

**AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE COLLEGE
SPEECH BY CJETW AT SIG CONFERENCE 2008**

**SESSION: NEW THREATS AND THE IMPACT ON THE
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT**

**SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE EFFORTS
IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL SECURITY**

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a pleasure to address you this morning on the international efforts that the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the Department of Defence currently undertake in support of our national security. We have entered an era in which the term 'security' is often used in preference to that of 'defence' and the use of this terminology is not accidental. On the contrary, this vocabulary signifies the real change that has occurred in the way the strategic environment has come to be perceived by analysts over the past two decades.

When I first joined the Royal Australian Navy it was during the late 20th century Cold War era and many military professionals tended to think in terms of relatively predictable and deliberate inter-state defence threats in a bipolar world. Iron curtains and concrete walls were the symbols of that time. Today, in the 21st century, we have entered the complex age of globalised security, an era of diffusion, in which we face unpredictable and distributed threats and risks from both state and non-state actors. Population mobility and the Internet are the symbols of this new era.

Under these circumstances, those of us in the profession of arms have had to confront what the Prime Minister described in his recent Townsville RSL speech as the coming of a much broader set of both traditional and non-traditional risks and threats. The latter embrace a full spectrum: potential state on state tensions; the ongoing threat of global terrorism; continued weapons proliferation across borders; the phenomenon of failing or failed states; festering issues of maritime security and growing resource competition. To quote Prime Minister Rudd:

We need to respond to [an] increasingly complex and interconnected security environment, where the lines between traditional notions of external and domestic threats are blurred. *We need a new whole-of-government national security strategy of which our national defence policy is the core component.*

In many ways, the ADF has led Australia's effort in the practical, if often informal expression, of comprehensive security. One reflection of this effort is our involvement in contemporary missions that contain 'joint, multinational and inter-agency' elements. The ADF has long participated in joint and multinational operations and has considerable experience in these areas. However, *sustained* inter-agency cooperation is likely to become a compelling issue in the years ahead. Indeed, a novel area for many – though by no means all - at this Conference is that of inter-agency co-operation within an *institutional* framework. As the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, put it in May 2007, adapting to meet a more comprehensive approach towards security is one of the most important challenges facing the ADF. It is an approach that by necessity will draw from what the CDF calls 'diplomatic, economic, informational and military

options' in order to achieve an '**integrated, multi-agency response capability**'. We have seen this inter-agency approach foreshadowed in recent missions, notably in the tsunami relief to Indonesia in 2004 and in the ongoing Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) since 2003.

In terms of civil maritime security, I can personally speak from the perspective of two years in charge of Australia's inter-agency Border Protection Command, an organisation led by Defence and Customs, with representatives of other agencies which considers the whole of government to be its 'customer' in achieving effective surveillance and response. Nonetheless, I think it is true to say that all are embarked upon what I would describe as a steep institutional learning curve. Logically then, we need to pool our knowledge and expertise in order to achieve a maximum security effect

What I will endeavour to do in the next twenty minutes is to provide you with a snapshot of Defence's current international effort in support of our national security. I will concentrate on three areas:

- the character of defence activity and international engagement;
- the workings of defence support and international engagement regionally in South East Asia and the South Pacific;
- and defence's international support in the global security dimension.

1. The Character of Defence Activity and International Engagement

In a very real sense, one can view Defence's international efforts in support of national security in terms of both 'hard' and 'soft' power – to borrow the terminology of the American scholar, Joe Nye. One can view our force deployments in the Gulf, East Timor, Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands as classic manifestations of 'hard power' in that we have sent combat elements to these areas. Currently, we have just over 3,000 ADF personnel deployed on eleven major missions stretching from the Solomons to the Sudan.

Indeed, it has been estimated by various analysts that in the seven years between 1999 and 2006, the ADF deployed 90,000 personnel on 32 different operations spread from the Solomon Islands to Somalia. In June 2008, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet issued a report entitled, 'Quantifying the Australian Defence Organisation's Commitment to Operations: A Study of Defence Personnel Distribution'. The report notes that in the period 2004-08 the ADO overall – not simply the ADF – devoted 25.9% of its entire personnel strength to operations annually. By any standards, this effort represents a crucial investment in upholding our national security interests.

Alongside our 'hard' activities there what might be called the more 'soft' element of Defence's activities in the form of international engagement or 'defence diplomacy'. This is an area of activity that often receives much less public attention but is, I submit, of vital importance, particularly in shaping the contours of our national security. Over the past three decades, the ADF and the Defence Department have placed a great deal of emphasis upon international engagement.

Our tools in defence engagement embrace such activities as strategic dialogues, high-level visits by military personnel, exchange programs, training cooperation and educational provision and combined military exercises. Collectively these activities are aimed at fostering confidence-building and mutual security. A 2007 study of Australian foreign policy by Allan Gyngell and Michael Wesley concludes that Defence's array of international engagement tools provides what they style as 'crucial ballast' for many of Australia's most important bilateral security relationships both globally and regionally.¹

Currently, the ADO operates a Defence Cooperation Program to oversee our engagement effort with a budget of \$86 million. We have defence representatives in 36 countries (but who are accredited to 65 countries in all). Defence's International Policy Division itself contains 196 personnel (both APS and ADF) working in and across 51 countries. Moreover, Defence trains approximately 1000 overseas officers per year on courses ranging from civil-military cooperation, English language skills and governance.

2. Defence Support to National Security: International Engagement in South East Asia and the South Pacific

The ballast that Defence brings to our national security is, I believe, best demonstrated by the character of our engagement in South East Asia and the South Pacific. With regard to South-East Asia, Defence's international

¹ Allan Gyngell and Michael Wesley, *Making Australian Foreign Policy*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2007.

defence effort involves multiple programs including frequent senior officer dialogue, military training exercises, study visits and exchanges, maritime security and counter-terrorism cooperation and not least, postgraduate education. Defence focuses much effort in South East Asia on areas of mutual regional concern such as the development of counter-terrorism capacity with Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Another important area is humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as highlighted by the 2004 tsunami. And there is, of course our commitment to assisting in peacekeeping training for regional militaries.

Our engagement with Indonesia represents a vital aspect of Defence's engagement and support activity. Indonesia is at once, our nearest neighbour, the world's largest Islamic nation and its third-largest democracy. The Australian-Indonesian Agreement on the Framework for Security Co-operation (the Lombok Treaty) formally came into force in February 2008. As part of this process, in March, the Australian and Indonesian Defence Ministers agreed to the further development of Joint Understandings on the Australian-Indonesian Defence to give effect to the Defence elements of the Treaty.

In May 2008, Australia and Indonesia co-hosted the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Desktop Exercise on Disaster Relief in Jakarta. This event was attended by over 100 delegates from 25 of the 27 ARF states and focused upon civil-military and military-military cooperation with the aim of improving the speed and effectiveness of disaster response within the region in the 'whole-of-government approach' we need for the future. The Australian delegation was led by Head, Military Strategic Commitments,

Major General Crane and included not only defence planners but also representatives from AusAID, Emergency Management Australia, the Attorney General's Department and DFAT.

In the context of civil maritime security, there is increasing interaction between Australia and Indonesia to establish improved maritime domain awareness. While much of this, such as the cooperative patrols against illegal fishing between Australian Customs patrol boats and Coastwatch aircraft and Indonesian Fisheries Ministries' patrol vessels has a 'civil' focus, there has also been military-military cooperation, including AP-3 patrols with Indonesian observers embarked. This type of co-operative, inter-agency endeavour is likely to become much more frequent in the years ahead.

In the new state of Timor Leste, alongside our deployed forces of some 700 military personnel, we introduced in February of this year an Enhanced Defence Co-Operation Plan. This program was a response to identified deficiencies in East Timor's defence capabilities and we have set aside \$5.7m for the construction of a Specialist Training Wing for the East Timorese Defence Force (ETDF). This Wing will help to improve the East Timorese military's capacity in logistics, communications, engineering and medical skills.

Our defence relationship with Malaysia continues to strengthen under the umbrella of long standing bilateral arrangements and the Malaysia-Australia Joint Defence Program. Similarly, in Thailand, deeper counter-cooperation and supporting for Thai peacekeeping capabilities now represent the main

planks of our defence relationship. During 2007-08, in order to help build capacity in the Royal Thai Armed Forces, the ADF provided training in Australia for over 80 Thai officers in areas such as English language training, peacekeeping and governance.

In the **South Pacific**, our Defence Cooperation Program provides support to numerous countries that are important to our security. This is an area where national fragility and cohesion of governance are of great concern to Australia. We in Defence, therefore, expend much effort in helping to develop the capacity of the region's diverse security forces. Let me give you a few examples of our activities in fostering South Pacific security.

Currently, we support the land and maritime forces of Papua New Guinea through an extensive program of training, exercises and infrastructure development. We have 32 ADF personnel posted as in-country advisers throughout the South Pacific island countries. In addition, we have the Pacific Boat Program which has been in existence since 1987 when Australia gave the first of twenty two patrol boats to twelve Pacific countries. These thirty-one metre boats provide participating countries with a maritime surveillance and response capability to monitor and secure their exclusive economic zones and marine resources. And, of course, our own naval deployments and maritime aircraft patrols within the region contribute to surveillance and maritime domain awareness, thereby improving the security of local maritime zones.

Last, but certainly not least there is the area of professional military education and training in South East Asia and the South Pacific as part of that essential 'ballast' that Defence provides to national security. As

CJETW, this is an area close to my heart. One only has to peruse the Roll of Achievement at the Australian Defence College at Weston Creek to see the value of defence engagement in strengthening our broader national security. The Joint Services Staff College (JSSC) and the Australian Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies (ACDSS) have, over the years, produced chiefs of service and of defence across South East Asia. To give you but two recent South East Asian examples: Air Chief Marshal Djoko Suyanto, the previous Indonesian Chief of Defence, and General Muhammad Ismail bin Jamaluddin, the Malaysian Chief of Army, were both distinguished graduates of Weston Creek. The investment we have made in regional military training and education is incalculable. Professional and personal relationships forged in our training and education institutions have proven, and will continue to prove, vital in our capacity to respond to regional crises.

3. Defence Support to National Security: Global International Engagement

Defence international engagement in support of national security extends beyond our immediate region to embrace the US, the great Asian powers of China, Japan and India as well as NATO and parts of the Middle East. Our alliance with the US remains a cornerstone of our security. In this respect, the 2008 AUSMIN talks saw a further deepening of ties with an agreement to enhance cooperation in the areas of intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, joint and combined training and disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. In particular, Minister Fitzgibbon and Secretary Gates signed a *Statement of Principles* establishing a military satellite communications partnership.

The ADF plays an important role in Australian engagement with the Asian great powers, China, Japan and India – particularly in areas such as strategic dialogue, inter-service links and defence college exchanges. Let me highlight our recent strategic dialogue with China. In July this year, we raised the level of our annual Defence Strategic Dialogue to Secretary/CDF level in recognition of the importance of engagement with China. The July Dialogue resulted in agreement to exchange ‘lessons learned’ on disaster relief (tsunami and earthquake), on Olympic Games security and the establishment of further education and training exchange initiatives.

Conclusion

Recently, Minister Fitzgibbon in his July 2008 speech to the Brookings Institute in Washington pointed out that today’s security challenges both traditional and non-traditional **‘do not respect national borders’**. Many contemporary security challenges are seamless and transcend domestic, foreign and defence policies. Moreover, such challenges are characterised by complex interactions between national, regional and global dimensions. These dimensions have become, as the Prime Minister has pointed out on several occasions, a **‘mutually reinforcing’** spectrum of threat and risk which we are forced to confront and manage.

In short, we need to improve the possibilities for innovation and collaboration in the face of many interconnected security challenges. The challenge for Defence in this complex environment is to expand our operational framework into the inter-agency area – particularly since we

have often been the lead agency in providing stabilisation or humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. As I noted earlier, we have long conducted joint and multinational battlespace operations and we have a long record in international engagement that seeks to give essential ballast to our broader national security. However, a strong and comprehensive inter-agency approach towards security that maximises Australia's strategic effect will, by definition, involve not just the ADF and the Defence Department but all relevant government departments. Let me conclude, then, with a reminder on the vital importance of mutual co-operation from one of the most celebrated pioneers in the field of national security policy, Professor Harold Lasswell, who wrote: *'there are no experts in national security; there are only experts on aspects of the problem'*.

Thank you

Q and A