



# SPEECH

Visit <http://www.mindef.gov.sg> for more news and information about MINDEF and the SAF

---

## **Speech By Second Minister For Defence Mr Lui Tuck Yew at the Total Defence Awards Gala Dinner**

10 Jul 2015

2nd Minister for Home Affairs and Foreign Affairs, Mr Masagos Zulkifli,

Minister of State for Defence and National Development, Dr Maliki,

Permanent Secretaries, CDF, Commissioner of SCDF,

Co-Chairmen of ACCORD Councils Mr Tony Chew and Ms Claire Chiang, Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

A very good evening to all of you.

## National Archives of Singapore

Let me first start off by congratulating and thanking all 122 award recipients, as well as your families and supporters, for all your efforts in supporting Total Defence and National Service (NS). This evening, I am especially delighted to welcome our friends from the Ministry of Home Affairs to our very first combined Total Defence Awards have also widened the NS recognition framework to include individuals, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), as well as organisations in the education and community sectors, to honour the wide range of individuals and organisations that have contributed to Total Defence and NS.

This year, we celebrate our nation's 50th year of independence, which is also a year when we celebrate 50 years of the SAF's formation. Our founding fathers recognised the importance of a strong defence for Singapore's survival. They prioritised the build up of the SAF from the very start. And today, a strong and credible SAF and Home Team give strength to our nation by providing Singaporeans a safe and secure environment to live our way of life, and the confidence to shape our own future in the face of increasingly complex security threats.

The tasks of defending Singapore are not vested solely in the uniformed services, although our servicemen and women are our front line against threats. Strong support for NS from the entire population is also critical. The concept of Total Defence counts on all of us being united as one people, resilient and willing to take difficult, but necessary, measures to overcome adversity and threats.

The Advisory Council on Community Relations in Defence or ACCORD was point, I would like to extend my gratitude to Mr Tony Chew, Ms Claire Chiang, Ms Indranee Rajah as well as all the other Council members for your personal involvement and contributions to ACCORD. The amount of time you have committed, the enthusiasm that you bring, your insights, your ideas and perspectives to strengthen support from various stakeholder groups are greatly valued.

There have been many ground-up proposals put forward since ACCORD's restructuring. One of the proposals put up by the ACCORD Family and Community Council was to step up efforts in engaging women. The first engagement session, organised by People's Association Women Integration Network Council (WIN Council), was held two months ago in May, where mothers, wives and young women came together and shared how they had supported their sons, their husbands, their brothers, their boyfriends through NS. We received very positive feedback that the session had enhanced their understanding of the NS experience, and they plan to hold more of these engagement sessions.

Equally important are businesses and employers which play a key role in supporting Total Defence and NS. Civil Resource owners help provide essential resources and services to support the SAF and Homefront operations in times of emergency. Perform during ICT to remain operationally sharp. And in turn, a strong defence and credible security force ensures a stable environment for businesses to grow and flourish. MINDEF and the SAF, in collaboration with the ACCORD Employer & Business Council and the many trade associations and chambers, will thus be organising a seminar for Human Resource (HR) practitioners next year. This seminar aims to reach out to even more employers to raise their awareness and understanding of the latest NS policies in order for them to better support their NSmen.

So it is gratifying to see that the many employers present tonight have gone the extra mile to support the commitments of their NSmen. This is the spirit that we wish to celebrate and honour - companies, organisations and individuals who have supported NS and contributed not because they are obligated to, but because they believe deeply that it is the right thing to do.

We see among us tonight, SMEs - and I interacted with a number of you outside - which despite their manpower constraints, try to provide the same level of support to their NSmen as larger organisations. Take Mr Victor Foo for example. He is the CEO of Digistore Solutions, one of this year's award recipients in the SME category. His company rewards NSmen who have completed their ICT in the form of paid extra mile by providing daily transport to the NSmen's immediate family members to and from work and to school, when the NSmen are serving their ICT. For employees who pass their IPPT, he even grants incentives such as high-tea vouchers or movie tickets for the entire family of the NSmen. And so Mr Foo, we thank you for being a very good role model for all our SMEs.

But most of all, we know that the everyday actions of individuals can make a huge difference in helping our NSmen fulfil their commitments. Mdm Nur Aini - I think she's seated right here at the main table - is an award recipient in the individual category, and she is a wonderful example for all of us. She has always encouraged her husband DSP(NS) Mulyadi Ahmad to fulfil his NS responsibilities, even if it meant that she sometimes had to shoulder greater responsibilities in the family, especially after the birth of their fourth child who I understand is now three years old. She is a mother with four children, so she does National Service of her own, of a different form. And if I may say so, I'm happy to share the good news that she told me earlier this evening, that she is expecting a fifth child. Back in 2013, when DSP Mulyadi was offered the appointment of NS Deputy Commander in the Airport Police Division, he initially hesitated to take up the appointment because of family commitments. But Mdm Nur Aini strongly encouraged him to accept it. And she said, "If you are the one selected and if your service is needed by the nation, you should take up the contributing to the nation." And so Mdm Nur Aini, thank you for your unwavering support for NS.

I know there are so many more stories from individuals, from employers, from friends, from loved ones, and it is all these collective support that really allows the NSmen to give of their very best. And so when I was in the Navy and now that I am back in MINDEF, on every occasion like this, my message to you is: whether you are a Regular, whether you are an NSman, of whatever kind you may be, go back and let your family members know that really, we in MINDEF, we in the Home Team fully appreciate all the support that they give to you. It is because of this support that you are able to do more than necessary, more than sometimes is required of you, and it gives you the peace of mind to serve to the very best of your abilities.

So let me conclude by congratulating all award recipients again. As we celebrate SG50 this year, let us not forget that Total Defence is the cornerstone of Singapore's success. And we need the strong support of every Singaporean to uphold Total Defence and NS for our nation's continued progress, peace and prosperity. Let us continue to build on our successes today to ensure a brighter and more secure future for all Singaporeans tomorrow.

So thank you and I wish you all a very pleasant evening ahead.

**News Release:** National Archives of Singapore

- Wider Range of Stakeholders Honoured for Supporting Total Defence (MINDEF\_20150710001.pdf)