



# SPEECH

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## **Speech by Chief of Defence Force LG Neo Kian Hong for the 06/10 Specialist Cadet Graduation Parade, at Pasir Labar Camp**

18 Mar 2011

Graduates of the 06/10 Specialist Cadet Course,  
Parents,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate everyone on parade for successfully completing the Specialist Cadet Course (SCC). It was a tough and challenging course that tested both your mental and physical abilities. You have shown that you are now better prepared to undertake greater responsibilities. This graduation parade does not just mark the end of the course, but signifies the beginning of your journey as Leaders in the SAF.

You have pledged to serve our nation and will lead men and women into operations when called upon, to defend our nation, our families and friends, and our future.

In a recent article, Australia's richest person, mining magnate Gina Rinehart, lauded Singapore as a model for success and called for her country to learn from the Singapore story - by having good, responsible government, sound policies and less red tape. Singapore will continue to prosper because we have the fundamentals right, and also because we have a strong SAF that underpins our peace and prosperity. However, we cannot take things for granted. As we can see around the world, the security landscape continues to evolve, becoming more complex and uncertain; social unrest in the Middle East and the earthquake and nuclear crisis in Japan have global effects. Beyond dealing with conventional threats, the SAF has expanded its capabilities to deal with a spectrum of operations.

Besides working closely with the Home Team to secure our homeland, the SAF also makes meaningful contributions internationally, for example, in counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, reconstruction and security operations in Afghanistan, and in disaster relief operations in the Christchurch earthquake. The 3rd Generation SAF has fundamentally transformed the way it fights. With unprecedented access to new capabilities and

technologies, small units on the ground can call upon the entire resources of the SAF and significantly influence the outcome of the battle. As Specialists, you play an integral part in this new SAF and your role will no doubt be demanding and challenging.

As Leaders, you bear the heavy responsibility for the men and women under your charge. They will look to you for leadership, guidance and support. Lead with conviction and lead by example. You must be prepared to do what you expect your men to do. You must achieve the standards that you set for your men and more. Even as you lead, show genuine care and concern. While you train and push them hard, look out for their safety and well being.

Spend time with your soldiers; be their guide, friend and mentor. Talk to them, listen to them and understand their challenges as you help them understand what the SAF expects of them.

You play an important role in helping them understand the importance of a strong defence for Singapore, and build their confidence and belief in themselves and in the mission of the SAF. You are the vital link between the mission and the soldiers. You also play a vital part in building a cohesive society through our citizen soldiers.

As you stand proud and ready on this parade square, known as the Leaders Square, always remember what you have been trained to lead with Pride. I am confident that the Specialist Cadet Course has equipped you with a strong foundation in leadership and combat skills. Ensure that you are technically and tactically proficient. Forge a strong partnership with the officers so that together you can build cohesive fighting units. S.L.A. Marshall, a US war veteran and combat historian, once wrote, "At the most basic level, soldiers fight for their leaders, and they will fight for their comrades."

Strive to be that leader and build great teams. Always strive for mission success, be it in training or operations. And when faced with unfamiliar situations and challenges, overcome adversity with courage, fortitude and fighting spirit.

To all parents and family members who are present here today. Thank you very much for your commitment to the nation and continual support to National Service. Your loved ones have been selected and trained to be leaders in the SAF. With discipline, grit and sacrifices, they have successfully undergone tough and realistic training in Specialist Cadet School. They will now go on to lead soldiers in their units and inspire those under their charge to serve our nation. These are heavy responsibilities. You have reasons to be proud of them. In the process, I am sure they will grow in their leadership and learn important life skills. We are deeply appreciative that you have stood firmly behind them and will continue to support them as they discharge their duties.

In closing, let me congratulate each and every one of you on having done yourselves, your families and our nation proud. The rank that you are about to don is an affirmation of the nation's trust and confidence in you. Perform your duties to the best of your abilities and live up to the Specialists' creed of excellence, leadership by example and dedication to Singapore. I wish you the very best as Specialists of the SAF. Thank you and With Pride We Lead!