



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Speech by Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, at the 5/13 Senior Military Expert Appointment Ceremony**

04 Jul 2013

Chief of Navy,  
Men and women of the SAF,  
Family and friends,  
A very good evening.

Today is truly a proud moment for all present. Let me first congratulate all the 50 graduates for arriving at this important milestone in becoming Senior Military Experts. Each of you has taken your own path through this journey of learning and growth, and I am sure that your tough and enriching experiences have provided you with the leadership and professional knowledge in your respective domain areas. Your achievements also reflect the dedication of the instructors and trainers from the various training institutes, who have worked tirelessly to share and impart their knowledge to you. I will also like to recognise the steadfast support provided by your families throughout this journey. Shall we put our hands together to thank the families? Ultimately, they are the reasons why we serve in the SAF - to protect our country and our loved ones. Thank you for your support.

In 2010, we launched the Military Domain Experts Scheme, or MDES in short. At the same time, we also introduced the Enhanced Officers Scheme and the Enhanced Warrant Officers Scheme. It is the partnership of the Officers, Military Experts and Warrant Officers that will ensure mission success for the SAF in an increasingly complex and technologically advanced environment. All SAF leaders - Officers, Military Experts and Warrant Officers - must work together as a team, each contributing their areas of specialisation to effectively achieve the mission.

As Senior Military Experts, your key strength lies in anchoring the deep domain expertise in the SAF, in areas such as engineering, intelligence and military medicine. MDES is designed for this, through a nurturing framework that provides multiple avenues to help every individual realise their potential at their own pace. I understand that of the 50 graduates today, we have a very good mix of people. Some have risen through the ranks, some have pursued further education while in service, while others have joined us after completing university education. Despite the different background, what is common is that all of you have gone through tough leadership training, and have excelled in your own respect.

For example, ME4 Ng Hai Soon from the Army will become the first Senior Military Expert to assume the appointment of Deputy Depot Commander, serving as a key anchor in the 61 Forward Maintenance Depot. Hai Soon's appointment is recognition of his leadership qualities and deep domain expertise acquired as he rose through the ranks.

We also have ME4 Johin Tan from the RSAF, who took up the SAF CLASS degree scholarship in 2011 to further his studies in Electrical and Electronics Engineering at Nanyang Technological University (NTU). Johin shared, "13 weeks in Officer Cadet School and 21 weeks in Air Engineering Training Institute have certainly transformed me into a better person, with greater mental resilience, who can now stand more confidently in front of my men." And there is ME4 Alex Lim from the RSN, who will assume the appointment of Combat Systems Engineer on board one of our Navy's missile corvettes. Alex attained his engineering degree through part-time studies. He had to balance work, family and studies over the last few years, and yet continue to perform and serve the Navy well during that period.

While MDES places a premium on skills, expertise and knowledge, you must also focus on your leadership as Senior Military Experts. You have to lead by example and be a good role model. You will be watched by many others - your staff will look up to you for guidance, your superior will look at you with new expectations, your peers will look at what value you bring to the team, and the public will look at you and how you represent the SAF. I will like to highlight two key leadership roles here, engaging the people, and inculcating the SAF core values.

Engagement has to be done on two fronts - internal and external. As leaders, you have to engage your people to understand their needs and aspirations. This will then allow you to develop them to their fullest potential and lead them well in accomplishing your missions. At the same time, you have to engage our external stakeholders to build greater public awareness and confidence in the SAF, enhance support for National Service, and strengthen commitment to defence.

You will have heard recently that MINDEF has convened a Committee to Strengthen National Service to look into ways to better allow NSmen to maximise their contributions and abilities to serve NS, and to look into ways to promote the recognition and appreciation of NSmen's contributions. As leaders on the ground, you must take time to explain to your soldiers the background and purpose of such engagement processes like the CSNS. You can encourage your servicemen to participate in public conversations on NS by giving feedback and share their views and personal NS experiences on public platforms, including the Strengthen NS website and participating in the Focus Group Discussions and Townhall sessions, or through existing internal channels. While we have institutionalized NS for the past 45 years, we must acknowledge that we must ensure that this institution remains relevant and is appreciated by each NS generation. As commanders and leaders, you must also be close to the ground and connect with your younger generation of NSFs and NSmen and help ensure that their NS experience continue to be meaningful and fulfilling, thereby deepening their commitment to NS and to our defence. You may need to acquire new skills sets in communicating and connecting with this younger generation. As leaders of the Military Expert Corps, it is also your responsibility to inculcate the SAF core values and build a culture of excellence. The SAF Core Values were formally introduced in 1996 with the purpose of providing an anchor for the actions and decisions of our people. For example, "Professionalism" guides our soldiers to be clear of their roles and responsibilities, and to discharge them judiciously to achieve the highest standards of excellence. "Care for Soldiers", another value, embodies genuine care and concern for the well-being of our soldiers and includes ensuring safety, providing proper rations and equipment, tough training and supporting the physical, emotional, mental fitness and health of our servicemen. It includes the willingness to also engage and communicate more openly with your soldiers, to receive and process feedback effectively.

This year, the SAF has added Safety as a core value. As an integral part of operations and training, safety has always been embedded within the SAF. The inclusion of "Safety" as an SAF Core Value reflects the organisation's commitment to safety. It raises the prominence of safety in every serviceman's consciousness and serves to shape the behaviour of every soldier towards safety. As leaders of the Military Experts, you must demonstrate command responsibility and commitment to the safety of your troops by ensuring that safety systems and processes are in place. Strengthen the safety culture of your units, and actively manage risks and enforce safety during execution of mission and training.

To all the graduates today, it gives me great pleasure to appoint you as Senior Military Experts. As you put on your ME4 rank from today onwards, I will like you to firstly, remember your role as part of the SAF leadership team in partnership with the Officer

and Warrant Officer Corps; secondly, remember to anchor deep domain expertise in the SAF and continue to learn, innovate and deepen your expertise in your respective domains and finally, remember your leadership role as a Senior Military Expert in engaging the people, and inculcating the SAF core values.

I am confident that you will discharge your duties professionally and with the highest standards. I wish you all the very best as you embark on your journey as Senior Military Experts of the SAF. Congratulations. Thank you.

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