



SPEECH

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Remarks by Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, at the Joint Press Conference with New Zealand Defence Minister Max Bradford at the Waiouru Training Area After Observing the SAF's Artillery Live-Firing

22 Jan 1998

I am very pleased to be here in New Zealand. This is my first visit to New Zealand in my capacity as Defence Minister. I would like to thank Defence Minister Max Bradford for hosting this visit.

Singapore is very grateful to the New Zealand Government, the New Zealand Ministry of Defence and the New Zealand Defence Force for making available to the Singapore Armed Forces training areas in New Zealand such as the Waiouru Training Area. Such training areas are valuable to us as Singapore is a small country with limited space for training. Besides artillery training which is currently being conducted, the SAF also carries out commando and RPV training in New Zealand. Such training is important in contributing to the operational readiness of the SAF.

I am very pleased with the efforts of both defence establishments to enhance defence interactions and cooperation. Since the Defence Coordinating Group was set up in 1995, the SAF has not only begun training in New Zealand, but has also initiated new bilateral activities with the NZDF, in areas such as Maritime Patrol, commando operations and naval exercises. These interactions are professionally beneficial to both the SAF and the NZDF.

I am confident that the ties of friendship and cooperation between Singapore and New Zealand will grow even stronger and deeper in the years ahead. This is not only good for the two countries, but these ties will contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

Transcript Of Remarks By New Zealand Defence Minister, Mr Max Bradford, At The Joint Press Conference With Deputy Prime Minister And Minister For Defence, Dr

Tony Tan Keng Yam, At The Waiouru Training Area After Observing The SAF's Artillery Live-Firing

Can I say how delighted we are to have the presence of such a senior Singaporean politician in New Zealand and such a significant representative of your government. Today's exercise, of course, is being spectacularly successful and I would like to compliment your Singapore Armed Forces and indeed our Kiwi contingent, who is here today to help make sure the exercise goes well. What we have seen, I think, is a remarkable relationship that goes back over 20 years now.

New Zealand has had a presence in Singapore with the full support of the Singapore government. We look forward to that continuation in the future. New Zealand, of course, is part of Asia now. It always has been, mind you. But we recognise the importance of the region to us and we hope that we can play an important role in the region. We are particularly committed to the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA) which I know is important to Singapore and a number of other countries in the region. And you have our solemn commitment to the success of that arrangement now and in the future. And exercises, such as you have seen today and over the coming months and years, would be an expression of that arrangement we have been practicing.

So I look forward and the New Zealand government looks forward to the continuation of our relationship and to a deepening of the commitment that we have towards each other's security in the region. As you concluded in your remarks, unless we have peace and security in our region, for which each of us have to make a commitment, then we can expect economic security to continue, for the standard of living of our respective people, and for the security that we all deserve.... We are very delighted to have you and your team here to strengthen this relationship.

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