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Chief of Defence Force Conferred the "Legion of Merit" by the United States

28 Jan 1997

The Chief of Defence Force, Lieutenant-General (LT-GEN) Bey Soo Kiang has been conferred the "Legion of Merit" (Degree of Commander) by the United States. The "Legion of Merit" is awarded to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States or of a friendly foreign nation who has distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements. The award was conferred by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General (GEN) Shalikashvili at an honour ceremony today, 28 Jan 97, at Whipple Field, Fort Myer.

LT-GEN Bey is on a 13-day official visit to the United States from 19 to 31 Jan 97, at the invitation of GEN Shalikashvili. LT-GEN Bey had earlier called on GEN Shalikashvili; the Under Secretary of Defence for Policy, Mr Walter Slocombe; the Secretary of the Navy, Mr John Dalton, and other key defence officials at the Pentagon, and met the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command, Admiral Joseph Prueher at the US Pacific Command (PACOM) in Hawaii. LT-GEN Bey also visited the Luke Air Force Base in Arizona where the RSAF has a F-16 fighter detachment on training. He will also be visiting the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) Chinook helicopter training detachment at Grand Prairie, Texas.

Defence relations between the United States and Singapore are strong and enduring. There are extensive defence cooperation and interactions. Singapore allows US forces the use of its military facilities, and a US logistics coordinating unit, COMLOG WESTPAC, which serves US forces deployed in the Asia Pacific, is located in Singapore. US Air Force aircraft and US Navy ships regularly call at Singapore. Besides the RSAF fighter and helicopter training in Texas and Arizona, the armed forces of the two countries participate in a wide range of bilateral military exercises, cross attachments and exchanges. The SAF and PACOM hold regular talks to explore ways to improve and expand military interactions.

Besides LT-GEN Bey, other Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) recipients of the award were former Chief of Defence Force, LT-GEN (Retired) Winston Choo in 1978 and 1988, former

Chief of Air Force, Brigadier General (NS) Michael Teo in 1991, and then Chief of Navy, Rear Admiral (NS) Kwek Siew Jin in 1993.

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