

INDOPACOM's Aquilino: Ukraine Situation Could Happen in Taiwan



Ships from the U.S. Navy, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), Royal Navy, Royal Australian Navy and Royal Canadian Navy break away from formation after Keen Sword 23 in the Philippine Sea, Nov. 14, 2022. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Louis Thompson Staats IV*

SIMI Valley, Calif. – The situation in Ukraine could easily happen in Taiwan if the main actors aren't careful, a top admiral warned during comments at the Reagan National Defense Forum here on Dec. 3.

Adm. John C. Aquilino, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, said that while people were “surprised” at what happened in Europe with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, many aspects of it could be repeated in Taiwan should a conflict there erupt.

"This could happen in the Pacific region," he said. "We shouldn't be surprised that it can happen."

He said that he takes several lessons from the conflict in Ukraine that apply to Taiwan.

"Once the fight starts, it's going to be really hard to end," Aquilino said. "Which means we ought to take action now. We need a sense of urgency to deliver the force, the capabilities, the industrial base, the budgets and what is needed now to move as fast as possible to deliver deterrence and sustain our deterrence efforts."

When asked why Taiwan was worth sending U.S. troops to die over a conflict there, Aquilino said Taiwan is "geographically and strategically important" to the United States.

"There's economic capabilities there that are important to the United States economy," he said. "There's a number of reasons why we believe it's important."

Aquilino said he hopes that his counterparts in China are also watching the Ukraine conflict and taking lessons from it, such as the necessity to avoid underestimating how difficult of an undertaking it would be to take Taiwan, and the fact that it will cost "blood and treasure."

He also warned China that the United States could enact sanctions that could have "500 times more devastating effects" than those on Russia because of how interconnected China was with the global economy. When the moderator pointed out that the same could be said of the United States and such sanctions could have a rebound effect, Aquilino said he was confident that the combined power of the United States, Japan and South Korea economies would "dwarf" China's economy.

Aquilino pledged that the Navy will continue to perform military exercises in China's backyard, claiming that the Navy performs 150 exercises in the Indo-Pacific region each year with allies.

CNO on China: Shipbuilders Can Expect High Revenue for Foreseeable Future



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday salutes as he passes through sideboys while visiting the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Rafael Peralta (DDG 115) moored at Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Deanna C. Gonzales*

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. – The defense contractors who run U.S.

Navy shipyards can expect plenty of revenue in the coming years as the Navy faces off with China, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday said Dec. 3 at the Reagan National Defense Forum here.

Addressing a question about the U.S. Navy's ability to counter China, Gilday said that the Navy had submitted to Congress the "largest shipbuilding budget in the history of the United States" at \$27.5 billion, and that is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

"You cannot throw much more money at the seven shipbuilders that build U.S. warships in the United States of America right now," Gilday said. "Their capacity is about at max, and Congress is helping us max them out. I would say the same thing for weapons production."

Gilday said that the Navy is very focused on supporting industry during this ramp-up in weapons production.

"If you take a look at our budget and where we're putting money, we are trying to send a very strong signal to industry that we need consistent, stable production lines for weapons with range and speed for a long time," he said.

Gilday did not directly answer the moderator's question about whether the Navy was prepared to counter a Chinese move on Taiwan, instead opting to tout the Navy's presence across the globe and readiness to react to any developing situation.

"About a third of the Navy is at sea today," Gilday said. "We have more ships in the European theater than the rest of the NATO nations combined – more than 25 ships. ... We have ships right now in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea.

"We have significant overmatch in that domain against any competitor," he added.

He also appeared to imply that the U.S. Navy was in constant contact with the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN).

"The U.S. Navy is in contact with peer competitors on the sea, under the sea and in the air every single day," Gilday said. "You see snippets of it with ships going through the Taiwan Strait and going nose-to-nose with Chinese ships. You see it with our aircraft in the eastern Mediterranean or by the Sea of Japan with the Russians."

U.S. Seizes 1.1 Million Rounds of Ammunition, Illegal Weapons in Gulf of Oman



Bags containing more than 50 tons of fuses and propellants for rockets and ammunition rounds sit on the flight deck of expeditionary sea base USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3), Dec. 3. *U.S. NAVY*

MANAMA, Bahrain – On Dec. 1, U.S. naval forces in the Middle East intercepted a fishing trawler smuggling more than 50 tons of ammunition rounds, fuses and propellants for rockets in the Gulf of Oman along a maritime route from Iran to Yemen, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs said in a Dec. 3 release.

Navy personnel operating from expeditionary sea base USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3) discovered the illicit cargo during a flag verification boarding, marking U.S. 5th Fleet's second major illegal weapons seizure within a month.

Forces from Lewis B. Puller found more than 1 million rounds of 7.62mm ammunition; 25,000 rounds of 12.7mm ammunition; nearly 7,000 proximity fuses for rockets; and over 2,100 kilograms of propellant used to launch rocket propelled grenades.

“This significant interdiction clearly shows that Iran’s unlawful transfer of lethal aid and destabilizing behavior continues,” said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. “U.S. naval forces remain focused on deterring and disrupting dangerous and irresponsible maritime activity in the region.”

The direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of weapons to the Houthis in Yemen violates U.N. Security Council Resolution 2216 and international law.

U.S. 5th Fleet previously intercepted a fishing vessel illegally shipping lethal aid from Iran to Yemen on Nov. 8. U.S. Coast Guard ship USCGC John Scheuerman (WPC 1146) and guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) intercepted the vessel in the Gulf of Oman.

A weeklong search assisted by patrol coastal ship USS Hurricane (PC 3) and Navy explosive ordnance disposal technicians from U.S. 5th Fleet’s Task Force 56 discovered more than 70 tons of ammonium perchlorate, a powerful oxidizer commonly used to make rocket and missile fuel as well as explosives. U.S. forces also found more than 100 tons of urea fertilizer, a chemical compound with agricultural applications that is also known for use as an explosive precursor.

The U.S. 5th Fleet operating area includes 21 countries, the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Bab al-Mandeb and Suez Canal.

Latvia Joins International Maritime Coalition in Middle East as 11th Member



Graphic illustration of the Latvia flag and International Maritime Security Construct logo. U.S. Naval Forces Central Command welcomed Latvia, Dec. 1, as the 11th member of the multinational maritime coalition established three years ago to deter attacks on commercial shipping in the Middle East. *U.S. NAVY*

MANAMA, Bahrain – U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) welcomed Latvia, Dec. 1, as the 11th member of a multinational maritime coalition established three years ago to deter attacks on commercial shipping in the Middle East, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs said in a Dec. 1 release.

Latvia has joined the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) and its operational arm, Coalition Task Force Sentinel, which are headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. 5th Fleet.

Latvia is the third nation to become a member of IMSC this

year. Seychelles and Romania joined in October and March respectively.

“We are excited to strengthen and expand IMSC with Latvia’s addition,” said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of NAVCENT, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. Cooper also serves as IMSC’s multinational task force commander. “Latvia is already a key NATO ally, and we now welcome them to a growing international naval coalition in the Middle East, which protects some of the most important waterways in the world.”

IMSC was formed in July 2019 in response to increased threats to freedom of navigation for merchant mariners transiting international waters in the Middle East. Coalition Task Force Sentinel was established four months later to deter state-sponsored malign activity and reassure the merchant shipping industry in the Bab al-Mandeb and Strait of Hormuz.

“Our coalition continues to grow and build commercial and military partnerships,” said United Kingdom Royal Navy Commodore Ben Aldous, commander of IMSC and Coalition Task Force Sentinel. “In an international rules-based system, a shared, common voice resonates louder than a state acting on its own.”

In addition to Latvia, Seychelles and Romania, IMSC member-nations include Albania, Bahrain, Estonia, Lithuania, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States.

Vigor Begins Maintenance Work on Destroyer USS John Paul Jones



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53) arrives to its new homeport at Naval Station Everett, Washington, Aug. 23, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Aranza Valdez*
SEATTLE, Wash. – Vigor, a Titan company, has been awarded a \$131 million U.S. Navy contract to complete a docking selected restricted availability (DSRA) on USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53) at Harbor Island in Seattle, the company said in a Dec. 1 release. The ship arrived at Harbor Island on Nov. 4, becoming the fourth U.S. Navy vessel currently undergoing maintenance at the Seattle shipyard.

“We are excited to welcome USS John Paul Jones to Harbor Island, where our skilled workers will offer excellent service

in support of the U.S. Navy,” said Adam Beck, executive vice president of Ship Repair at Vigor. “Vigor is proud to have built a reputation of completing challenging availabilities safely and with excellent quality. We are grateful the Navy continues to choose our shipyards for this critical work.”

The DSRA will consist of underwater hull preservation, propulsion overhaul, structural work, valve overhaul, sonar work, deck preservation and significant modifications and alterations. The project will employ more than 600 skilled workers during its year-long stay at Harbor Island.

In addition to USS John Paul Jones, USS Chosin (CG 65), USS Omaha (LCS 12) and USS Cape St. George (CG 71) are currently undergoing maintenance at Harbor Island. This is the first time since Vigor began operating the Harbor Island shipyard in 2011 that four U.S. Navy ships have been onsite undergoing maintenance concurrently. Additionally, USS Tulsa (LCS 16) has recently arrived at Vigor’s Swan Island shipyard in Portland, Oregon, while work commenced earlier this year on USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard.

“Vigor’s deep relationship with the U.S. Navy supports hundreds of jobs across the Pacific Northwest, Alaska and Hawaii,” Beck said. “We are grateful for the continued opportunity to support our national defense, and our skilled workers look forward to showing our standard of excellence in our work. Not only do Vigor employees consistently perform tremendous work, they do so while making Vigor shipyards among the safest in the industry.”

HII Delivers Destroyer Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee to U.S. Navy



Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee *HII*

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division delivered the Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123) to the U.S. Navy Dec. 1, the company said in a release. Delivery of DDG 123 represents the official transfer of the ship from the shipbuilder to the Navy.

"Delivering an incredibly capable finished ship to the Navy is always an important event for our Ingalls team," said Kari Wilkinson, president of Ingalls Shipbuilding. "We are absolutely committed to the work that we do for our customers, communities and country."

Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee is the 34th Arleigh Burke-class

destroyer Ingalls has delivered to the Navy and will be the final Flight IIA ship built at Ingalls as the Navy transitions to Flight III destroyers. Ingalls currently has in production the future Arleigh Burke-class Flight III destroyers Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), Ted Stevens (DDG 128), Jeremiah Denton (DDG 129) and George M. Neal (DDG 131).

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers are highly capable, multi-mission ships that can conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence and crisis management to sea control and power projection, all in support of the national defense strategy. Guided missile destroyers are capable of simultaneously fighting air, surface and subsurface battles. These ships contain a myriad of offensive and defensive weapons designed to support maritime defense needs well into the 21st century.

DDG 123 is named to honor Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee, a Navy nurse and first woman to receive the Navy Cross for her heroic actions during World War I. Higbee joined the Navy in October 1908 as part of the newly established Navy Nurse Corps, a group of women who would become known as "The Sacred Twenty," and became the second superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps in January 1911. The ship's motto truly reflects the heritage of this naval hero – *Bellatrix illa*, meaning "she is a warrior."

Amphibious Assault Ship USS Tripoli Returns Home from

Maiden Deployment



Amphibious assault carrier USS Tripoli (LHA 7) transits San Diego Harbor as the ship returns to homeport, Nov. 29, 2022. Tripoli returned to Naval Base San Diego following its initial deployment to the U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleets in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific. *U.S. NAVY / Mass communication Specialist 2nd Class Brett McMinoway*

SAN DIEGO – USS Tripoli's deployment to the U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet areas of operations was particularly significant for its diplomatic and military engagements with regional partners and Allies, as well as successful integration with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) to support maritime security operations, theater security cooperation, crisis response and maintaining a forward Navy-Marine Corps presence, Expeditionary Strike Group Three said in a Nov. 30 release.

"I am proud of Tripoli for a successful first deployment," said Rear Adm. James Kirk, commander, Expeditionary Strike

Group (ESG) 3. “The ship and crew are on the leading edge, setting the example and testing the limits of the assault ship. LHAs are designed to support the future of the Marine Corps Air Combat Element, and Tripoli has done just that. I am excited to see what else they can bring to the fight.”

The U.S. Marine Corps embarked 16 F-35Bs aboard Tripoli, which flew missions in support of exercises Valiant Shield 22 and Noble Fusion. The Navy and Marine Corps team seamlessly integrated to complete training and certification exercises before joining the Armed Forces of the Philippines for bilateral exercise Kamandag 2022. Overall, the crew completed 2,052 hours of flight operations and traveled 40,303 nautical miles during exercise support. Tripoli operated alongside other partners and Allies throughout the Indo-Pacific during the deployment, including Japan and the Republic of Singapore. Port calls included stops in Tasmania, Australia, Japan, Singapore and the Philippines.

“The Sailors and Marines aboard Tripoli went above and beyond during this deployment to demonstrate the unique capabilities of this ship,” said Capt. John C. Kiefaber, Tripoli’s commanding officer. “Whether it was launching and recovering aircraft at night, acting as a base of operations for the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit to conduct operations ashore or serving as an instrument of diplomacy to our ally and partner nations, the crew performed their duties professionally and demonstrated why they are the Navy’s greatest asset. I couldn’t be more proud.”

During the deployment, 140 Tripoli Sailors advanced to the next highest paygrade. The crew also excelled at earning individual qualifications; more than 167 Sailors earned their Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) qualification, 192 Sailors earned their Enlisted Air Warfare Specialist (EAWS) qualification and 3 Sailors earned their Enlisted Information Warfare Specialist (EIWS) qualification, a new program for

Tripoli. In the Wardroom, 12 officers earned their Surface Warfare Officer qualification, three officers earned their Surface Warfare Supply Corps Officer qualification, two officers earned their Naval Aviation Supply Officer qualification, four officers earned their Surface Warfare Medical Department Officer qualification and 16 officers earned their Officer of the Deck (Underway) qualification.

“A Sailor earning their primary warfare pin is a great way for them to better themselves and it’s a milestone in their career, but also it’s important Sailors have a deeper understanding of the role that they and their shipmates play in the ship’s operations,” said Command Master Chief Matthew Logsdon.

Tripoli, an America-class amphibious assault ship, commissioned in July 2020. The ship is homeported in San Diego and operates under ESG 3. Amphibious assault ships provide the ability to operate seamlessly and simultaneously on the sea, ashore and in the air allowing the integration of forces to be distributed more broadly, and increasing operational unpredictability anywhere around the globe by varying our domain, forces and timing.

ESG 3 comprises four amphibious squadrons, 15 amphibious warships and eight naval support elements including approximately 18,000 active-duty and reserve Sailors and Marines. As deputy commander for Amphibious and Littoral Warfare, U.S. 3rd Fleet; Commander, ESG 3 also oversees Mine Countermeasures Group 3 and the 14 littoral combat ships and tow subordinate divisions under Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1. ESG 3 is postured in support of U.S. 3rd Fleet as a globally responsive and scalable naval command element, capable of generating, deploying, and employing naval forces and formations for crisis and contingency response, forward presence, and major combat operations focusing on amphibious operations, humanitarian and disaster relief and support to

defense civil authorities, and expeditionary logistics.

SeeByte to Extend U.S. Navy Autonomous Systems and Machine Learning Capability



Sailors assigned to the Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Charleston (LCS 18) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 5 transport a simulated Mark 18 Mod 2 Kingfish unmanned underwater vehicle during a mine countermeasures exercise. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ryan M. Breeden*

EDINBURGH – SeeByte Ltd, a developer of smart software solutions for uncrewed maritime systems, has been awarded an indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity (IDIQ) contract to support the U.S. Navy's Mk18 Uncrewed Underwater Vehicle

Family of Systems program, the company announced in a Nov. 29 release.

The awarded IDIQ has a total potential value of \$87 million and a duration of up to 10 years. Under this contract, SeeByte will provide engineering, technical support, training and simulation services including upgrades to SeeByte's Mission-Level Autonomy system, Neptune, development of Automatic Target Recognition modules and a bespoke training and simulation toolkit (Unmanned Systems Simulator).

The U.S. Navy uses the Mk18 Mod 1 Swordfish and Mk1 Mod 2 Kingfish UUVs for mine countermeasures.

7th Fleet Cruiser Conducts Freedom of Navigation Operation in South China Sea



Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville conducts routine underway operations in the South China Sea, Nov. 29, 2022. *U.S. NAVY*

SPRATLY ISLANDS, South China Sea – On Nov. 29, 2022, USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the South China Sea near the Spratly Islands, consistent with international law, U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs said in a release.

At the conclusion of the operation, USS Chancellorsville exited the excessive claim area and continued operations in the South China Sea. The freedom of navigation operation (“FONOP”) upheld the rights, freedoms and lawful uses of the sea recognized in international law by challenging restrictions on innocent passage imposed by the People’s Republic of China (PRC), Vietnam and Taiwan.

Unlawful and sweeping maritime claims in the South China Sea pose a serious threat to the freedom of the seas, including the freedoms of navigation and overflight, free trade, and unimpeded commerce, and freedom of economic opportunity for

South China Sea littoral nations.

USS Chancellorsville conducted this FONOP in accordance with international law and then continued on to conduct normal operations in waters where high seas freedoms apply. The operation reflects continued commitment to uphold freedom of navigation and lawful uses of the sea as a principle. The United States is defending every nation's right to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows, as USS Chancellorsville did here.

The PLA Southern Theater Command's statement about the operation is the latest in a long string of PRC actions to misrepresent lawful U.S. maritime operations and assert its excessive and illegitimate maritime claims at the expense of its Southeast Asian neighbors in the South China Sea. The PRC's behaviors stands in contrast to the United States' adherence to international law and our vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. All nations, large and small, should be secure in their sovereignty, free from coercion, and able to pursue economic growth consistent with accepted international rules and norms.

The PRC's statement about this mission is false.

The United States challenges excessive maritime claims around the world regardless of the identity of the claimant. Customary international law of the sea as reflected in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention provides for certain rights and freedoms and other lawful uses of the sea to all nations. The international community has an enduring role in preserving the freedom of the seas, which is critical to global security, stability and prosperity.

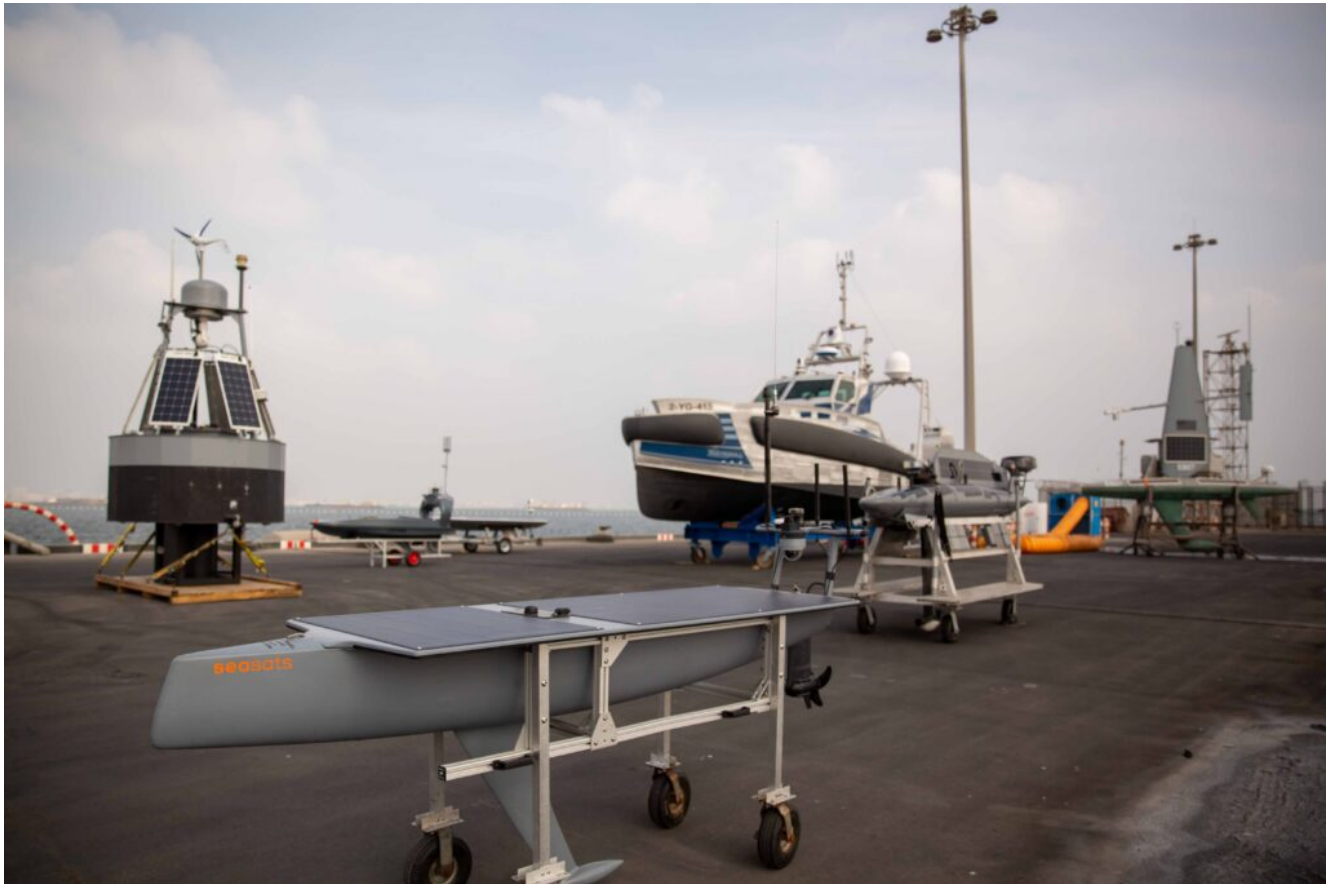
The United States upholds freedom of navigation for all nations as a principle. As long as some countries continue to claim and assert limits on rights that exceed their authority under international law, the United States will continue to

defend the rights and freedoms of the sea guaranteed to all. No member of the international community should be intimidated or coerced into giving up their rights and freedoms.

The PRC, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines each claim sovereignty over some or all of the Spratly Islands. The PRC, Vietnam and Taiwan purport to require either permission or advance notification before a foreign military vessel engages in “innocent passage” through the territorial sea. Under customary international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention, the ships of all states – including their warships – enjoy the right of innocent passage through the territorial sea. International law does not allow for the unilateral imposition of any authorization or advance-notification requirement for innocent passage, so the United States challenged these requirements. By engaging in innocent passage without giving prior notification to or asking permission from any of the claimants, the United States challenged the unlawful restrictions imposed by the PRC, Taiwan and Vietnam. The United States demonstrated that innocent passage is not subject to such restrictions.

U.S. forces operate in the South China Sea on a daily basis, as they have for more than a century. They routinely operate in close coordination with like-minded allies and partners who share our commitment to uphold a free and open international order that promotes security and prosperity. All of our operations are conducted safely, professionally and in accordance with international law. These operations demonstrate that the United States will fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows – regardless of the location of excessive maritime claims and regardless of current events.

U.S. Launches New Unmanned & AI Systems Integration Event



Various unmanned systems sit on display in Manama, Bahrain, Nov. 19, prior to exercise Digital Horizon 2022. The three-week unmanned and artificial intelligence integration event, beginning Nov. 23, will involve employing new platforms in the region for the first time. *U.S. ARMY / Sgt. Brandon Murphy*

MANAMA, Bahrain – U.S. 5th Fleet began a three-week unmanned and artificial intelligence integration event in Bahrain, Nov. 23, that will involve employing new platforms in the region for the first time, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) Public Affairs said in a Nov. 23 release.

The event, called Digital Horizon, will advance the command's efforts to integrate new unmanned technologies while establishing the world's first unmanned surface vessel fleet by end of next summer. U.S. 5th Fleet's efforts are focused on improving what U.S. and regional navies are able to see above,

on and below the water.

“I am excited about the direction we are headed,” said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. “By harnessing these new unmanned technologies and combining them with artificial intelligence, we will enhance regional maritime security and strengthen deterrence. This benefits everybody.”

Cooper established a staff called Task Force 59 in September 2021 to speed new tech integration across U.S. 5th Fleet. Since its launch, the task force has deployed a suite of new unmanned systems from operational hubs in Bahrain and Aqaba, Jordan.

Digital Horizon will include 17 industry partners bringing 15 different types of systems, 10 of which will operate with U.S. 5th Fleet for the first time.

The unmanned aerial vehicles will include two vertical take-off and landing systems, AeroVel's Flexrotor and Shield AI's V-BAT as well as Easy Aerial's tethered UAV. The unmanned surface vessels will include the Elbit Systems Seagull, Exail DriX, L3Harris Arabian Fox MAST-13, Marine Advanced Robotics WAM-V, MARTAC T-38 Devil Ray, Ocean Aero TRITON, Open Ocean Robotics Data Xplorer, Saildrone Explorer, Seasats X3 and SeaTrac SP-48.

Industry partners Accenture Federal Services and Big Bear AI will also employ data integration and artificial intelligence systems during the event, and Silvus Technologies will provide line-of-sight radio communications while an unmanned surface vessel from Ocious participates from off the coast of Western Australia.

“The pace of innovation is amazing,” said Capt. Michael Brasseur, commander of Task Force 59. “We are challenging our industry partners in one of the most difficult operational

environments, and they are responding with enhanced capability, fast. I am extremely proud of the entire team, including our many partners across government, academia, and industry for their commitment to Digital Horizon, as we discover new capability together.”

Over the past year, Task Force 59 operated USVs in regional waters for more than 25,000 hours, which equates to 12 years of nine-to-five testing five days a week. The Saildrone Explorer USV in particular has operated at sea for as long as 220 consecutive days without refueling or maintenance.

NAVCENT is headquartered in Manama, Bahrain and includes maritime forces operating in the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal and Bab al-Mandeb.