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US Chief of Naval Operations Receives Prestigious Military Award for Enhancing Strong Navy-to-Navy Ties

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The United States' Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral (ADM) John M. Richardson, was conferred Singapore's prestigious military award, the Pingat Jasa Gemilang (Tentera) [or the Meritorious Service Medal (Military)] by President Tony Tan. Minister for Defence Dr Ng

Eng Hen presented the award to ADM Richardson at an investiture held at Changi Naval Base this morning.

ADM Richardson was conferred the award for his contributions in enhancing the long-standing and excellent bilateral ties between the United States Navy (USN) and the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN). Under his leadership, navy-to-navy cooperation and exchanges between the United States and Singapore have advanced significantly. Both navies have maintained a steady tempo of training and exercises, such as the first RSN-USN-Royal Thai Navy multilateral Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise conducted earlier this month. The RSN has also been a regular participant in the US-led multinational Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises.

Under the direction of ADM Richardson, the USN has stepped up efforts in non-traditional security areas in the region. The USN participated in the counter-proliferation exercise, Deep Sabre, in 2016, and also advanced cooperation in response to piracy and maritime terrorism threats through the conduct of the annual maritime information-sharing Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training (SEACAT) exercise and the deployment of international liaison officers to the RSN's Information Fusion Centre. Under ADM Richardson's charge, the USN also worked with the RSN towards enhancing regional submarine operational safety, which will help to prevent incidents at sea. The extensive interactions have raised the professionalism of both navies, strengthened their interoperability, and forged stronger rapport and camaraderie between their personnel.

Following the award ceremony, ADM Richardson said, "It is an honour for me to accept this award on behalf of all US Navy sailors who have had the privilege of visiting Singapore or working with the Republic of Singapore Navy. The United States shares a special bond with Singapore, rooted in common values, common goals, and close personal relationships. I am grateful for our unique relationship, which includes hospitality provided to our sailors and families who live in Singapore, and support of our P-8 aircraft and Littoral Combat Ships that are on rotational deployment here. On a personal level, this is a special honour for me given the friendship I have developed with Rear-Admiral Lai. His strong and insightful leadership has been pivotal to the regional success of our two navies."

ADM Richardson will also call on Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant-General (LG) Perry Lim and Chief of Navy Rear-Admiral (RADM) Lai Chung Han. ADM Richardson is in

Singapore from 14 to 16 May for the International Maritime Review and the International Maritime Defence Exhibition & Conference Asia. He will also be speaking on a panel titled, "Pursuing Common Maritime Objectives", at the 5th International Maritime Security Conference tomorrow.

