



# SPEECH

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## **Speech by Minister for Defence, RADM (NS) Teo Chee Hean, Inauguration of Changi Air Base (East)**

29 Nov 2004

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to be here today to inaugurate Changi Air Base (East). This is indeed a milestone event in the history of the Republic of Singapore Air Force.

When our Air Force was set up in 1968 - as the Singapore Air Defence Command - it built upon existing air base facilities inherited from the British. The facilities, at Tengah, Paya Lebar, Sembawang and here at Changi, met needs of our first generation air force in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Over the last two decades, over the second generation of the SAF's development, we continued with regular investments to upgrade these air bases to meet our operational requirements.

Changi Air Base (East) is a unique development. It is the first RSAF air base facility which we ourselves entirely designed and developed. This is the fruit of close collaboration among our Defence Science and Technology Agency, the RSAF and the local construction industry. This indigenous development allowed the RSAF to define the design to fully meet its requirements well into the third generation of the RSAF's development.

Changi Air Base (East) enhances the RSAF's operational capability and readiness, for it provides greater operational flexibility and more deployment options for the RSAF's fighter assets. Changi Air Base (East) enhances the RSAF's ability to launch and recover its air assets under adverse conditions, as well as to mitigate our airspace constraints. 145 Squadron, which operates our top-end F-16D Blk 52+, will be based here.

It is most satisfying for me to see the rapid progress we have made in the development of Changi Air Base (East). When this project was approved in 1996, this land did not exist. The

entire facility was built within two years of the ground-breaking after the land was reclaimed. This testifies to the professionalism and dedication of the various agencies involved in this project. I wish to record my appreciation to all the agencies and people involved for accomplishing this mission so professionally and in such good time.

The squadrons being inaugurated today will now have the responsibility to fully operationalise the Base, and optimize it for the defence of our airspace and Singapore. I wish you all the best in this mission.

It is now my pleasure to declare Changi Air Base (East) open.

New Release:

- RADM (NS) Teo Chee Hean Opens Changi Air Base (East) (Document No:20041129001.pdf)

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