



SPEECH

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Speech by Chief of Defence Force Major-General Neo Kian Hong at the Chief of Defence Force Change of Command Parade

01 Apr 2010

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, Mr Teo Chee Hean;
Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence, Dr Ng Eng Hen;
Permanent Secretaries;
Distinguished Guests,
Men and Women of the SAF,
Good evening, and thank you for your presence.

The mission of the Singapore Armed Forces is to deter threats to Singapore's peace and security, and should it fail, to secure a swift and decisive victory over the aggressor. To remain true to our mission, we need a strong and credible SAF to allow us to pursue our national interests and provide space for Singapore to continue to prosper and grow.

The key building blocks of the 3rd Generation SAF are already in place. Firstly, the SAF has acquired cutting-edge equipment and formed new units to transform the SAF into an advanced networked force that can seamlessly tap each Service's capabilities. The Sikorsky S-70B naval helicopters, for example, help enhance the frigates' ability to undertake anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare missions at longer ranges. The frigate's Command, Control and Communications suite also allows it to network with a variety of land-based and airborne SAF assets. Similarly, the Army's Terrex combat vehicles are equipped with the Battlefield Management System which allows each vehicle to call on the fire power of an array of air and land platforms, such as the Apache helicopters.

Secondly, to deal with an expanded spectrum of operations both at home and overseas, the SAF has been re-organised into new operational commands. Integrated Task Forces like the Maritime Security Task Force and the Special Operations Task Force, can draw from the strengths and resources across all three Services. Besides being able to protect Singapore from conventional threats 24-7, the new organisational changes have also made the SAF

more flexible and effective in supporting international security operations and humanitarian and disaster relief missions. Our successful deployments to the Gulf of Aden and Afghanistan bear testament to that.

Finally and most importantly, the 3rd Generation SAF cannot be realised without the people behind the force. The recent changes to the career schemes were introduced to better match the increasingly complex operational demands of the 3rd Generation SAF with our servicemen and women's needs and aspirations. Today marks the day the Military Domain Experts Scheme, and the Enhanced Officers and Enhanced Warrant Officers Schemes come into effect. With more training opportunities as well as academic upgrading, our people can develop greater depth of knowledge and competency in their areas of specialisation.

LG Desmond Kuek has led the SAF to achieve the first spiral of its transformation into a 3rd Generation force. Under his dynamic leadership, we have forged a more integrated and capable SAF. We thank him for his outstanding service to the SAF and our nation.

Having achieved success in the first spiral, we need to sustain the momentum and focus on the execution and delivery of capabilities in this ongoing transformation journey. We will also need to continue enhancing our operations and investing in our people in order to maintain the SAF's cutting edge.

My fellow soldiers, airmen and sailors. You dedicate yourselves to training hard to fulfil the role entrusted to you. You answer the call of duty to guard our land, seas and skies. It is the fighting spirit of each and everyone of you that determines the effectiveness of the SAF. Because of your unwavering commitment to the defence and security of Singapore, no one doubts the resolve of the SAF to fulfil its mission.

I ask you to join me in continuing to maintain an operationally ready, relevant and respected SAF. As we forge ahead together, we shall be competent and confident in discharging our duty to preserve the independence and sovereignty of Singapore.

Thank you.

National Archives of Singapore

Related Resources:

- [New Chief of Defence Force for the SAF \(MINDEF_20100401001.pdf\)](#)
- [Speech by outgoing Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant-General Desmond Kuek Bak Chye at the Chief of Defence Force Change of Command Parade \(MINDEF_20100401002.pdf\)](#)