



SPEECH

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Speech by Minister Of State For Health, Dr Lam Pin Min, at the 25/15 Specialist Cadet Course Graduation Parade

17 Dec 2015

Graduands of the 25/2015 Specialist Cadet Course,

Parents,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good evening to all of you,

To the graduands on parade, congratulations on successfully completing the Specialist Cadet Course. You have demonstrated commendable perseverance and fighting spirit in enduring 22 weeks of rigorous training. This parade marks the end of a key phase of your training but more importantly, it signifies a new beginning of your service to the nation as a Specialist of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). As Specialists, you are not just Warfighters, but also Trainers and Leaders. You are entrusted with the heavy responsibility of leading men and women into battle when called upon, to protect your family, your loved ones, and the nation.

2015 has been an important year for the SAF to come together to celebrate our pioneers, who built a strong military from scratch, over just 50 years. The task was never easy or straightforward, but our pioneers recognised that a small country like Singapore needs a strong defence, and they dedicated themselves to building up a capable, modern SAF. This strong defence underpins the peace and prosperity that we enjoy now

today.

However, the world that we live in has become more complex and unpredictable. As a small nation in a hyper-connected world, we must not forget that we can be easily affected by any turmoil that takes place in the world. Non-conventional threats such as piracy, terrorism, natural disasters and pandemics traverse national boundaries. Even as Singapore has maintained our peace and security, incidents around the world are stark reminders that we must always remain vigilant. Slightly more than a month ago, multiple terror attacks in Paris left 130 people dead and 200 people injured. A week later, there was another terrorist attack in Mali, which left 21 people dead. Just this month, 14 lives were lost in a shooting rampage in Southern California. The threat of extremism continues to be a real and present one. As soldiers and even more so as Singaporeans, it is important that our social and psychological defence remains strong, in order to withstand and recover from any threats which may arise.

We have never allowed ourselves to rest on our laurels. The SAF has continuously enhanced its capabilities by leveraging on new technologies, weaponry and platforms. Today, the SAF is a modern and networked force, and stands ready and capable of conducting a wide spectrum of operations. To date, the SAF has mounted more than 20 humanitarian aid and relief operations, bringing assistance to those who are struck by disaster. The SAF has also participated in more than 30 overseas missions, including international counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. Through these operations, others have recognised the abilities and professionalism of the SAF.

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Even as the SAF has given strength to this nation by responding effectively when called upon, the ultimate strength of the SAF lies in the unity and resolve of our people. It is with this in mind that MINDEF/SAF has rolled out initiatives put forth by the Committee to Strengthen National Service (CSNS) since June last year to ensure that National Service (NS) remains relevant and responsive to a new generation who will defend Singapore. Your role as Specialists and leaders in the SAF is a critical one as we count on you to help the men and women under your charge understand and internalise the importance of a strong defence.

Indeed, we are depending on you to write the future chapters of the SAF. As you assume greater responsibilities in your new units, you will be shaping the NS experience of the men under your charge, not just during the two years of active service but in the subsequent ten years of NS. This will not be an easy feat as your soldiers will

come from diverse backgrounds, each with their own beliefs, expectations and challenges. Train your soldiers well and train them hard. Be prepared to show them the way, and help them achieve the standards that you set for them. But always remember to lead by example and with conviction, and engage them sincerely. Be their friend, their guide and their mentor.

I would also like to acknowledge your parents and loved ones who have stood beside you throughout this journey. To the parents, family and friends, your strong support is critical in motivating our servicemen to give their best for the defence and security of Singapore.

Graduands, today's Graduation Parade represents a significant milestone in your journey in NS and the SAF. Generations before you have done their duty to keep Singapore safe and secure. It is now your turn to step up to take on the responsibility of defending our home. I am confident that the Specialist Cadet Course has equipped you with a strong foundation of leadership and combat skills. The rank that you are about to wear is an affirmation of the nation's trust and confidence in you. I welcome all of you as Specialists of the Singapore Armed Forces, and wish you all the best as you serve our country to the best of your abilities. Singapore will depend on you to keep our country safe, secure, and strong for the years ahead.

WITH PRIDE WE LEAD

News Release: National Archives of Singapore

- 1,126 Graduate as SAF Specialists (MINDEF_20151217001.pdf)