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Embarking on a new adventure

Former military man joins MFA to explore new places and meet new people

BY GEL CABOTAJE

As a first warrant officer at the Singapore Armed Forces, Mr Jason Ng had to manage servicemen and handle administrative duties within his unit.

While those were his main tasks, his 24 years of service also saw him working closely with different government agencies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

"From my dealings with MFA, I felt that foreign service was adventurous and an interesting career path," says the 47-year-old. "It's closely aligned with my experience and interests. I have always enjoyed travelling, exploring new things, meeting new people and immersing myself in new cultures. A career in the MFA was a good fit for me."

For purpose and job satisfaction
In 2018, Mr Ng applied for the foreign service administration specialist scheme at MFA. He says: "I was considering a mid-career switch to realign my sense of purpose and satisfaction at work."

For his first deployment, Mr Ng was attached to the Southeast Asia Directorate, where he supported MFA's daily operations. His role of directorate support executive involved a lot of logistics, from preparing briefing materials to assisting officers to prepare for meetings and visits.

These responsibilities were paving the way for Mr Ng to take on his next role.

"I was offered an overseas posting to the Pretoria Mission in March 2019," he says of his role as personal assistant to the High Commissioner in Pretoria, South Africa.

"The role of directorate support

executive was a good training ground for me. Now my responsibilities include providing administrative and secretarial support to the High Commissioner in Pretoria, to ensure the smooth day-to-day operations in the office."

A typical workday for Mr Ng includes managing the High Commissioner's schedule and correspondence, preparing his travel arrangements, conducting research for the directorate and taking charge of other ad hoc tasks.

"I feel that being an assistant to the High Commissioner is a great responsibility and I take satisfaction in that I can contribute in a small way in furthering Singapore's interests overseas."

And Mr Ng likes how every day at the office is different. "I enjoy talking to people, learning new skills and streamlining my work processes so that I can handle the High Commissioner's day-to-day schedules more effectively. I get a great satisfaction from getting a job done well."

He is also thankful that MFA supports his career growth. For instance, the government agency sent him to a four-week administrative specialist basic programme to equip him with the basic knowledge and help him develop his core competencies to better perform his duties in headquarters and overseas missions. "I wish to continue to pick up new skills to help me excel in what I do so I can take up more responsibilities and roles in the future."

Mr Ng says joining MFA has presented him with a lot of opportunities. "Being a member of the MFA requires me to be self-motivated, flexible, resourceful and resilient. You would be surprised how rewarding it can be when you step out of your comfort zone and embrace change."

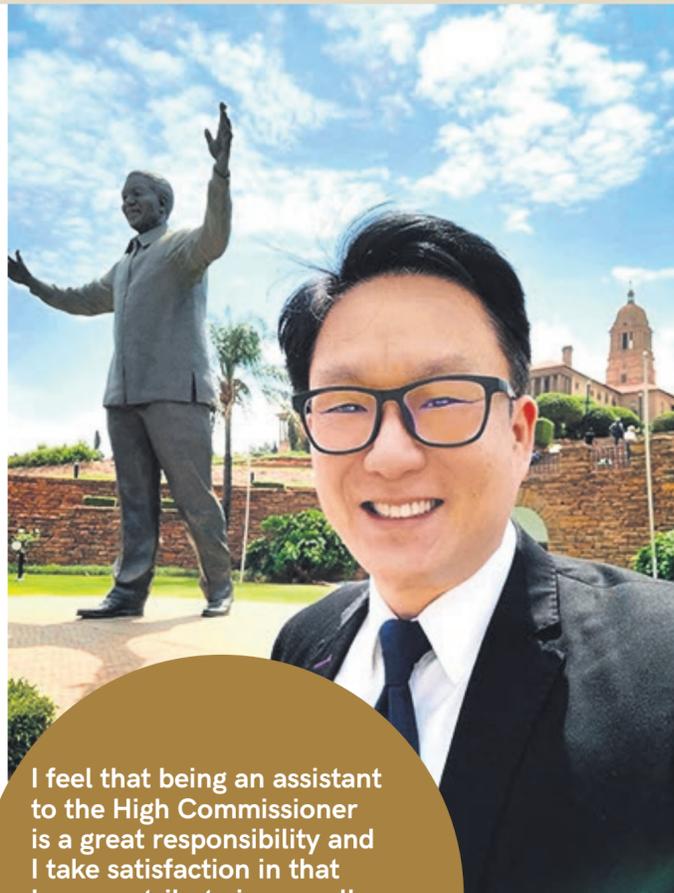


PHOTO: JASON NG

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JASON NG
Pretoria Mission,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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