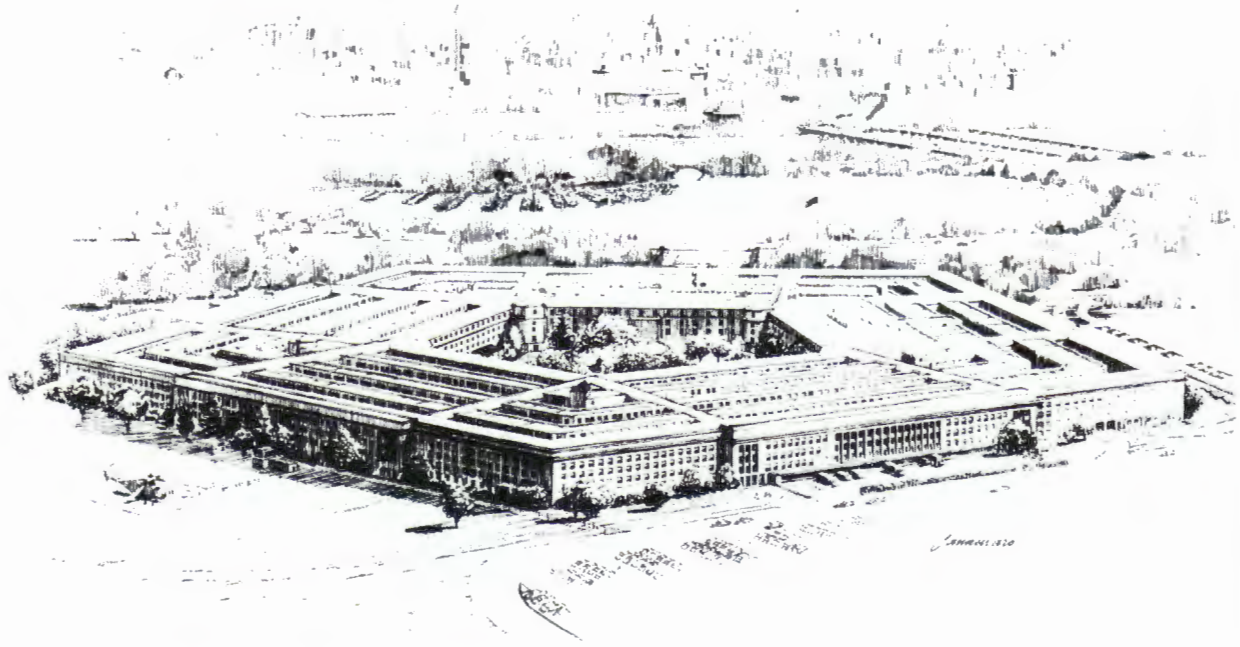


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# Annual Report

## to the President and the Congress



William S. Cohen  
Secretary of Defense



1999

**FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION**

For 19 years, the U.S. Freedom of Navigation program has ensured that excessive coastal state claims over the world's oceans and airspace are repeatedly challenged. By diplomatic protests and operational assertions, the United States has insisted upon adherence by the nations of the world to the international law of the sea, as reflected in the UN Law of the Sea Convention. A significant majority of countries (130) are now Parties to the Convention, and there is an encouraging trend toward the rolling-back of excessive maritime claims. Nonetheless, some coastal states continue to assert maritime claims inconsistent with international law, which left unchallenged would limit navigational freedoms vital to U.S. national security and essential to peaceful uses of the world's oceans.

assertions challenging the excessive maritime claims listed in the accompanying table. In addition, military vessels and aircraft frequently conducted routine transits through international straits, such as the Straits of Gibraltar, Hormuz, and Malacca. Air and surface units also transited the Indonesian Archipelago in archipelagic sea lanes passage on 20 occasions and transited the Philippine Archipelago by exercising high seas freedoms, transit passage, and innocent passage, as applicable, on 32 occasions. Combined with robust and highly visible routine operations by U.S. forces on, over, and under the world's oceans, and scrupulous adherence by the United States to the navigational provisions of the UN Law of the Sea Convention, Freedom of Navigation operations have continued to underscore the U.S. commitment to a stable legal regime for the world's oceans.

In FY 1998, U.S. armed forces conducted operational

**FY 1998 DOD OPERATIONAL ASSERTIONS**

Country	Excessive Claims Challenged
Albania	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Algeria	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Bangladesh	Excessive straight baselines; claimed security zone
Burma	Excessive straight baselines; claimed security zone
Cambodia	Excessive straight baselines; claimed security zone
Croatia	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Cuba	Require state aircraft to comply with directions from air traffic control within flight information region
El Salvador	200 nautical miles (nm) territorial sea
Iran	Excessive straight baselines; prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Kenya	Excessive straight baselines; historic bay claim (Ungwana Bay)
Liberia	200 nm territorial sea
Libya	Claims all waters south of 32-30 north latitude Gulf of Sidra closure line as internal waters
Malaysia	Excessive restrictions on military activities in exclusive economic zone
Maldives	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Malta	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Nicaragua	200 nm territorial sea
Pakistan	Claimed security zone; excessive restrictions on military activities in the exclusive economic zone

<b>FY 1998 DOD OPERATIONAL ASSERTIONS (Continued)</b>	
<b>Country</b>	<b>Excessive Claims Challenged</b>
Philippines	Excessive straight baselines; claims archipelagic waters as internal waters
Saudi Arabia	Excessive straight baselines; claimed security zone
Seychelles	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Sierra Leone	200 nm territorial sea
Somalia	200 nm territorial sea; prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Sudan	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea; claimed security zone
Syria	35 nm territorial sea; prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
United Arab Emirates	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea; claimed security zone
Viet Nam	Excessive straight baselines; claimed security zone; prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea
Yemen	Prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea; claimed security zone