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Date of issue: 13 Dec 2022

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong Officiates the Launch Ceremony of Singapore Navy's Second and Third Submarines

1. Prime Minister (PM) Lee Hsien Loong officiated the launch ceremony of the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN)'s second and third *Invincible*-class submarines, *Impeccable* and *Illustrious*, at thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (tkMS) shipyard in Kiel, Germany on 13 December 2022. The submarines were launched by Mrs Lee Hsien Loong, who, as the spouse of the officiating officer, was the Lady Sponsor. German Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz attended the launch ceremony as an honoured guest, at the invitation of PM Lee. The ceremony was also witnessed by Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Chief of German Navy Vice-Admiral Jan Christian Kaack, RSN's Chief of Navy Rear-Admiral Aaron Beng, CEO tkMS Oliver Burkhard, Chief Executive Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA) Mervyn Tan, and other senior defence officials from both countries.

2. Emphasising the importance of the submarines during his address at the ceremony, PM Lee said, "Singapore is a maritime nation and we are highly reliant on the free and unimpeded movement of goods and materials across the sea for our prosperity and indeed survival. The RSN has the crucial mission of keeping our Sea Lines of Communication Open. Submarines provide the RSN an added capability to fulfil its role." Expressing optimism for the warm and growing defence relations between Singapore and Germany, he added, "Our collaboration on this strategic capability underscores the depth of partnership and trust between our navies and our defence industries. I am confident that the relationship between Germany and Singapore will grow from strength to strength, and I look forward to more meaningful interactions between our militaries.

3. The *Invincible*-class submarines are custom-designed for operations in Singapore's shallow and busy tropical waters, and they possess longer endurance and higher payloads. Following the launch, *Impeccable* and *Illustrious*, will undergo a series of sea trials before delivery to Singapore. The first submarine *Invincible* was launched in 2019, while the fourth submarine *Inimitable*, remains under construction.

4. The launch of the two submarines, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, underpins the resilience and readiness of the SAF, RSN and DSTA. It marks a key milestone in

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the RSN's submarine modernisation journey. The launch is also testament to the warm and growing defence ties between Singapore and Germany, underpinned by the signing of the enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement in 2018. Both countries cooperate and interact widely through high-level visits and dialogues, military exchanges and training, cross-attendance of professional courses, and in areas of mutual interest, such as in defence technology and cyber.

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