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## President's Annual Diplomatic Reception



President Tony Tan Keng Yam and First Lady Mrs Mary Tan, greeted guests from Singapore's diplomatic community at the President's Annual Diplomatic Reception on 3rd May 2017 held at the Istana. The reception was also attended by PM Lee Hsien Loong. The Reception is held for the heads of diplomatic and consular missions, and representatives of international organisations, and their spouses. The event was started in 1985 by former president Wee Kim Wee as a gesture of thanks to the diplomatic community as well as international organisations who have contributed to Singapore's progress.



President Tony Tan and First Lady Mrs Tan with Ambassador of Costa Rica in Singapore and Dean of DCC Singapore HE Jairo Hernandez Milian

## Laotian PM Visit



Prime Minister Thongloun (left) reaffirms bilateral ties with Prime Minister Lee (Photo credit: Ministry of Communications and Information)

His Excellency Dr Thongloun Sisoulith, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, was in Singapore on an Official Visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on 2 May 2017. PM Thongloun, who was accompanied by a business delegation, also gave a keynote speech at a luncheon hosted by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry

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### EVENT

## Poland Constitution Day 3 May 2017

### Pres Tony Tan to Visit Poland Says Polish Ambassador

HE Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz, Poland's Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore shares news about the visit and highlights of the Polish food festival



From the left: Ambassador Zenon Kosiniak-Kamysz; Mrs Josephine Teo, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs; Mr Jacek Bogucki Secretary of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in Poland; Ms Joan Pereira Member of Parliament; Mr Desmond Choo Member of Parliament

Poland celebrates its Constitution Day on 3rd May and the Embassy has planned many activities, could you share with us what's on the cards for the coming events?

We will be organising the first Polish Food Festival here in Singapore. You may well ask 'Why food?' Well, I have been here for three years now, and it has been my desire to make Poland more visible through our products. Given that Singapore is interested in many different food products we would like to show our food can be interesting and attractive too. We also aim through this showcase to attract more Singaporeans to visit Poland.

We would like to present a larger palette of European fare. Since Poland has four seasons it has a large influence as well. In winter you get richer food, in summer cold soups and other special summer dishes. To showcase this, we have brought to Singapore six prominent Polish chefs for the festival and we plan to host many of these events in different venues: the Conrad Hotel, the Sofitel, Sentosa etc. We have planned a picnic, Polish-style with Polish baskets, at the

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Minister Balakrishnan (third from right) with fellow ASEAN Foreign Ministers and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson (sixth from right) at the Special ASEAN-US Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Photo credit: Minister Balakrishnan's Facebook page)

## ASEAN Foreign Ministers US Visit

Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan visited Washington D.C. from 3 to 5 May 2017. He met US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson together with the other ASEAN Foreign Ministers at the Special ASEAN-United States Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 4 May. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers also met US National Security Advisor Lieutenant General H R McMaster the following day.

During the meetings, ASEAN Member States and the US affirmed the importance of the ASEAN-US Strategic Partnership in maintaining regional peace and stability, and in promoting mutually beneficial areas of cooperation. ASEAN Member States and the US also exchanged views on regional and international developments, and agreed to further strengthen ASEAN-US relations.

Singapore welcomes the US' sustained and multifaceted engagement with ASEAN. The ASEAN-US relationship, which commemorates its 40th anniversary this year, is vibrant and underpinned by robust people-to-people links.



DPM Teo Chee Hean hosted to lunch by Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia De-meke Mekonnen, 9 May 2017. (Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore)

## DPM Teo Visit Ethiopia & South Africa

DPM and Coordinating Minister for National Security Teo Chee Hean visited Ethiopia from 7 to 11 May 2017 and had meetings with Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. They welcomed the re-launch of direct flights by Ethiopian Airlines between Addis Ababa and Singapore, the start of negotiations on a Bilateral Investment Treaty, and looked forward to the early ratification of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement. Both agreements will help strengthen bilateral economic links. During the trip, Mr Teo met representatives of Singapore companies and other key business leaders based in Ethiopia. After Ethiopia, DPM Teo visited South Africa where he participated in the 20th meeting of the TOTAL International Advisory Committee and meet Singaporeans based in Johannesburg.

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## Polish Ties

**Botanical Gardens** with which we have a long association for hosting some of our events. We plan to spice it up with a lucky draw at the picnic - a free trip to Poland! And so I hope many Singaporeans will come and get a taste of Poland in Singapore. We want Singaporeans who are going to Europe to travel to Poland as well.

We hope this promotion will tantalise the taste buds of visitors and interest them to discover more by visiting Poland.

Your promotion is titled 'Poland Tastes Good Shio! Shio!' That is so local in terms of tone as you know we love food!

Absolutely! This was even endorsed by

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## Laotian PM Visit

(SCCCI) and IE Singapore. Prime Minister Thongloun welcomed the increasing interest among Singapore companies to invest in Laos. He also shared his views on strengthening business networks and collaboration with the Singapore and Lao businessmen. At the forum, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between SCCCI and the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI) to enhance business partnerships and promote investments between Laos and Singapore.

your Prime Minister! I had a conversation with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong recently and he said to me "Ambassador, I have noticed you have been here for a while and you understand us...and you have decided to set up the Polish Food Festival...so you really know what Singaporeans like!"

**What's the message you hope will be taken away by Singaporeans who attend these events?**

Come and have fun but it should also be a learning experience. Discover our customs as well as our cuisine.

**How would you describe the state of bilateral relations between our two nations?**

Currently political dialogue between us is at a very high level. Three years ago we had the visit of PM Lee Hsien Loong to Poland and by the end of this week President Tony Tan is also going to pay a visit. We've also had many high ranking visits to Poland in the recent past and vice versa. One wonderful way you can track this is that we have at least four orchids named after Polish VVIPs at the Botanical Gardens!

Now bilateral ties are very good, and we are extremely pleased that President Tan has decided to go to Poland. I'm also very happy that there is a significant number of Singapore business leaders accompanying him on this trip. Their itineraries will not only take them to official meetings at the capital Warsaw but they will also be going to other regions of Poland to meet their counterparts, meet entrepreneurs and visit factories etc. This holds much promise for our future economic relations.

**What is the current balance of trade between Poland and Singapore and what are the major products traded.**

**Singapore is one of the biggest Asian importers from Poland and also the biggest amongst ASEAN.** According to our statistics, the figure is about US\$2 billion much of this involves Polish shipyard-industry related products. We also export luxury yachts and now food products. There is also a great level of mutual cooperation as Singapore will be involved in setting up an aviation factory in Poland. We have many other fields which are promising for future co-operation and mutual benefits, for example, in start-ups, fleet transportation such as manufacturing buses (Poland is a leading European bus maker).

We also welcome more investments from Singapore in Poland. We hope to see Singapore expand its investment map in Europe as we have a very investment-friendly environment that is already attracting investors from other parts of the world.

**How large is the Polish community in Singapore and how does the Embassy actively engage them?**

We have about 1,000 Poles here and many of them are working in the banking and IT industries as well as in the scientific fields. So the Polish diaspora here tends to be highly qualified. The Polish embassy here is very much in touch with our community. For example, we have a group called the Polish Professionals and we have meetings and events...also daily interactions on social media. We are indeed proud we have such talented people who can contribute to Singapore.

## COMMUNIQUÉ

### Chileans Residing here to Vote in Embassy for the First Time



Singapore and Chile have a common bond which bridges the geographic distance between them. From the days when Nobel laureate Pablo Neruda served as Chile's Consul in Singapore in 1931 to the heralding of the Trump era in 2017, their commitment to strengthening their bilateral relations on several fronts is shored up by their smartness in embracing the changing dynamics of today's political-economic scenario, for a stable and revitalised world order.

As Chile readies itself for the general elections in November/December 2017, the Chileans living in Singapore are now, for the first time, officially allowed to vote for their representatives. Registrations for Chileans residing in Singapore are facilitated by the Embassy of Chile. The first round of voting will be in November and then the second will take place a month later. Close to one million Chileans are currently living abroad and this has been a momentous decision. Voting is not mandatory. However, Chileans are registered to

vote since the day they are born.

The Chilean community in Singapore consists mainly of working couples and students. "Many Chileans are here on short terms. After a couple of years they move to other locations, so the community changes faces quite fast" shares His Excellency James Sinclair Manley Ambassador of Chile to the Republic of Singapore who presented his credentials on 24 September 2014.

In a lively conversation with the editor-in-chief of IN Diplomacy, Nomita Dhar, he opens up on many different aspects of the growing ties between the two countries and what will be the core areas of common pursuit. As self-professed lover of many Asian aspects, Ambassador Sinclair's engagement with Southeast Asia goes way beyond his official duties ever since he had his first posting in the region in 2000.

This is what propels him to bring together Chilean and Asian people and culture to strengthen the ties beyond trade, commerce,

diplomacy and politics. The bilateral trade flows remain small but as Ambassador Sinclair reveals, there is a growing interest in Chile to consider Singapore as the main access point to Southeast Asian markets, especially for wines and seafood. Singapore as well, is looking at Chile as the gateway to access to Latin America. Singapore's service industry has a lot of opportunity in Chile where - as Ambassador Sinclair points out - there is a huge potential for participating in the development of infrastructure such as railroads, airports, ports etc.

Ambassador Sinclair wishes the opportunity for Singaporean businessmen to meet Chilean businessmen who will be accompanied President Bachelet on the occasion of the APEC Trade Ministers Meeting in Vietnam in November 2017. As pointed out in Ambassador Koh's essay in 2013, Singapore and Chile are two of APEC's strongest pillars. Singapore is an APEC founding member while Chile joined it in 1994. Both Singapore and Chile, together with New Zealand and Brunei, are the founding fathers of the P4 Group who led the TPP.

Education is another area in which Chile seeks a deeper co-operation with Singapore. Ambassador Sinclair wishes to see more projects under Singapore's Co-operation Programme. He is also looking to grow the current programme on good governance, transparency and democracy that involve both countries.

Taking the discussion to a more personal level, Ambassador Sinclair, whose career has taken him to the Argentina, Peru, US, and Indonesia, now lives in Singapore with his wife. They have one son living in Germany while another is going to start his Master's Degree at Dukes University and a daughter who is teaching English in Chile. They come often to Singapore for holidays.

## Uzbekistan Travel Fair

4 May 2017 - Tanglin Shopping Centre

The three-day fair with the theme on the Silk Road Uzbekistan organised by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Singapore, showcased information about Uzbekistan as a destination and highlights of its culture, people and food. The event attracted the participation of Aveson Travel, Uzbekistan Airways, Uzbekistan Holidays and Hyatt Regency Tashkent.

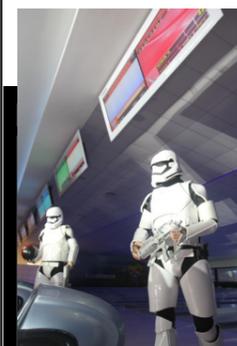




# IN Diplomacy PHOTO ALBUM



SingaporeBowling @ Rifle Range at Temasek Club is the island's largest bowling venue. It is also home to Singapore's bowling champions who go there to train under the auspices of the Singapore Bowling Federation. On 25th April 2017, the Federation's President Mrs Jessie Phua and DCC Dean HE Jairo Hernandez Milian welcomed members, friends and families of the DCC in Singapore to the annual Ambassador's Night with a Movie themed night. Fun competition mixed with music, food and drinks, plus generous prizes sponsored by Canon made it a night to remember. Top Singapore bowlers also made guest appearances in Star Wars gear! The SBF provided helpful chaperones for bowlers and there were local community teams that also took part. The DCC did not disappoint as the top individual scorer was Mr. Timur Zevakhin, political counsellor from the Russian Embassy with an impressive 202 points!



## ANZAC Day in Singapore



Observing ANZAC Day here (above left photo) was His Excellency Mr. Jonathan Austin, High Commissioner of New Zealand (centre) and His Excellency Mr. Jairo Hernandez, Ambassador of Costa Rica and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. (Above right photo): Meeting with bagpipers of Singapore's Nepalese Gurkha Regiment and members of the New Zealand Armed Forces after the Gunfire Breakfast.

## Indonesian Embassy Golf Outing



The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Singapore organised a friendly Golf Competition in Riau that also covered a visit to a software competition in Batam. The weekend trip also took in some sightseeing, shopping and exploring business/investment opportunities.

## Brunei High Commission Hosts April Coffee Morning Session



It was the turn of the Brunei High Commission in Singapore to host the wives of the diplomats in Singapore for the month of April. Cultural performances and talks were held at the Grand Hyatt Singapore

## From the Embassies....

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**Opportunity Russia 2016**



**Opportunity Indonesia 2016**



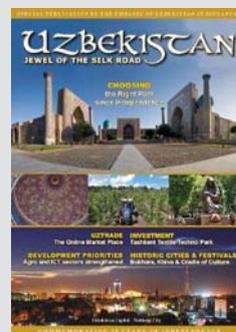
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