



DANIEL K. INOUE ASIA-PACIFIC CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES

# CURRENTS

## Perspectives on Maritime Security





# CURRENTS

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## Emphasizing maritime cooperation

Adm. Scott Swift, U.S. Pacific Fleet commander, joined academic and defense education leaders for discussions on building collaboration in the Asia-Pacific maritime domain during a Feb. 3 to 5 workshop at the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. The workshop, titled “Maritime Security Cooperation: Engagement through Education,” was one of two maritime-oriented workshops at the Center held in February and May. The events represented the region’s emphasis on increasing shared awareness and a common understanding of issues impacting maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region. For more details on the Center’s efforts in this area, see pages 20 to 23.

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## Discipline key to sustaining security capacity, avoiding conflicts

I'm going to focus my message on a theme that I shared earlier this year at India's International Fleet Review while speaking on the role of oceans and navies in the context of maritime domain security.

Held Feb. 7 to 8 in Visakhapatnam, India, and organized by the Eastern Naval Command, IFR is a major annual maritime event, and I was fortunate to have been selected as one of the keynote speakers for the International Maritime Conference, a key component of the IFR.

The objective of IFR is to enhance mutual trust and confidence with neighboring navies, a mission that is in sync with our own DKI APCSS objectives.

The IFR is a big deal, and this year, it included 50 participating nations, more than 70 ships and approximately 200,000 participants, including India's president and prime minister.

**The key point I made ... is that navies, like their counterparts from other services the world over, have a moderating influence; their discipline and proficiency make conflict less likely.**

While it may seem strange that an Air Force fighter pilot would be asked to speak to a group of sailors, the reality is that my message resonated well with the audience, as it aligned with the spirit of the gathering.

The key point I made in addressing an international audience of ap-



DKI APCSS Director retired Lt. Gen. Dan Leaf (*center*) addresses 300 participants in the International Maritime Conference held as part of the Feb. 7 to 8 India International Fleet Review in Visakhapatnam. Leaf spoke on the importance of military professionalism to security.

proximately 300 is that navies, like their counterparts from other services the world over, have a moderating influence; their discipline and proficiency make conflict less likely. Military forces must be disciplined and professional — the nature of their business and the harsh environment in which they operate simply demand it.

By virtue of that professionalism, military forces serve as standard setters for norms, rules and laws, if they are properly trained, equipped, and disciplined. Additionally, their effectiveness is multiplied in an environment of cooperation.

In the modern world, conflict is almost never in a nation's interest. Over the last few decades, the United States has learned that regional cooperation, rather than dominance, is the way ahead, particularly in the Asia-Pacific. That's because the ambitions

of the most powerful nations can be thwarted by the smallest.

While often technically and philosophically difficult, shared domain awareness and clear communication of intent, applied in both bilateral and multilateral forums, are the keys to creating the necessary environment for peace, stability and prosperity.

That's why DKI APCSS facilitates many of these vital forums to promote the cooperation, leadership, decision-making and common understanding needed for a peaceful and stable region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Leaf".

Retired Lt. Gen. Dan Leaf  
Director, DKI APCSS