

Editorial

The past year for *POINTER* has indeed been exciting. We have presented a wide range of subjects covering the growth and development of the SAF into a Third Generation fighting force with an emphasis on being adaptive, innovative and constantly reinventing itself, to contemporary threats such as global terrorism and insurgency faced by many countries. We were also proud to have published essays from our inaugural Goh Keng Swee Command and Staff College (GKSC) Seminar 2011. Held in collaboration with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) and the SAF-NTU Academy (SNA), the seminar was entitled "Operations Other Than War in a Coalition Environment: Opportunities and Challenges for Modern Armed Forces."

In this issue of *POINTER*, we have lined up five feature articles covering a perspective of maritime power in World War II to a discourse on Non-Offensive Defense as a strategy for National Security.

There are three articles examining the maritime domain. The first, "The Utility of Seapower: The Battle of the Atlantic and the Second World War" by LTC He Ruimin, examines how much the Allied success in keeping the Atlantic Ocean's Lines of Communications (LOC) open against the Germans was instrumental to their victory in Europe. The next article, "The Role of the Merchant Vessel in Combating Piracy" by CDRE Patrick Tyrell examines the important role merchant vessels play in defending themselves against contemporary piracy threats. In this article, CDRE Tyrell focuses on how a well-trained crew, defensive equipment like high pressure water cannons and lasers

and the use of good intelligence and effective sensors can be efficient and effective means to defend against piratical attacks. The third article, "Realizing the Global Maritime Partnership: Strategies for Enhancing Cooperation within the Asia Pacific Region" by LTC Joshua Toh analyses how the Global Maritime Partnership (GMP) can be used to provide a secure maritime environment for all nations in the changing regional security landscape, in the midst of various challenges like piracy, maritime terrorism and national disasters.

In this issue, we are also covering the role of unmanned technology in military operations today. The article, "Unmanned Technology – The Holy Grail for Militaries?" by ME5 Calvin Seah Ser Thong, sheds light on the importance of the use of unmanned vehicles on land, air and sea. At the same time, ME5 Seah warns of the dangers of an overemphasis on unmanned technology at the expense of the human factor. He points out that it is crucial to strike a balance so as to get the best from both. While the use of unmanned systems has undoubtedly brought about many benefits, ME5 Seah emphasises that the human aspect is THE most important element in this equation. Ultimately, it is not the machine but the human spirit that will be the deciding factor in any battlefield.

The fifth article, entitled "The Viability of Non-Offensive Defense as a Strategy for National Defense" is by MAJ Teo Key Leng Derek. In this article, MAJ Teo explores how non-offensive defense can be a viable strategy for national security, if conditions permit. He defines non-offensive defense as "one that provides a

state with a means to defend itself without threatening another state." He examines some key considerations for security strategy and discusses three countries which practice viable non-offensive defense strategies: Switzerland, Norway and New Zealand.

In this issue's Tech Edge article, "Technology and the F-2 Fighter: How the Japanese Defense Industry Defied the Odds," ME5 Jenny Lu examines the characteristics of the Japanese defense industry. ME5 Lu discusses how Japan has made use of foreign technology transfer to grow its indigenous defense industry. She explains that "technology transfer takes place when systematic, rational knowledge developed by one group or institution is incorporated into the processes of other groups of institutions." According to ME5 Lu, it is through collaboration with the United States (US) and the resultant technology transfers from US to Japan that has enabled the Japanese defense industry to expand at an increased rate. Through such technology transfers, Japan has produced advanced platforms such as the FS-X/F-2 fighter, the Aegis-equipped destroyer and the four Mitsubishi intelligence-gathering satellites.

As a viewpoint article, we are featuring "Wikileaks and the New Politics of Diplomacy" by Mushahid Ali and CPT (NS) Benjamin Ho. This article discusses the dangers of information leaks in the diplomatic arena.

We are also pleased to announce that the Chief of Defence Force Essay Competition 2012/2013 is now open for entries. We would like to invite our readers to take part in the competition. Details can be found on the *POINTER* website: <http://www.mindef.gov.sg/safti/pointer>.

Finally, we would like to wish all our readers a Happy New Year and a great 2013 ahead!

The *POINTER* Editorial Team