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Dr Ng Visits PLAN North Sea Fleet

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Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen visited the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) North Sea Fleet (NSF) in Qingdao earlier today. Dr Ng was briefed by Chief of Staff, PLAN NSF Rear Admiral (RADM) Wei Gang, and viewed the PLAN Type-056 Jiangdao-class corvette Fushun, which allowed him to gain a better appreciation of the PLAN's development and modernisation plans.

Dr Ng's visit to the PLAN NSF underscores the warm and friendly ties between the PLA and the SAF. Commenting on the visit, Dr Ng said, "It reflects mutual confidence...We

are a very small navy, and they know that we are China's good friend and bilateral relations from the defence point of view are very strong... We treasure each other's confidence in each other, and we will continue to find ways to step up that defence relationship."

Both navies interact regularly through port calls, bilateral exercises, multilateral events, and international deployments such as counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden (GoA). For instance, in Apr 2014, the RSN's Formidable-class frigate, RSS Formidable, participated in the Multilateral Maritime Exercise (MME) in Qingdao. Then-Chief of Navy RADM Ng Chee Peng also attended the 14th Western Pacific Naval Symposium, where the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) was adopted. Such interactions have allowed both navies to enhance mutual understanding and friendship, as well as enhance cooperation in international issues of mutual concern, to maintain regional peace and stability.

Dr Ng was also hosted to an official dinner by Commander of Qingdao Garrison Senior Colonel Wang Chunjie tonight. Furthermore, as part of his official visit to China, Dr Ng had the opportunity over the past two days to visit other historical sites in Nanchang and Nanjing, which showcased the rich history and cultural heritage of China and the PLA. Dr Ng will visit Beijing tomorrow and deliver a speech at the PLA National Defense University on the Asian Century on 13 November 2014.





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