



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet**  
**Navy League RIMPAC Wrap Up Breakfast**  
**Pacific Aviation Museum**  
**Pearl Harbor, Hawaii**  
**Admiral Harry B. Harris Jr.**  
**August 2, 2014**  
*As prepared for delivery*

Thank you Bob for that introduction, and as always, it's great to be a Sailor at a Navy League hosted event. Well done.

I also want to thank our friends here at the Pacific Aviation Museum for the special part they've played in making this event possible, and for all they do in preserving the great history of aviation, Hawaii and the Pacific.

Ken Dehoff, I consider it an honor to take the stage after you, and a challenge too. You've set the speaking bar so high it might be easier for me to just walk under it.

You know, I arrived a few minutes early and had a chance to mix and mingle a bit. It was great to see so many familiar faces, like Navy League president Carl Devoe and his team. I even saw Mildred Courtney here, so always great to have the Navy League team...also leaders from the Pacific Aviation Museum.

You know, we heard Ken speak a moment ago, but what he didn't tell you was that he was a wounded warrior from the Vietnam War. As a Cobra pilot he was shot down several times and crash landed a fourth time because of mechanical malfunction, so a real hero. Thank you Ken for all you have done for our country.

And speaking of wounded warriors, I saw we had some in attendance this morning. I'm always inspired to see our Wounded Warriors in attendance at these events. Thank you all for coming too.

But what really caught my eye this morning, was everywhere I looked, I saw all those sharp-looking naval uniforms – men and women proudly representing their nations, nations from all over the Pacific. It's great to have the RIMPAC participants here this morning, COs, XO's, senior enlisted, and I see a lot of non-commissioned officers and junior enlisted out there. Your presence makes this event all the more special. Thank you.

On a serious note though, I would like to congratulate everyone here for your participation in RIMPAC 2014. This was the 24<sup>th</sup> in the series that we've hosted over the last 43 years. Since our humble beginnings with only three countries, each RIMPAC just gets bigger and better. This year's certainly no exception: We had 22 participating nations and another five observing.

Any of you, who visited Pearl Harbor lately, especially when the fleet was in, saw that it was a packed house. The same was true on our airfields. This year we had 49 surface ships, six submarines, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel participating.

As you can imagine, an exercise this large involves a tremendous amount of planning, preparations, coordination and plain old hard work to pull it off, and we did extremely well.

All of you involved in RIMPAC, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, Coastguardsmen and civilian employees, all played an important role in RIMPAC's success this year. And I thank each of you.

And that goes for the great people of Hawaii, who opened the doors of their community to our visitors, who welcomed them in true Aloha style, and who helped make RIMPAC the success that it was. Thank you, as well.

The success of an exercise like this is important and has lasting effects. As this audience knows well, today's globalized world is interconnected and interdependent in ways unimaginable just a few decades ago. The oceans, which for centuries kept us apart, are now the highways that bring us together. Today, not only does 90 percent of the world's commerce travel by sea, but 99 percent of all Internet traffic travels under it.

Freedom of the seas is the minimum condition necessary for global prosperity and trade to flourish. That applies to the United States – a true maritime nation, and that applies to every other country in the world, especially those represented here today. We all rely on the seas.

Of course you can't have freedom of the seas without security and stability throughout the maritime domain. Local natural disasters and regional manmade crises can have a negative effect on the entire global economy.

The security and stability we all rely on is tough to maintain. It takes a large effort from a coalition of nations, each working together toward a common purpose. That's why an exercise like RIMPAC, the largest maritime exercise of its kind in the world, is so important. It gives us a chance to train with like-minded nations to expand cooperation, improve safety, build trust and increase transparency.

While the challenging work we conducted at sea is important, like the live fire exercises, the SINKEXs, the submarine searches and the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief scenarios we worked, our work ashore is just as important.

As we step ashore and shake hands in friendship, as we get to know each other personally and share stories of common experiences at sea, the relationships we establish and nurture are important to our working together at sea now, and in the future. Those relationships are important to the security and stability we all count on.

Today as we come together, probably just a matter of hours before some of you set sail from Hawaii and head home, I am glad to see so many non-commissioned officers, because when it comes to building the relationships among nations that will last over the coming decades, it's them who play the most important role. And perhaps that's a message that we don't communicate well enough.

The enlisted are the heart and soul of any great navy. Speaking from experience, the true greatness and capability of the United States Navy is not measured by the numbers of ships, submarines or airplanes we have in our inventory. Our Navy owes its greatness to the hard-working and dedicated Sailors who bring these platforms to life. And I know that is the case for many of the navies represented here today.

Now, as we become more technologically sophisticated, and as we work more in the cyber domain, we rely even more on the expertise of our enlisted Sailors, and we continue to push responsibility on them, pushing it to the lowest possible level. It's a lot to ask of such young men and women, but time and time again they have proven that they have what it takes to get the job done, and get it done extremely well.

Of course, if you ask any senior enlisted leader in the Navy, they'll tell you that the Chiefs run the Navy, and for the most part that's true. I've been aware of that fact my whole life. My father was a Navy Chief, back in World War II and Korea. He told me that was the way it was back then, and that's the way it still is today.

You see, our Chiefs are the deckplate leaders who shape the passion for our sea service and develop our enlisted Sailors, and junior officers, in a way that is truly unique to our service. They have a far-reaching and meaningful impact on all who serve with them.

Everyone respects the Chief, from the top to the bottom of the chain of command. Chiefs are the essential and integral part of our great Navy team, the backbone. I know that two of my most trusted advisors on the Pacific Fleet staff are Fleet Master Chief Ramirez and Command Master Chief Carroll, who are here in the audience today.

Ladies and gentlemen, I realize I've been up here for a while. I had an opportunity to speak at an event several days ago and when it was over I asked my wife Bruni how I did.

She quickly replied. "You did great! Except you missed several good opportunities to sit down."

Well, I got the hint and I don't want to miss an opportunity to sit down, so let me close with the following thought.

During my opening statement for RIMPAC a month ago, I said that there are three great ships that sail the high seas – friendship, partnership and leadership.

We must always remember that the fate of all nations in the Indo-Asia-Pacific is inextricably linked together. Security and stability in this region of the world comes from the united effort of like-minded people. People like many of you in the audience, here today. People who are aware of the challenges, aware of the opportunities, and aware of the dangers we all face together, now and in the future.

Through your continued friendship, partnership and leadership in this important part of the world, you have an opportunity to help shape a brighter and more prosperous world for all us.

It's a tremendous responsibility and an important one – one that I know you are capable of fulfilling.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your support and participation in RIMPAC 2014.

I wish all of you fair winds, following seas and a safe voyage home. Aloha 'oe – until we meet again.

Thank you.