

NE Insights

CONFLICTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

22 Aug 2025

INTRODUCTION

**What's happening
in the Middle East?**

Tensions in the Middle East have persisted since the attacks between Israel and Hamas in October 2023.

Hostilities between Israel and Iran further heightened tensions in the Middle East since June 2025. The fight has since drawn in Iran-backed groups such as the Lebanese armed group, Hezbollah.

Constant impediment of humanitarian aid has caused mass starvation and a dire lack of essential medical services. The suffering of innocent civilians is prolonged as a result of these conflicts.

Suggested readings:
Explainer - What is the history of the Israel-Palestinian Conflict?
Straits Times, 1 Oct 2024



SINGAPORE'S POSITION ON THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICTS

**Singapore condemns
all acts of terrorism
and wanton violence.**

Terrorist acts cannot be justified by any rationale, regardless of problems or historical grievances.

Singapore is deeply distressed by the increasing civilian casualty toll, and has consistently called for the full and unimpeded flow of humanitarian assistance into Gaza and supported efforts to alleviate the suffering of people there.



“Our positions on the need to adhere to international law, including international humanitarian law, the need to refrain from unilateral actions which hinder or delay progress on a peace process, and the need to ensure the protection of civilians, are also clear. We will continue to vote in support of relevant UN General Assembly resolutions that are consistent with our principled positions.”

- Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan's Written Reply to Parliamentary Questions on the Israel-Hamas Conflict, 8 April 2025

To support the call for peace and security and humanitarian aid, Singapore has:

October 2023

Supported UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution for a humanitarian truce.

November 2023

Supported UN Security Council Resolution which called for the immediate, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to Gaza.

Deployed a Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) to deliver second tranche of aid to Gaza.

December 2023

Co-sponsored and voted for an UNGA resolution that called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza.

January 2024

Deployed two medical personnel from the Singapore Armed Forces to treat casualties from Gaza onboard the French hospital ship FS Dixmude.

March 2024

Deployed RSAF C-130 transport aircraft for its first airdrop operation into Gaza to deliver the third tranche of humanitarian aid.

August 2025

Deployed RSAF C-130 transport aircraft for second airdrop operation into Gaza, delivering the ninth tranche of humanitarian aid.

July 2025

Delivered Singapore's National Statement at the High-Level Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution at the United Nations in New York

September 2024

Voted for an UN Security Council Resolution for Israel to end its actions in the Palestinian territories.

May 2024

Supported UN Security Council Resolution that recommended for the admission of Palestine as a UN member but was vetoed.



“The SAF stands ready to support humanitarian assistance into Gaza. This is one way to show how the whole community rallies together to show compassion and shows how it brings together all the resources and Singaporeans...This reflects the SAF's operational readiness, commitment and professionalism to aid those in need,...”

- Senior Minister of State for Defence Mr Zaqy Mohamad
at the send-off ceremony of the ninth tranche of humanitarian aid
for Gaza, 12 August 2025

KEY REFLECTIONS FOR SINGAPORE

Security threats are real and can happen to any country.

The long-drawn and ongoing Russia-Ukraine and Middle East conflicts remind us that even as we enjoy the peace and security here in Singapore, we must never take national security and social harmony for granted.

All Singaporeans can play a part in defending Singapore.

We must ourselves protect our home and safeguard our way of life.

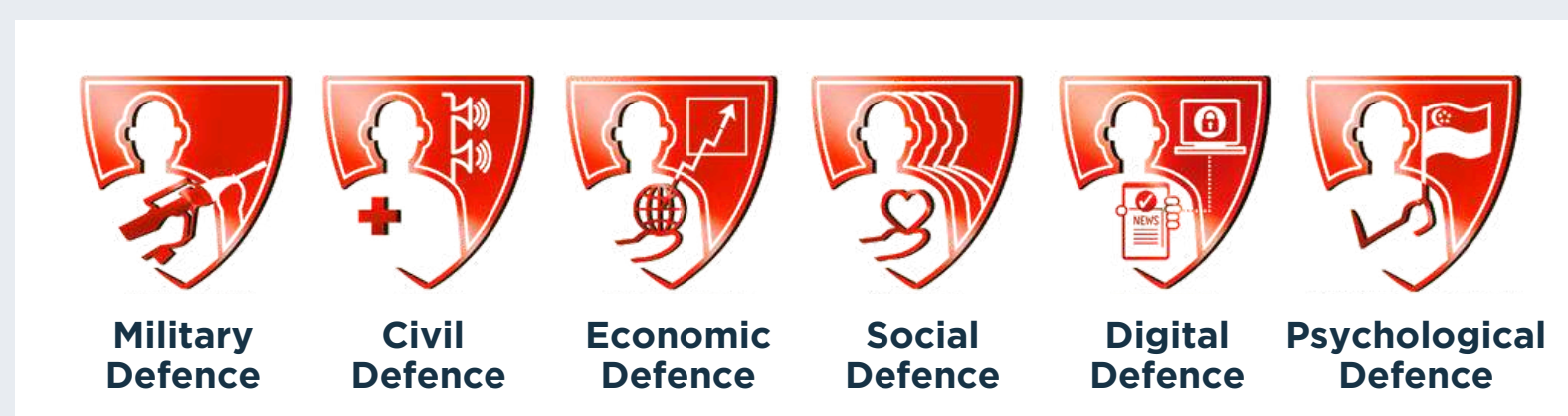
A strong and capable Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) will protect our sovereignty and national interests, and deter potential adversaries.

National Service (NS), as the bedrock of our fighting force and national security, remains critical for Singapore's continued survival and success.

In this complex threat landscape, all Singaporeans must play an active role in Total Defence and SGSecure to protect Singapore and our shared way of life.

Total Defence: There's a Part for Everyone

Since the launch of Total Defence in 1984, Total Defence has rallied Singaporeans together in responding to challenges that threaten Singapore's independence and well-being, such as terrorism, SARS, economic downturn and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic.



SGSecure is Singapore's community response to the terrorism threat. It is a national movement to sensitise, train, and mobilise everyone in Singapore to play a part to prevent and deal with a terrorist attack.



Find out more on Total Defence here:
<https://go.gov.sg/totaldefencesg>



Find out more on SGSecure here:
<https://go.gov.sg/-sgsecure>

We must not let external events affect Singapore's racial and religious peace.



Singapore Red Cross supports relief efforts for affected communities in Gaza. Image: Singapore Red Cross

The mutual trust and respect among different races and religions in Singapore have been built over many years by generations of Singaporeans.

We must treasure the racial and religious peace that we enjoy in Singapore and not take it for granted.

The ongoing conflicts in the Middle East could evoke concerns and emotions among people. Thankfully, most Singaporeans responded in a measured and positive manner by being respectful and constructive in our dialogues. Singaporeans also came together to donate generously towards the relief efforts.

Let's continue to stay united and protect our precious cohesion and harmony.



"External events can pull our population in different directions and make it more challenging for the government and society to hold together in a united way to continue to move our society forward... We have made tremendous progress in building racial and religious harmony over the last 50 years... But it requires constant attention, constant effort, and the experiences of other countries, much more advanced than us, compared to where we started, (to) offer us cautionary tales."

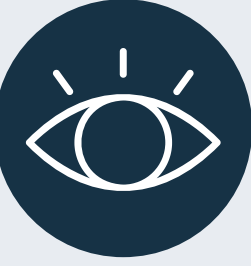
- Then Minister for Home Affairs and Law Mr K Shanmugam,
during his opening speech at the IPS-MHA forum on non-violent ethnic hostilities,
1 July 2024

We must also be mindful of online attempts to rile up emotions and sow distrust in our society. Disinformation targeted at particular segments of society can whip up communal tensions.

How can we stay vigilant against disinformation:



Be discerning to comments aimed to stir up discord amongst different communities in Singapore.



Be aware of current affairs and tactics used to spread fake news.



Use social media responsibly, such as verifying information before reacting to or sharing content.



Find out more about Foreign Influence and disinformation here:
<https://go.gov.sg/foreigninterference>



Source - Pexels

We must stay ready and prepared for uncertainties and possible disruptions.

There are global concerns that a drawn out conflict could introduce risks to the two vital shipping choke-points in the Middle East, disrupt supply chains, and increase shipping and freight costs.

Singapore will continue to adapt ourselves to evolving global circumstances - enhancing our economic resilience by diversifying our sources of supplies, strengthening our supply chain strategies and investing in connectivity infrastructure to keep trade flows going and minimise supply chain disruptions.

Together, we can overcome any disruptions or challenges that come our way.

Find out more about Singapore's economic resilience strategies on SG101:
<https://go.gov.sg/sg101economy>





CONCLUSION

Our future is built upon our shared values, experiences and aspirations as Singaporeans – let's cherish the long-standing bonds amongst our people and stay as one united people to keep Singapore, our home, safe and strong.



Find out more about the conflicts in the Middle East here:
<https://go.gov.sg/sg101conflictmiddleeast>



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<https://go.gov.sg/neinsights>
or email us at nexus@defence.gov.sg.

