



Daniel Oliver, President

## Dinner Speech to the “Global Security Challenges Roundtable”

**NPS President Daniel Oliver, Geneva Switzerland**

**22 September 2009**

Dear Distinguished Guests, Colleagues and Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for joining us this evening.

I am proud and honored to join you in this important meeting and want to thank our partners in this endeavor, the Graduate Institute’s Centre for International Governance for graciously hosting this dinner.

I want to thank our Executive Vice President and Provost Leonard Ferrari and our co-host Dr. Daniel Warner for organizing this splendid Roundtable event. I would also like to extend our deep gratitude and appreciation to our dear friend Talal Abu-Ghazaleh for joining us and giving such an insightful keynote speech. And, special welcome to Professor Jean-Dominique Vassalli, Rector of the University of Geneva, who has joined with the Naval Postgraduate School in launching several collaborative endeavors. Also, this event could not have happened without the outstanding support and cooperation of the US Mission to the UN in Geneva. Thank you all.

These important discussions have joined, from three continents, a total of eleven universities, ten research institutes, four international organizations, four humanitarian NGOs and four private sector corporations in an intensive two-day interdisciplinary dialogue. Globalization and the emerging security challenges are the primary topics of discussion. Our discussion will inform the establishment of a future-oriented, annual global research forum in Geneva that is visionary and security-based, while seeking to help move a changing world from challenges, to opportunities, to solutions.

Today’s panel discussions also provided a wonderful introduction to Geneva as the City of Peace. We could not have assembled a better team of experts and dialogue partners. Nearly two years ago, Provost Ferrari and Professor Walter Christman convinced me of the critically important partnership role of International Geneva in support of the new US Cooperative Maritime Strategy. To understand why this is indeed the case, I need to explain the new “Cooperative Maritime Strategy” of the United States.

The fact that 90% of the world’s commerce travels by sea, linking every country on earth, that the vast majority of the world’s population lives within 100 miles of the world’s oceans and waterways, and that nearly three quarters of the earth’s surface is covered by water led the maritime forces of the United

States—the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard—to come together, for the first time, to create a unified maritime strategy.

But what is new? Well many things. One key difference is where the old strategy made clear that the Navy was to help win America's wars, the new strategy now places preventing war on an equal basis. Allow me to quote the authors:

“ Our citizens were involved in development of this strategy through a series of public forums.....three themes dominated these discussions: our people want us to remain strong; they want us to protect them and our homeland, and they want us to work with partners around the world to prevent war.”

The final strategy document says and I quote:

“We believe preventing wars is as important as winning wars”; and

“Increasingly, governments, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and the private sector will form partnerships of common interest to counter these emerging threats.” and,

“Although our forces can surge when necessary to respond to crises, trust and cooperation cannot be surged. They must be built over time so that the strategic interests of the participants are continuously considered while mutual understanding and respect are promoted.”

Therefore, if the US Maritime Strategy places preventing war as important as winning war, and it will do so in partnership with partner nation states, international organizations and non-governmental organizations dedicated to preventing war, then International Geneva emerges as a Cooperative Maritime Strategy partner of first rank.

Geneva has been the scene of peace negotiations and security related treaties of every kind. It is the home of over 200 international organizations and non-governmental organizations and to an outstanding university community, devoted not only to peace, but also to global cooperation in every field imaginable. This Global Security Challenges Roundtable, in linking the US Cooperative Maritime Strategy with global partners from three continents – and in collaboration with the Geneva international community and its leading educational institutions – in my opinion is an undertaking of historic proportions.

We are very pleased that the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and the US Mission were willing to join us in this venture. We look forward to working with our co-host, the Centre for International Governance, on this project for a very long time to come.

As many of you may know, the Naval Postgraduate School, which is currently celebrating its 100th centennial anniversary, also joined forces this year with the University of Geneva, celebrating its 450th anniversary.

Our initial endeavor was a joint venture to bring documentary films highlighting the challenges of globalization to the international community of Geneva. Nobel Peace Laureate, the Reverend Desmond Tutu, was the honored keynote speaker, and the University of Geneva did a splendid job of organizing an event in which over 1,000 people participated. Provost Ferrari originally proposed this cooperation project as a kick-off event and we were pleased to support the University of Geneva in its celebration. This particular effort will continue and I am told that the Naval Postgraduate School will be a continuing stakeholder with the University of Geneva as part of the governing board for its future activities. I believe that this partnership is of particular strategic importance, as it allows military voices to join in an open forum, to consider the challenges to peace, and to participate in the opportunities to overcome them.

As the Naval Postgraduate School embarks on its next hundred years of service, we have taken time to think about the future. Since our founding, NPS has graduated more than 60,000 alumni. They are leaders, they are Secretaries and Chiefs of the military services, they are business and political leaders and they are located all over the globe. We have graduated countless leaders across the landscape of American defense. One alumnus is the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, USN. Our alumni include three dozen astronauts, who have piloted Space Shuttles and have walked on the moon. Our alumni invent new systems that have changed the face of conflict and promote peace ... they create new policies and new technologies ... in short, our alumni are helping to change the world.

Our international student programs are having an equal impact, educating new leaders for countries across the globe. Nearly 5,000 officers from 100 countries have attended the Naval Postgraduate School, reflecting an international contribution to global stability that very few institutions can claim. Included among them is His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan. And just as we often describe our own U.S. students, our international students are truly no different – they are professional, they have been selected by their respective nations as leaders, and they are dedicated to career and country.

These accomplishments are meaningful but merely scratch the surface of the depth of academic vigor and spirit that span the breadth of the Naval Postgraduate School. It is important to note that over the past few decades, the Naval Postgraduate School student population and programs have evolved to the point where NPS is no longer a purely naval institution. It is currently home to 1,800 resident and 1,000 distance learning graduate students from our Navy, Marine Corp, Air Force, Coast Guard. We also educate a growing number of US government agency civilians and nearly 250 international military officers and government officials engaged in advanced graduate education.

In sum, NPS is a first-rate graduate university, with a combined annual income of some \$300M for education, research and service. It is comprised of four schools, four major institutes, 14 departments and some fifty masters and PhD level degrees, covering a broad spectrum of subjects in science and technology, business, public policy, international studies and operational sciences.

The world is at an important crossroads as we move into the 21st century. We face new, non-traditional threats from a weakened global economy, international terrorism, energy security, global warming, water shortages, population growth, increased poverty and cyber-terrorism. These problems are extremely complex and often interrelated. I believe their solutions will require the work of multi-disciplinary, multi-national teams of subject matter experts and policy makers utilizing new technologies and improved approaches to open collaboration.

In Monterey, the Naval Postgraduate School recently established the Global Public Policy Academic Group as a multi-disciplinary academic group to study the impact of globalization on non-traditional threats and more generally on national and human security. The group will draw faculty from all disciplines at NPS in order to conduct research studies and develop research-led educational programs. By broadening the understanding of the forces of globalization and their potential impact on US and international security policy, NPS endeavors to not only inform, but to also help shape, national and international policy at home and abroad. We believe a more inclusive, more open approach to international cooperation will be needed to successfully address the complex Global Security Challenges of the 21st Century.

We are especially pleased that the PRC Mission to the UN has sent a representative to work with us at this week's roundtable discussion. We all recognize that the PRC must play an important role in future discussions if we are to move forward and find solutions to some of the world's most pressing and important problems.

It is my hope that all of you, assembled here in Geneva, will continue to work with the NPS and its Global Public Policy Group to shape and define the broad based multi-national cooperation and programs that are needed to take us from these global challenges----to global solutions for our most pressing and urgent security problems.

As I look at the next 100 years, I reiterate how proud I am to be a part of the Naval Postgraduate School, right now – ready to enjoy the fruits of what we have done, and seek with anticipation the next challenge. The “Cooperative Maritime Strategy” of the United States has drawn us to this great partner for Peace, the City of Peace--Geneva.

With our international partners gathered here from Europe, the Middle East and Asia, I invite you to join us on the next journey. We must together be the drivers of change. We must foster an environment of cooperative inquiry, imagination and discovery.

This could mean establishing a new “Global Challenges and Opportunities Forum” to provide faculty and students from all of our institutions throughout the globe, and others to come, access to the best ideas, tools and resources. It also means encouraging collaboration, activities and events that give voice to intellectual discourse on a multi-national and multi-cultural basis.

Formal sharing of education and research findings is a hallmark of a research university, but equally important are the smaller colloquia and seminars that provide informal introductions of scholars and scientists – and ideas. Careful stewardship of this environment is attentive to these ingredients for growth and we have come together from around the world to explore possible shared roles in that stewardship.

I wish you continued success in your discussions tomorrow as you work together to shape the establishment of a future-oriented, annual global research forum in Geneva that is visionary and security-based, while seeking to help move a changing world from challenges to opportunities to solutions.

**Thank You!**