

Foreword

To survive and prosper, Singapore as a small country must be exceptional. To achieve this, we need not only men and women who are exceptional but who are also fully committed to the Singapore cause.

The Foreign Ministry has been able to attract such men and women into its ranks. This collection of essays from a third generation of ambassadors bears testimony to this. Their reflections, thoughtful, insightful and often times heartwarming, are infused with a palpable sense of mission and shared purpose in the service of Singapore. That sense of mission manifests itself in their clear-sighted appreciation, passionate promotion and steadfast defence of our national interest.

Pursuing the national interest is the *raison d'être* of every country's foreign policy and Singapore is no different. Undergirding this is an acute awareness that no strategic or competitive advantage that we enjoy is a permanent advantage. Even as we sign the latest international agreement that expands our external political and economic space, our diplomats are looking at what more needs to be done.

We are perpetual worriers. We take nothing for granted. We are too small to change the world but we can change to stay relevant to the world. This constant restlessness sets Singapore apart from

many countries. It makes us imagine and invent our future beyond the limits of our physical size. Our diplomats embody this spirit.

I believe above all it is this spirit that makes the “Little Red Dot” and its people exceptional.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Raymond Lim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Raymond Lim
Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore
2009