



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Speech by Minister of State for Defence Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman at the 8th SAF Senior Military Expert Appointment Ceremony**

28 Nov 2014

Chief of Defence Force,  
Chief of Navy,  
Senior Military Experts,  
Graduands of the 8th SAF Senior Military Experts Course,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Good evening.

First of all, my heartiest congratulations on your appointments as Senior Military Experts in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). Your appointment today is a milestone in your journey as leaders. As Senior Military Experts, you are a critical pillar in the SAF leadership corps comprising the Officer Corps, the Warrant Officer Corps and the Military Expert Corps. As Senior Military Experts, the SAF looks to you to exercise leadership in technical expertise and innovation. Bear in mind, however, that you are more than a technical expert. You are first and foremost a leader in the SAF and we will count on you as leaders to scale new heights, provide deeper insights and inspire the men and women under your charge to do their best. Lead with integrity and conviction, motivate with passion and commitment and strive to build a resilient SAF that is well-placed to confront all challenges and uncertainties. Build up the relationships with the Officer and the Warrant Officer Corps, and leverage on one another's strengths to force multiply for the SAF.

The Military Experts Corps anchor important capabilities within the SAF. Your specialised knowledge and deep expertise in the areas such as engineering, intelligence and cyber are more valuable than before in today's security environment, as we see increasingly transnational and complex challenges such as natural disasters, cyber attacks

and terrorism. These are complex security threats that no country can alone solve, and our people must be well-trained and adept at working with other militaries and agencies around the world in tackling common challenges that affect all of us.

The violence and extremism occurring now in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is one such challenge. An estimated ten to twenty thousand foreigners are reported to be in Iraq and Syria, many of whom have joined the radical group. Some of them come from our region and have even formed militant groups back in their countries, posing immediate dangers to Singapore and Singapore's security. As Minister for Defence mentioned in Parliament earlier this month, MINDEF and the SAF have decided to contribute to the multinational effort to counter the threat from ISIS and to protect Singaporeans from the scourge of terrorism.

The SAF will offer contributions within our means that are sustainable and useful to the efforts to combat ISIS, which include sending liaison and planning officers, air-to-air refuelling support and an Imagery Analyst Team. These assets have proved effective in our previous deployments in Afghanistan and were appreciated by our international partners. The Military Experts in the Imagery Analyst Team performed well in Afghanistan and served with distinction to bring success to the SAF's operations. When the time comes for our Military Experts to be deployed again in the coming months, I am confident that they will rise to the occasion once more and do the SAF and Singapore proud.

As the challenges facing us grow more complex and sophisticated, we will need a constant flow of new and better ideas so that the SAF is always ready for its next mission. We will look to you, as Military Experts, for the innovative solutions that will provide the SAF with the leading edge and enable us to pre-empt tomorrow's challenges so the SAF can stay ahead of the curve. As Senior Military Experts, your leadership must enable your community to innovate more effectively, and deliver expert solutions that make the SAF more potent and effective. This requires you to sharpen not just your technical expertise, but also your operational instincts to better understand the SAF's needs and challenges for mission success, some of which we may not have even trained for today.

I am confident that you are ready for the responsibilities entrusted to the Senior Military Expert Corps. The Senior Military Expert Corps benefits from the diverse experiences, strengths and expertise that each individual brings. Some of you here are "veterans", Military Experts who took the path less travelled. They joined the SAF fresh after their polytechnic studies, worked up the ranks, and proved their competencies in operations. Military Expert (ME) 4 Kelvin Lim, from this cohort is one such veteran. With two tours in Operation Blue Orchid - our Peace Support Operations in the Arabian Sea under his belt, Kelvin went on to graduate with a good 2nd Class Honours degree under a SAF sponsorship scheme. It is this combination of operational experience, professional

expertise and education that will enable our Senior Military Expert to work effectively with both the Officer Corps and Warrant Officer Corps for mission success.

In the Military Expert Corps, there are also professionals from the private sector who chose the path of a Senior Military Expert. ME4 Ong Wan Ying is one such professional. She worked in the aerospace industry before her decision to serve in the RSAF as an Air Force Engineer. In the RSAF, Wan Ying is responsible for the RSAF's tanker aircraft which has participated actively in SAF operations in multiple roles - which ranges from air-to-air refueling in support of Peace Support Operations during Operation Blue Orchid to humanitarian missions. It is a heavy responsibility which will challenge ME4 Ong to bring out the best of her professional expertise; and, beyond the limits of her experience in the aerospace industry. Before I conclude, I must also thank the family members for your support. Without your unstinting support, the men and women of the SAF would not be able to achieve what they have today - not just for themselves and families - but also for our country, for all these years. I am sure to the graduands today, you are their pillars of strength and the source of their inspiration. Their success today is indeed your success. Can we give the family members a big round of applause. My heartiest congratulations to the family members.

To all the graduands here today, each and every one of you can be proud of what you have achieved in the rigorous and demanding course. You exemplify the "can do" spirit that is critical to success. Your success is an inspiration to many around you. I call upon the newly appointed Senior Military Experts to discharge your duties professionally and with the highest standards. I wish you all the best as you embark on your new leadership journey in the SAF. Congratulations and thank you.

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