

**Press Information Bureau
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**Joint statement by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Defence of the Republic of India and Dr Ng Eng Hen,
Minister for Defence of the Republic of Singapore**

The 2nd Defence Ministers' Dialogue between India and Singapore was successfully concluded today. It was inaugurated after both countries signed the revised Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) in 2015 to further strengthen the longstanding defence relationship between the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) and the Indian Armed Forces.

Of particular significance during this meeting was the conclusion of the India-Singapore Bilateral Agreement for Navy Cooperation, which will lead to increased cooperation in maritime security, joint exercises, temporary deployments from each other's naval facilities and mutual logistics support. Both Ministers looked forward to the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise next year.

Dr Ng expressed his appreciation for India's continued support for the SAF's training in India, covered by the Air Force and Army Bilateral Agreements. Both Ministers welcomed the renewal of the Air Force Bilateral Agreement on the sidelines of the 11th Singapore-India Defence Policy Dialogue in January this year, and looked forward to the successful renewal of the Army Bilateral Agreement next year.

On regional security, both Ministers reaffirmed the importance of maintaining maritime freedom of navigation and trade consistent with international law. India plays a vital role in the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus. Both Ministers also discussed Singapore's proposal to expand the Code of Unplanned Encounters at Sea to all ADMM-Plus countries as well as to establish guidelines for air encounters between military aircraft, in order to reduce the risk of miscalculations.

Appreciating India's leading role in the Indian Ocean Region, Dr Ng agreed to India's proposal for continuous and institutionalised naval engagements in their shared maritime space, including establishing maritime exercises with like-minded regional/ ASEAN partners.

Both Ministers emphasised the importance of international cooperation in tackling transnational security threats, and in particular measures to collectively tackle the threat of terrorism.

Both Ministers also commended the progress made since the India-Singapore Defence Technology Steering Committee was set up in October 2006 to launch joint research projects. Dr Ng expressed his appreciation for India's offer of its test ranges and infrastructure to Singapore for the conduct of testing and evaluation for R&D projects.

Singapore and India have also made progress in defence industry cooperation, with the signing of the terms of reference for the Defence Industry Working Group (DIWG) in August this year. Both Ministers agreed that this would facilitate greater collaboration in aerospace, electronics and other areas of mutual interest between the defence industries of both countries.

Dr Ng expressed his appreciation for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's acceptance as keynote speaker for the 2018 Shangri-La Dialogue to articulate India's vision for a stable Indo-Pacific region.

MJPS/NA/DK/RP