

Defence Minister Teo says cooperation key in new security landscape

Channel NewsAsia, 4 August 2009

Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister, Teo Chee Hean, said the global financial crisis has accelerated broad strategic shifts in Asia.

Mr Teo, who is also the defence minister, said that in this new security landscape, cooperation is key.

He was speaking at the opening of the Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers on Tuesday.

Mr Teo said: "In a security landscape where there are co-existing elements of cooperation, competition and conflict, it is important that we have a robust regional security architecture that gives everyone a stake in maintaining peace and stability.

"The security architecture must be open and inclusive, so as to provide a platform for the big powers and other countries to work together - through dialogue and mutual trust - to resolve issues of concern.

"In the Asia Pacific, the regional security architecture is still evolving. But multilateral cooperation can slowly be built up, based on the shared interests that states have. One such shared interest is secure sea lanes and freedom of navigation."

Mr Teo cited the Gulf of Aden as an example of multilateral cooperation.

Countries all over the world, including Singapore, have sent ships to protect the waters there, in response to the United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

The SAF Task Group has just returned from its three-month anti-piracy mission. It conducted 80 sorties during its mission and managed to keep its area clear of pirate attacks.