

First my apologies; I will never rely on GPS again. Over the last hour or so, I have explored parts of Maryland I did not know existed.

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Based on my look at the program and few remarks I have heard here, I am sure that all of you share the feeling I have that this conference, in a way, could not have happened at a more opportune time. Although the Japanese tsunami was not caused by climate change, I think the damage that has been suffered in Japan gives you a sense of how the best laid preparations can seem so inadequate when we have to deal with the force of water and the problem of where we all like to live, what we all like to do, and how much that is going to have to change in the future simply because of climate change.

Imagine, if you can, what kind of picture we would have in North Africa if there were not just a wave of revolution with uncertain effects facing us, but if, in fact, that wave were backed up by a massive push of population from places in Africa where both water and ways to support the population are in short supply. Imagine all of those people crowding onto a littoral that is plenty crowded already. I think all of us are under an enormous mandate to think differently about the future. It is not a future that we want. It is not one we are going to be comfortable with, but it is coming, and to the best of our abilities, we have to think through what the implications are not just for the Navy but really for the kind of world in which the United States is going to be operating. There will be many, many demands for resources, and we are going to have to come up with a new list of priorities and be able to defend them not just to our own population but to other people as well.