

U.S. Naval War College

U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons

CMSI Translations

China Maritime Studies Institute

3-24-2026

CMSI Translations #28: Uphold the Idea of a Maritime Community with a Shared Destiny and Forge a New Chapter in Maritime Military Security Cooperation

Du Bo

Wang Chenyuan

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/cmsi-translations>

CMSI

翻译

TRANSLATIONS

**Uphold the Idea of a Maritime Community with a
Shared Destiny and Forge a New Chapter in Maritime
Military Security Cooperation**



中国海事研究所
China Maritime Studies Institute



CHINA MARITIME STUDIES INSTITUTE
CENTER FOR NAVAL WARFARE STUDIES
U.S. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
686 CUSHING ROAD (3C)
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND 02841



Uphold the Idea of a Maritime Community with a Shared Destiny and Forge a New Chapter in Maritime Military Security Cooperation¹

CDR Du Bo and Wang Chenyuan²

Abstract: The concept of a maritime community with a shared destiny proposed by Chairman Xi is China's wisdom and approach for maintaining global maritime peace, promoting ocean development, enhancing global maritime governance, and advancing maritime security cooperation. This should guide efforts to tailor security cooperation relationships based on different targets. We need to broaden our thinking and innovate mechanisms for maritime security cooperation, take proactive steps to provide maritime public security goods, strengthen coordinated implementation of external maritime military assistance, and promote the creation of a new landscape in maritime military security cooperation.

Introduction

Present changes in the world and recent history are unfolding in unprecedented ways, leading to significant shifts in global governance that have not been seen in a century. In the face of a complex situation characterized by the intertwining of traditional and non-traditional maritime security threats, as well as the persistent rise in instability and uncertainty in maritime security, countries around the world urgently need to strengthen maritime military security cooperation in areas such as building strategic mutual trust at sea, constructing maritime cooperation mechanisms, and providing maritime security products. Chairman Xi's concept of building a maritime community with a shared destiny embodies profound principles such as peace, openness, inclusivity, and win-win cooperation. It encourages nations to join forces in addressing various common maritime threats and risks, working together to maintain global maritime peace, stability, and prosperous development. This approach paves a mutually beneficial and collaborative path toward maritime security, contributing China's wisdom to promote sustainable development of the oceans, uphold the international maritime order, and enhance maritime prosperity. It is crucial for establishing a broad network of security cooperation, gradually taking a leadership role (主导) in some security cooperation mechanisms, guiding related countries to

¹ 杜博 [Du Bo] and 王辰圆 [Wang Chenyuan], 坚持海洋命运共同体理念开创海上军事安全合作新局面 [“Uphold the Idea of a Maritime Community with a Shared Destiny and Forge a New Chapter in Maritime Military Security Cooperation“], 军事学术 [Military Art], no. 11 (November 2023), pp. 45-48.

Translator's note: *Military Art* is an internal PLA publication (军内刊物).

² CDR Du Bo is a member of the Strategy and Campaign Department at the PLAN Naval Command College. Wang Chenyuan, a member of the uniformed civil service (文职人员), works at the Teaching and Research Support Center at the Naval Command College.

provide more public security products, and maximizing collective efforts to tackle security threats, thus opening a new chapter in maritime military security cooperation.

I. The Concept of a Maritime Community with a Shared Destiny as the Theoretical Guide for Advancing Maritime Military Security Cooperation

The concept of a maritime community with a shared destiny breaks free from the rigid constraints of outdated maritime geopolitics and overturns the theoretical determinism of traditional geopolitics. It serves as the theoretical guide for our efforts in advancing maritime military security cooperation.

(1) Promoting Maritime Peace and Stability, Opposing Maritime Conflict and Confrontation, and Creating a Positive Atmosphere for Advancing Maritime Military Security Cooperation

Chairman Xi emphasized, "The blue planet we inhabit is not divided by oceans into isolated islands, but rather connected by oceans into a community of shared destiny, where the safety and well-being of people across countries are interlinked. The peace and stability of the oceans concern the safety and interests of all nations and must be jointly safeguarded and treasured." On one hand, the United States continues to provoke maritime tensions, leading to crises in regions such as the Black Sea, the South China Sea, the

-----p. 46 begins-----

Indian Ocean, and the Persian Gulf, resulting in a loss of strategic trust. On the other hand, it aggressively promotes its so-called "freedom of navigation operations," leveraging its significant maritime advantages to apply pressure and sanctions against emerging nations and even allies across various fields, including military, economic, and technological domains. The goal of this approach is to coerce or entice countries to take sides, driving a trend of "anti-cooperation." These actions severely undermine the development of maritime military security cooperation. The concept of a maritime community with a shared destiny breaks free from the constraints of the traditional Western approach centered on self-interest, aiming to construct an environment conducive to global maritime peace and stability. It advocates for all countries to jointly maintain peace and stability at sea while opposing maritime conflict and confrontation, thus fostering a positive atmosphere for enhancing maritime military security cooperation among nations.

(2) Advocating Maritime Common Security, Opposing Zero-Sum Games, and Providing Innovative Concepts for Advancing Maritime Military Security Cooperation

Chairman Xi pointed out, "China firmly pursues a defensive national defense policy and advocates establishing a new security concept that is common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable." This important statement aligns with the security needs of our evolving times and holds significant practical implications. Looking at the global landscape, armed conflicts at sea are occurring frequently, with issues such as piracy, maritime terrorism, unreported and unregulated fishing, natural disasters, arms trafficking, and drug smuggling all becoming increasingly prominent. The transnational, interconnected, and diverse nature of maritime security issues is increasingly pronounced, presenting various challenges to global maritime peace. Countries are linked by the oceans into a community of shared destiny, where maritime

security is interrelated and mutually influential. No country can seek absolute maritime security on its own, nor can any nation achieve stability in the maritime environment amidst the turmoil of others. Furthermore, no country can effectively address real threats relying solely on its naval capabilities. The ocean is not a stage for a zero-sum game; individualistic approaches are ineffective, self-interest is insufficient, and reliance on military might not be the solution. The concept of a maritime community with a shared destiny emphasizes the respect and safeguarding of each nation's maritime security, promoting global maritime security through dialogue and cooperation. It provides innovative concepts for advancing maritime military security cooperation, ultimately striving for lasting maritime security.

(3) Advocating for Joint Consultation, Joint Construction, and Shared Benefits, Opposing Maritime Exclusivity and Strengthening the Will to Advance Maritime Military Security Cooperation

Chairman Xi stated, "The Chinese military always upholds the banner of win-win cooperation and is committed to creating a security landscape characterized by equality, mutual trust, fairness, justice, and shared outcomes." He also mentioned, "The ocean can accommodate all rivers; countries should frequently engage in consultations and discussions, rather than resorting to force or threatening one another with military might." This assertion provides clear direction for shaping a world maritime environment rooted in joint consultation, joint construction, and shared benefits. Some countries continue to cling to Cold War mindsets, seeking to forge exclusive maritime alliances and "maritime cliques," deepening frameworks like the "Five-Four-Three-Two" mechanism and attempting to treat the oceans as their private territory.³ This restricts emerging maritime nations from developing and utilizing ocean resources in a fair, just, and reasonable manner, significantly hindering maritime security cooperation. The oceans are a commonwealth for all humanity, not the private property of a few nations; they are wide enough to accommodate the development of all countries. The concept of a maritime community with a shared destiny illustrates that as stakeholders in the world's precious marine resources, every nation has the right to participate in discussions and decision-making regarding global maritime affairs. Each also bears the obligation to contribute to the sustainable development of the oceans on a global scale and has the opportunity to engage in the wave of global maritime cooperation. This certainly will greatly enhance the motivation and willingness of relevant countries to engage in maritime military security cooperation.

(4) Advocating for Maritime Cooperation and Win-Win Outcomes, Opposing Maritime Hegemony, and Creating Favorable Opportunities for Advancing Maritime Military Security Cooperation

Chairman Xi pointed out, "The navy, as the mainstay of national maritime power, bears significant responsibility for maintaining the peace, stability, and order of the oceans. Countries should respect each other, treat one another as equals, enhance mutual trust, strengthen maritime dialogue and exchanges, deepen practical cooperation among navies, and pursue a mutually

³ **Translator's Note:** Regarding the "5-4-3-2" Mechanism, "5" refers to the Five Eyes (FVEY: US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand); "4" refers to the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue: US, Japan, India, Australia); "3" refers to AUKUS (Australia, UK, US); and "2" refers to Bilateral Alliances (e.g., U.S.-Japan, U.S.-South Korea, U.S.-Philippines).

beneficial path to maritime security." He also stated, "The Chinese military is willing to work with the armed forces of other countries to make positive contributions to the development and prosperity of the oceans." This important assertion presents a Chinese solution for promoting the development of the world's oceans and enhancing global maritime governance. Since the Age of Exploration began, the ocean has become a major stage for the struggle for power. From the early Portuguese and Spanish to the later Dutch, British, and French, maritime hegemonic nations have taken turns attempting to establish maritime security and trade orders based on their own strength and unilateral interests. To this day, established maritime nations continue to dominate

-----p. 47 begins-----

global maritime affairs, controlling rights to use ocean resources and formulate maritime rules, with hegemony still prevalent. The concept of a maritime community with shared destiny advocates for maritime cooperation and win-win outcomes. This presents a favorable opportunity for emerging maritime nations, especially those in the developing world, to strengthen maritime military security cooperation, break free from maritime hegemony, and establish a new order for the world's oceans.

II. Methods and Pathways to Build a Maritime Community with a Shared Destiny and Create a New Landscape in Maritime Military Security Cooperation

Chairman Xi's proposal to build a maritime community with a shared destiny aligns with the maritime interests of the majority of countries around the world and showcases China's wisdom in global ocean governance, earning widespread acclaim and support from the international community. We should seize favorable opportunities, take proactive actions, and implement comprehensive strategies. Guided by the concept of a maritime community with a shared destiny, we will promote the creation of a new landscape in maritime military security cooperation.

(1) Differentiating Strategic Partners to Cultivate Maritime Security Cooperation and Fortify the Framework for Military Engagement.

First, China must establish a "shared risk and responsibility" maritime security framework with the United States. Given the current reality of extensive cooperation coupled with intensifying competition between China and the United States, [the two countries should] strengthen maritime security dialogues; effectively control and handle friction and disagreements; prevent misunderstandings and miscalculations and unplanned encounters at sea and in the air; jointly construct a Sino-American naval relationship grounded in consultation, cooperation, and stability; and strengthen crisis management. In the short term, particularly against the strategic backdrop of the ongoing Ukraine crisis, [China] should maintain a maritime security relationship with the United States based on red lines (底线) and avoiding maritime. Maintaining Sino-U.S. maritime strategic stability is extremely important. Over the medium-to-long term, the focus should shift toward seeking low-level cooperation in international maritime affairs and maintaining a certain level of coordination on major issues, ensuring that foundational communication channels remain intact. Second, [China should] pursue inclusive and mutually beneficial maritime security partnerships with other Western nations. Interests between China and Europe are not only non-conflicting but deeply intertwined. The Chinese and European

navies should strengthen defense seminars, high-level delegation exchanges, port calls by escort task forces, and multi-lateral exercises. [China should] send naval task forces and delegations to visit European countries, host more European naval ships and visits from high level naval commanding officers, increase understanding and friendship between all sides, and promote the joint progress of the two major economies of China and Europe. Third, China should establish mutually beneficial maritime security partnerships with developing nations. Whether past, present, or future, developing nations are essential partners for China in international affairs. Guided by the principle of balancing shared interests and mutual benefits, China should expand and strengthen engagement and cooperation with naval forces in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America, especially countries in which China's overseas interests are fairly concentrated. Especially in regions where maritime interests are concentrated. This approach involves active participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum and various multilateral naval symposiums, as well as cooperation in areas such as equipment assistance, personnel training, and marine environmental protection. Furthermore, [China should] remain sensitive to the political and diplomatic contexts of these nations and their comfort levels for engagement, not rushing things, but instead waiting patiently, continuously enhancing our attractiveness and appeal through tangible results from cooperation. By forging maritime security relationships at various levels, [China can] foster mutual understanding and trust, build consensus on maritime security and develop, identify the greatest common denominator of all countries' maritime interests, and provide strong partnership support for forging a new chapter in maritime military security cooperation by "building the broadest possible circle of security partners."

(2) Expanding Ideas and Innovating Maritime Security Cooperation Mechanisms to Provide Institutional Support for Creating a New Landscape in Maritime Military Security Cooperation

First, create different cooperation mechanisms tailored to each country's situation. Based on factors such as overall relations between countries, geopolitical environments, and capabilities for maritime security cooperation, we can construct cooperation mechanisms. Together with neighboring maritime countries, we should establish a confidence-building maritime security mechanism addressing issues like sea lane security, joint maritime search and rescue, and counterterrorism, promoting peace and stability in waters where China's interests are concentrated (利益攸关海域). In collaboration with major powers in the Asia-Pacific region, we will create a crisis management maritime security consultation mechanism focused on strategic stability in global waters, injecting vitality into new naval relations. Alongside other developing countries around the world, we aim to build a mutually beneficial maritime security mechanism discussing the restructuring of a new order for the world's oceans, shaping a fair and reasonable new maritime security order. Second, enrich and improve existing cooperation mechanisms. The influence of the BRICS cooperation mechanism continues to rise, with most member countries being emerging maritime nations that share common goals in initiatives like improving international maritime security rules and advancing global maritime governance toward a more equitable, just, and rational direction. In February 2023, China, Russia, and South Africa conducted their second joint naval exercise, comprehensively demonstrating their determination to work together in addressing maritime threats, maintaining world peace and security, and constructing a maritime community with a shared destiny. This laid a solid foundation for further promoting BRICS and even "BRICS+" maritime security cooperation. In the future, we will fully

leverage our leadership and influence within this mechanism to further enrich its functions, extending from the economic realm into security, and engaging in maritime military security cooperation under the BRICS framework. Additionally, we should enhance the functions of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) mechanism. Utilizing the fact that key SCO member states border the Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean, and Arctic Ocean, we will promote maritime military security cooperation within the SCO framework, extending its influence from land to sea. Third, we will expand methods to build new cooperation mechanisms. We can promote organic connections and deep integration between

-----p. 48 begins-----

the BRICS and SCO maritime military security cooperation mechanisms. In the future, starting with low-sensitivity topics such as maritime disaster relief and joint anti-piracy efforts, we will promote interconnected maritime security cooperation between the two organizations, forming a new maritime security cooperation mechanism of "BRICS plus SCO" to safeguard the Belt and Road Initiative. By innovating maritime security cooperation mechanisms, we will continuously enhance our influence and voice in maritime affairs, strategically shifting from past participation in mechanisms to future construction of mechanisms. This transition holds significant strategic value in establishing a new landscape for maritime military security cooperation where we “gradually play a leading role in certain security cooperation mechanisms.”

(3) Taking Proactive Actions to Provide Maritime Public Security Goods, Offering Material Support for Creating a New Landscape in Maritime Military Security Cooperation

First, ensuring the security of international maritime passages. Protecting international sea routes not only safeguards our national maritime interests but also serves global energy and food transportation security and supply stability, demonstrating our great nation's responsibility and commitment. We should continue with escort operations in the Gulf of Aden, intensifying joint efforts to combat piracy, maritime terrorism, cross-border drug trafficking, and human trafficking. Additionally, we can enhance the public service functions of the Djibouti support base, providing supplies to foreign vessels participating in escort actions in nearby waters. Moreover, we must be prepared; if the piracy issue in the Gulf of Guinea escalates, we can send vessels to participate in the maintenance of maritime passage security, in accordance with relevant international laws and the needs of regional countries. In May 2022, China held a special video seminar on the security situation in the Gulf of Guinea, during which representatives engaged in in-depth discussions on topics such as "New Visions for China-Africa Maritime Security Cooperation," laying a solid foundation for our future actions in maintaining the safety of maritime passages in that region. Second, conducting humanitarian relief and disaster response operations. Humanitarian relief actions typically include maritime search and rescue and assistance during natural disasters at sea. Implementing humanitarian rescue and disaster relief is essential for safeguarding national overseas interests and showcasing our national image, and is also a vital approach to maintaining maritime peace and stability. We should focus on key maritime areas such as the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, regularly holding joint maritime exercises and drills on tasks like rescuing individuals fallen overboard, task force communications, joint maritime search and rescue operations during maritime and aviation disasters, and helicopter deck operations to solidify the foundation for joint actions.

Third, promoting the formulation of maritime military security regulations. We have previously actively participated in the development and promotion of the "Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea" (CUES), which has been utilized by many navies and plays a significant role in ensuring the safety of personnel and vessels. In the future, we should continue to explore and work on developing guidelines for naval vessels in high seas marine protected areas, as well as procedures for encounters between naval vessels and unmanned ships, thereby better serving maritime public safety. We will also continue to conduct international medical rescue operations, leaving behind warm traces of humanitarian efforts like the *Peace Ark* in more parts of the world. By our proactively providing maritime public security goods, more countries will be able to enjoy the benefits of maritime security, allowing those seeking assistance to catch a "free ride" and offering early gains to those observing from the sidelines, gradually attracting more countries to join the "Group Providing Maritime Public Security Goods." This will provide vital support for creating a new landscape in maritime military security cooperation, where we lead relevant countries in supplying more public security goods.

(4) Strengthening Coordinated Implementation of External Maritime Military Assistance to Provide Support for Creating a New Landscape in Maritime Military Security Cooperation

First, enhance maritime military assistance to neighboring countries. Strengthening the maritime security capabilities of neighboring nations, particularly some ASEAN countries, is crucial for jointly addressing regional non-traditional security threats. We should provide personnel training and vessel assistance to combat maritime crime and enhance their maritime law enforcement capabilities. Support in terms of personnel, funding, and equipment should also be extended for marine environmental protection and law enforcement capacity building. Second, increase maritime military assistance to countries located along important straits. Countries along vital straits have a high volume of maritime traffic; enhancing their capacity to maintain straight security will better serve the navigational security of vessels from around the world. This is significant for ensuring the security of maritime passages and can also enhance our influence and appeal in those countries, deepening our relationships with them. Cooperation can be developed around maritime route security assurance, naval personnel training, marine environmental protection, and sharing maritime information. Third, strengthen maritime military assistance to other countries in need. Currently, piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea are frequent, yet some regional nations still lack effective anti-piracy capabilities. We can collaborate in areas such as naval personnel training, patrol vessel assistance, joint exercises, and hydrographic surveying. Addressing the shortcomings in marine governance capabilities among Pacific island nations, we can aid and enhance their coast guard capabilities and maritime situational awareness. By implementing maritime military assistance, we can enhance the ability of relevant countries to respond to non-traditional maritime security threats, thereby better eliminating their own maritime security challenges. As their capabilities improve and their maritime security threats decrease, these nations can dedicate more resources to collectively address shared maritime security threats. This approach offers robust support for creating a new landscape in maritime military security cooperation, where we can maximize efforts from all parties to respond to security threats.