



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
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Dear Colleagues:

The 12th European and North American Chiefs of Chaplains Conference convened in Strasbourg, France, on 5 February. The theme was "Military Chaplains: Linking Religion and State." Nearly one hundred chaplains attended, including Chaplains Olauson and Holcomb who accompanied me. Grasping this opportunity to increase mutual, international understanding will make us better leaders.

The new military ministry context, particularly military operations other than war, requires greater international cooperation. Different chaplaincies operate under varied governmental church-state models, and it's important to understand the diverse challenges confronting international ministry. The reorientation of Armed Forces' objectives to include re-establishing or keeping the peace gives another nuance to "Defense." These are exciting times for our Chaplain Corps as we strive to be peacemakers in response to God's call.

At the conference, chaplains forged new friendships and stabilized old ones. I re-established ties with Australian colleagues, started a relationship with South Africa, and strengthened bonds with the British. I continued dialogue with Poland and Ukraine. It was a profitable four days.

Returning to CONUS I prepared to talk to new Flag officers about chaplaincy, leadership, and ethics. I've participated in this training for three years and find it builds important bridges. These new Admirals were reminded about how your fine work contributes to readiness, and about how faith is a force multiplier. This was an energizing encounter.

From 14 to 16 February, Chaplains Iasiello, Bigger, and I participated in *All Flag Officers Conference 2001*, in Arlington, Virginia. This annual conference provides an opportunity for Flag officer interaction and team building. It informs us about executive level issues and provides a discussion forum for the CNO. Many of the conference's insights will be explored at the March Senior Leadership Conference.

I continue to be inspired by your faithful service. I invite you on 15 March to engage in special prayer for our Corps. Let us persevere with good works, knowing that we will reap what we sow.

In His Service,

Barry C. Black

BARRY C. BLACK
Rear Admiral, CHC, U.S. Navy