

Readout of Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel's Call to the MV Cape Ray

defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/605138/readout-of-secretary-of-defense-chuck-hagels-call-to-the-mv-cape-ray

You have accessed part of a historical collection on defense.gov. Some of the information contained within may be outdated and links may not function. Please contact the [DOD Webmaster](#) with any questions.

Immediate Release

Aug. 18, 2014

Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby provided the following readout:

This morning, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel called Navy Captain Rich Dromerhauser aboard the U.S. ship MV Cape Ray to congratulate the ship's crew on finishing their unprecedented work of neutralizing, at sea, the most dangerous chemicals in Syria's declared stockpile. The secretary said that by ridding the world of these materials, they - as part of an ongoing international effort to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons arsenal - have helped make an important and enduring contribution to global security.

Secretary Hagel expressed his gratitude for the crew's service, dedication, and expertise, noting that with the world watching, they performed flawlessly every step of the way - despite a very long deployment, and a complex operation that required careful coordination with our international partners. The secretary commended the crew for conducting every aspect of the mission in a highly professional manner, with strict adherence to safety and with no impact to the surrounding environment, and said that they should all be very proud of what they've accomplished to help reduce the threat posed by chemical weapons.

Today's milestone would not have been possible without the contributions of our many international partners, or the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, which provided the funding to carry out these operations. While the international community's work to completely eliminate Syria's chemical weapons program is not yet finished, the secretary believes this is a clear demonstration of what can be achieved when diplomacy is backed by a willingness to use military force.

The United States will remain vigilant in our efforts to deter future use of chemicals as weapons, and in ensuring that all questions about the extent of Assad's chemical weapons program are answered in full.
