



SPEECH

Visit <http://www.mindef.gov.sg> for more news and information about MINDEF and the SAF

Welcome Address by RSN Fleet Commander, Rear-Admiral (RADM) Sim Gim Guan, at the Opening Ceremony of the Co-Operation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Singapore 2001

02 Jul 2001

Good morning, Rear-Admiral Mark Edwards, Commander Logistics Group, Western Pacific, Commodore Gary Erikson, Commander Destroyer Squadron 1, Colonel Chew Men Leong, Commander First Flotilla, Senior Commanders, officers, men and women from the United States Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy,

First of all, allow me to extend a warm welcome to all of you to this year's CARAT-Singapore, and specifically the US CARAT Task Group to Changi Naval Base. This is the first time that we have co-located the larger part of the combined Task Group under the umbrella of one base. In form, it is symbolic of the close relationship we have built up through the CARAT series of exercise. In substance, it will enhance co-ordination to stage a successful exercise, and most of all, bring the participating forces even closer through a higher level of face-to-face interaction.

This year's CARAT in Singapore is the seventh in a series of exercises between the USN and the Singapore Armed Forces, which dates back to 1995. The USAF had also been a regular participant when Commando Sling was aligned to CARAT.

Over the years, CARAT-Singapore had progressed into a multi-faceted exercise of significant complexity, scope and exercise realism. Many significant milestones were achieved along the way. The establishment of a combined Headquarters to command and control all CARAT forces since 1999 was one example. Complex anti-air missile firing exercises by RSN ships on the USN's BQM-74E drone targets launched from USN FFGs have become a recognisable highlight of the CARAT-Singapore series. It also demonstrated the high level of inter-operability between the two forces. CARAT-Singapore also saw its development as an opportunity for technology demonstration such as the Small Water-plane Area Twin Hull brought in by the USN for CARAT 2000.

We have even achieved a high level of inter-operability in areas like base defence where we have achieved the development of an integrated Base Defence Task Unit. And the list goes on.

This year, without exception, we will continue to build upon the achievements of past CARAT exercises. CARAT 2001 will see the participation of 15 ships, one submarine, some 48 air sorties, and 2000 men and women in an exercise significant in both its scale and scope. On the opening day of MERCUB 2001, the USN FFG and RSN Patrol Vessel will attempt to conduct a first-ever combined gunnery and anti-air missile firing on one single drone target.

MERCUB 2001 would see significant portions dedicated to tactical free-play scenarios to challenge the surface, air and sub-surface forces from both sides. For the first time, we would see cross-decking of medical personnel between RSN and USN ships in a first-aid exercise. Combined deep helium-oxygen salvage diving would also be conducted. All in all, I think CARAT-Singapore 2001 would demand the most from its participants bring the level of inter-operability to a new plane.

More importantly, the continuation of CARAT and the commitment by both countries to build on its successes reaffirms two issues. Firstly, it demonstrates the commitment of the United States to furthering of the stability and security of the Southeast Asian region. Secondly, it reaffirms the importance of CARAT to the armed forces of the two countries in terms of building a high level of inter-operability.

But the construction and staging of even more challenging exercise scenarios is only one aspect of furthering inter-operability. The other vital component is the understanding that we build through the close interaction between participants from both countries. As with previous years, I hope that all officers, men and women of the CARAT task force will capitalise on the many opportunities to interact and get to know one another. I would also like to take this opportunity to give our best wishes to all US participants on the celebration of the two hundredth and twenty fifth year of independence of the United States of America.

To conclude, I would like to urge all participants to challenge themselves to achieve the objectives we have laid out and to further inter-operability. Of course, while we push the exercise, we must do our utmost to ensure that all activities are conducted safely. With that, I am confident that CARAT 2001 will be a most successful and fruitful exercise.

Thank you.

News Release:

- Naval Exercise Between the United States and Singapore
(Document No: MINDEF_20010702001_2.pdf)

National Archives of Singapore