are asked to assist. In short, we should avoid the perception that we are leading the way and that by joining the partnership, a country is joining a U.S.-led venture.

### **Realistic Expectations – Focus On Conditions When the Initiative Can Work**

The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative must be seen as a prospect for international cooperation at the regional level on the shared issue of maritime security vice a vehicle for supporting the larger war on terror. In fact, the initiative’s principles should be framed in terms of peacetime cooperation – it is a peacetime partnership and will not work under certain circumstances. The U.S. must be realistic about when the partnership will work and be careful to avoid the appearance of acting unilaterally when it is not necessary.

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<sup>38</sup> National Strategy for Maritime Security p 12

The idea behind the partnership only succeeds if we as a country do not throw out the construct and act as we see fit. Not all countries will subscribe to our idea of the greater good, and they may block our efforts in certain cases. That fact must necessarily be factored into the expectations we place on the Global Maritime Partnership. The partnership envisioned will lead to successes in the maritime realm and will create difficulties as well, but if we act unilaterally we risk severely damaging any partnership and ending any set of conditions when that partnership could succeed in the future. This is not to say of course that the U.S. should not maintain the ability to act when it is in our interest to do so; I am simply stating that the damage of doing so may prevent future cooperation and we should weigh any decision to act unilaterally carefully and through the eyes of all parties involved.

#### **Don't Throw Out the Baby with the Bath Water – Incorporate Existing Organizations**

There are a number of regional organizations (and international organizations for that matter) already in place that place a significant emphasis on regional maritime security and are working toward increased cooperation through coalition and information sharing procedures. The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative must not attempt to co-opt these organizations, but should instead be advanced as a means to help coordinate efforts among these international and regional organizations. For instance, if a vessel in the Western Mediterranean poses a threat to security, the “Five Plus Five Initiative” (composed of five northern and five southern countries in the western Mediterranean) has a system in place to track and board that vessel. If that vessel passes through their area of operation, there are limited means to continue prosecution of that vessel, and even less chance of passing that vessel off to another coordination agency. The interoperability between organizations simply does not exist today between many of these regional actors. But the initiatives to improve

these processes are underway in many regions. The Global Maritime Partnership Initiative could provide assistance in coordinating regional efforts and eliminating the seams between regions in order to increase maritime security. While easier said than done, working within the partnership envisioned could lead to greater cooperation in the effort to reduce maritime threats to various nations.

### **Operational Leadership: Combatant Command / Joint Task Force Involvement**

Combatant and Joint Task Force Commanders have more of a role in the creation of this partnership than is currently acknowledged. Operationalizing the partnership must mean more than a series of receptions when ships pull into port or conducting some canned security cooperation plan – these are only steps toward making the partnership reality. In my opinion, the place that the partnership began was the International Seapower Symposium in 2005 with leaders of navies espousing what has been done in their regions and largely agreeing to the concept of cooperation / partnership. But that token agreement is not enough of course. Through their contacts at the regional level, both military and civilian, joint task force commanders and combatant commanders are in the right places to further cooperation between nations through different means. The importance of personal contact cannot be overstated here. I view it as an absolute necessity that these operational commanders take the lead and interface with their counterparts in order to create new concepts for operations, foundations for multi-national exercises, technological advances, and training support to less capable nations. Only through a revised vision of what is possible and focused leadership toward that vision will the Global Maritime Partnership Initiative become a new reality instead of an imagined future.

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