



Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet

Admiral Scott H. Swift

Chilean Naval War College

Valparaiso, Chile

March 14, 2017

As delivered

It's great to see so many old friends and new friends as well. I've come to that point in my career – when I was young, I very much looked forward to the day when I would receive such a kind introduction as this morning, but now it just makes me feel very old. [Laughter]

But it's a great opportunity to share some time with you this morning. I'll make a few comments, share some of my thoughts that occupy my life, but I want to get to your questions so that I can learn from your thoughts and your experiences.

I'm very grateful for the opportunity to speak with you here this morning.

As I look around the room at this august group, it strikes me that all of you are already accomplished leaders, and among you are many of the Chilean Navy's future flag officers, and past flag officers as well.

Leaders are the sum of their past experiences, relationships, and most importantly, the mistakes that help them learn along the way. As you rise up through the ranks, leaving cockpits and captain's chairs behind, the role of leadership becomes less about proving technical mastery and less about accumulating individual achievements. It's more about sharing the gains of success and failures broadly within your organization and beyond – deriving strength by lifting others up rather than holding them back. When the team, ship, squadron or fleet succeeds, that is when you know your leadership is making a difference. It's about being inclusive, approachable and empowering subordinates, all the while maintaining oversight, responsibility and accountability. It's about collective cooperation, coming together seeking collaborative consensus in solving challenging problems. It's about being thoughtful rather than rash, consistent rather than erratic, firm rather than rigid and patient rather than reactionary. I believe these attributes apply to all levels – individuals, across navies and across nations.

Chile is a regional leader, and its navy, which all of you share leadership in, is a shining example for Pacific Rim nations to follow. With a reputation as one of the most professional navies in the Pacific, your navy is also a steadfast champion of the international rules based system that has allowed so many Pacific Rim nations to achieve unprecedented prosperity -- safely and securely

-- for the past 70 years. The Chilean Navy does this by actively participating in regional fora and by partnering with other Pacific navies to address shared interests and concerns.

It plays an influential role in the Western Pacific Naval Symposium, which brings together naval leaders from around the region. One example of this is a discussion I had with Admiral Larranga on the sidelines of last year's W-P-N-S Workshop in Padang, Indonesia, where I learned that Chile would host W-P-N-S this year. That discussion was an inspiration for this trip that brought me here today. The Chilean Navy is hosting the W-P-N-S Workshop in Santiago next month. Unfortunately I cannot return for the workshop but I look forward to hearing from my staff who will attend about how the dialogue addresses key issues, among them relief operations, submarine safety, and expansion of the code of unplanned encounters at sea to coast guards.

Pacific Fleet knows the Chilean Navy's professionalism and proven leadership well. Each year, Chilean Navy flag officers enrich discussions at the Combined Maritime Component Commander course at my headquarters in Hawaii. Rear Admiral Vega and Rear Admiral Sanchez attended the most recent CFMCC course just this last month. Chile has also participated in RIMPAC no less than 12 times, and last year, in addition to bringing the frigate Cochrane to the Pearl Harbor waterfront and the sea phase, they performed in an excellent manner, setting the example for other navies to follow. Chile played a major leadership role as Deputy CFMCC as well. At RIMPAC, I had several positive interactions with Cochrane's commanding officer and was especially impressed by his crew's seamanship.

Next year, the Chilean Navy will become the first non-founding member of RIMPAC to serve as CFMCC commander, which previously alternated between the U.S. Navy, Royal Australian Navy and Royal Canadian Navy. That's a huge accomplishment, underscoring the inclusiveness of both the Chilean Navy as well as the RIMPAC exercise.

The Chilean Navy earned this responsibility through years of observation, participation, mastery and leadership at RIMPAC. Your navy's consistent, professional and inclusive leadership outside RIMPAC, at W-P-N-S and at sea, says a lot about the value you will bring to RIMPAC 2018. Success as CFMCC in 2018 won't be measured by how well the Chilean Navy performs; it will be measured by how all RIMPAC participants perform together, both in port and at sea. I have every confidence in the Chilean Navy's ability lead all the RIMPAC participants inclusively, sharing the benefits of their leadership with other RIMPAC participants.

I've said this before, but it bears repeating in the context of leadership: one of the most pressing challenges naval leaders face in the Pacific Rim is the potential erosion of the rules-based system. It's my sense that some nations - and the naval forces, coast guards and militia under their command - view the international laws that underwrite that system as up for grabs, especially at sea. They see opportunities to impose national laws in international space, to pile

coral sands on rocks in contested waters, and to build fortifications designed to control and coerce – projecting national power into international seas and skies with what are dubious intentions in the minds of many. The lawful right of all ships and aircraft to navigate freely is now in question. All of this is at the expense of nations that rely on lawful, unimpeded freedom of the seas to sustain the prosperity we all enjoy, but especially smaller nations that now face a preponderance of military force just beyond their shores. This sort of misguided leadership is bullying by any name in any language.

Addressing these challenges requires the continued example of your strong and inclusive leadership within the Chilean Navy. For more than 70 years, the regional tide of prosperity was driven by the ebb and flow of security, and in turn, stability. The entire region has benefited from a generally benign security environment, though it is unclear how some nations will use those gains going forward. Together with like-minded partners, our navies will continue to uphold the rules-based system that has allowed so many nations to rise safely and securely. That process begins with the strength of leadership to help others and to reserve coercion and the use of force as the very last measure to restore peace.

With that I look forward to being enriched by your comments and questions.