SECNAV Del Toro Announces Effort to Deter Adversarial Foreign Investment Risks, Protect Innovation and Technology



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Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced the formation of the Department of the Navy (DON) Maritime Economic Deterrence Executive Council (MEDEC) during a panel discussion hosted by the Aspen Institute and powered by the Bloomberg Foundation, Feb. 22.

MEDEC, co-chaired by our Principal Military Deputy to the

Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition (RD&A), Vice Admiral Francis Morley, and Chief of Staff Chris Diaz, will focus on mitigating adversarial foreign investment risks, innovation and technology protection, supply chain integrity initiatives, and coordination and protection of research efforts.

MEDEC is DON's acknowledgement of these risks and represents a commitment to identify and address them early, for the safety of our personnel, as well as the security of our allies and partners, depends on us getting this right.

"MEDEC's work is more than just preserving military advantages for our Sailors, Marines, and civilians. It is an effort to better support the business and investment communities that we rely on to design, test, and build the technologies and capabilities we adopt and field. The risks posed by adversarial capital investments and intellectual property theft affect all of us – from investors and industry leaders to our present-day Sailors, Marines, and civilians who support the DON," said Secretary Del Toro.

MEDEC, empowered to act by authorities already granted to the DON, is a component of Secretary Del Toro's whole-of-government national Maritime Statecraft approach, which calls for building up industries that are vital to our nation's efforts to re-build and sustain our comprehensive maritime power.

"It is imperative to bring together representatives from within the defense industrial ecosystem in a unified, focused council to address Maritime Economic Deterrence within our department, allowing the DON to better synchronize our efforts and be leaders in the larger Department of Defense (DoD) Economic Deterrence initiative," said Secretary Del Toro.

As the DON broadens its engagements with investment and business communities that are responsible for driving advances

in critical technologies, MEDEC’s work becomes more important to ensure that the companies with which engage are properly shielded from adversarial influence.