



# SPEECH

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## **Keynote Address by Minister of State for Defence, and Information and the Arts, Mr David Lim Tik En, at the Launch of RSS Chieftain in Karlskrona, Sweden on 22 May 2001**

23 May 2001

State Secretary of Defence Mrs Yvonne Gustafsson, Excellencies, distinguished Guests, ladies and gentlemen, my wife and I are pleased to be here today to officiate at the launch of RSS CHIEFTAIN for the Republic of Singapore Navy.

Singapore depends on the sea for a significant part of our prosperity, because of the importance of maritime trade to our economy. We therefore attach great importance to the task of building a modern and balanced navy to ensure that the sealines of communications are free and safe for navigation. You only need to look at a map of the Southeast Asian region to realise that a more secure maritime environment benefits not only Singapore but all the countries in the region. The seas feature prominently in our geography as much as they do in our economies.

RSS CHIEFTAIN will join her three sister vessels to help the RSN develop its naval doctrine of operating an integrated fleet of surface and sub-surface combatants. On this note, I am pleased to learn that RSS CONQUEROR has successfully undergone a series of sea trials, which included a torpedo firing, to validate the competence of the submarine's systems and her crew, which was the first to be trained here by the Royal Swedish Navy. She is now the first submarine commissioned into the service of the RSN, and has already participated in various exercises.

The RSN has also put in efforts to raise the safety of submarine operations. We gained valuable experience when we hosted EX PACIFIC REACH in October 2000, the first multilateral submarine rescue exercise conducted in the Asia Pacific. In addition, the RSN has put in place a SUBSAFE or Submarine Safety programme, which ensures that we follow strictly the regimes required to maintain our submarines at the highest safety order.

Our efforts to build a submarine capability have been possible because of the valuable assistance we received from the Royal Swedish Navy and the engineering expertise of Kockums working together with our Defence Science Technology Agency. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Swedish Ministry of Defence and the Royal Swedish Navy for your contributions to our submarine project. I would also like to thank Kockums for your good work on our submarines.

RSS CHIEFTAIN will return home at the end of the year and join her sister ship RSS CONQUEROR. We look forward to her successful operationalisation and contribution to the RSN's seaward defence of Singapore. My congratulations and best wishes also go to the Commanding Officer and crew of CHIEFTAIN for the rest of your training programme and successful sea trials after today's launch.

Thank you.

**News Release:**

- The RSN Launches Her Fourth Submarine, the RSS Chieftain (MINDEF\_20010523370)

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