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Call to Invest in Youths



Representatives of the Africa Group in Singapore with special guests (4th & 5th from left) Dr Maliki Osman, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr Rotimi Chibuike Amaeki, Minister of Transport for the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Africa Day was celebrated in Singapore on 26th May 2017 by a gathering of distinguished guests who included Dr. Maliki Osman (Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Mr. Rotimi Chibuike Amaeki (Minister of Transport for the Federal Republic of Nigeria), a slew of High Commissioners and Ambassadors, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and many of the members of the African community in Singapore. They were welcomed by Ambassador Guillaume Kavaruganda, the High Commissioner of the Republic of Rwanda in Singapore, who is also the representative of the Africa Group in Singapore.

He shared the fact that the African Union Heads of State and Government declared the theme for the African Unions 2017 Year to be "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth". Though the African peoples, he said, had achieved many of the political goals established by the Organisation of African Unity, he felt that Africa needed to speed up its potential to make development

more inclusive. And to achieve this it was of even more significant that one invests in skills and capacity-building in the youth of Africa, which would address not only poverty and inequality but also unemployment in all African countries.

Ambassador Guillaume concluded his address by expressing on behalf of the Africa Group, appreciation of Africa's partners, in particular the Singaporean Government and its programmes, as well as those Trade Associations and Chambers and Singaporean companies which are presently invested in Africa. He reached out in particular to Dr. Maliki Osman, who in his opinion endorsed the continued engagement of Singapore in Africa, by his very presence at the meet. In the Dean's view this cooperation between Singapore and the African Continent was a win-win situation as it would be an important platform for creating opportunities for its youth, "help eradicate the poverty and (will) create sustainable development—and last, but not least, create peace and prosperity for all Africans."

Also inside:

More on Africa Day & Nigeria-S'pore Relations **Interview with Mrs Zainab Zakari-Awami Nigeria High Commission pg. 2**



...on Significance of Africa Day

"The Africa Day Celebration is an annual commemoration of the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. The OAU is known today as the African Union (AU). Africa Day is celebrated on the 25th of May, every year. It is a celebration of African unity that takes place globally."

The inaugural Africa Day Celebration in Singapore was held in 2010. Then, African Missions in Singapore came together, for the first time, to celebrate Africa as a continent. The Celebration was hosted by the diplomatic Heads of Mission of Angola, Egypt, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe."

EVENT

Iftar at Shangri-La 30 May 2017

Saudi Arabia Embassy Continues Break Fast Tradition

Again, this year the embassy has held this annual event. HE Mr Saad bin Saleh AlSaleh, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Republic of Singapore was host to Guest of Honour Assoc Prof Dr Yaacob Ibrahim Minister for Communication and Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs & Cyber Security as well as diplomats, local civic leaders from various faiths and religions (see photo right) and Saudi subjects living here for the break fast ritual in the month of Ramadhan at the Shangri-La Hotel on 30th May 2017.





Africa Day and Nigeria-Singapore Relations in the Spotlight

Interview with Mrs Zainab Zakari-Awami
Acting High Commissioner and Senior Counsellor
of Nigerian High Commission, Singapore



(Above, from left). His Excellencies Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, Dr. Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman and Guillaume Kavaruganda

1. Please share with us the significance of Africa Day 2017.

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The 2017 Africa Day emphasises that Africa's young people are an enormous resource for the continent's development. It is in this regard that African Union Heads of State and Government declared the theme for 2017 as, "Harnessing the demographic dividend through investments in youth."

2. What were some of the highlights of this year's celebrations?

We celebrated it on 26 May 2017 at the Hilton Hotel. Apart from the tremendous support we received from our Special Guest of Honour, Dr. Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Senior Minister of State for Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Singapore, I was personally pleased that H. E. Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, Honourable Minister of Transportation of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was also in attendance as well as the Heads of Mission of Angola, Egypt, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe; in addition we had the Honourary Consuls of African countries in Singapore, members of the Diplomatic Corp in Singapore, chief executives and captains of industries, the African community and friends of Africa.

The programme started with remarks by the Special Guest of Honour, Dr. Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman and the representative of the African Group in Singapore, H. E. Guillaume Kavaruganda, the High Commissioner of the Republic of Rwanda.

All six member countries of the African Group were able to showcase their diverse arts,

culture and consumer goods produced from individual countries, it also included displays by the African fashion house in Singapore, House of Nell, which featured trendy African apparels and accessories.

Furthermore there were African cuisine from Nigeria and Egypt. To top it off, a mixed African band performed live!

3. What would you say about the collective opportunities that await the Singaporean investors in Africa, as a continent?

The outlook for Africa has brightened considerably in recent years. Perceptions have changed for the better. The Africa that one reads and hears about today is markedly different from the Africa of just two decades ago. The most impressive change is Africa's meteoric economic growth since 2000. Africa's GDP has risen almost four fold from US\$600 billion to US\$2.2 trillion presently.

While the global economy has undergone one shock after another since 2008, Africa has registered impressive annual growth rates of above 5 per cent. African growth trajectory can be attributed to improved political stability. The number of inter-state and intra state-state conflicts have declined significantly. Consequently, the overall quality of life for many Africans has improved.

Africa's Transformation is a reality today and its potential is immense. Africa is one of the fastest growing regions in the world and its population is projected to be more than 1.2 billion by 2026, the third highest after China and India. By 2040, Africa will have the youngest workforce in the world. These are the collective opportunities that await prospective Singaporean investors in Africa. A young wealthy African middle class with strong purchasing power will be a strong driver of economic growth and a strong attraction for global investment to Africa.

4. Brief us about Nigeria's participation and showcase at the event.

Nigeria's display had Made-in-Nigeria products and provided the Mission a good platform to promote the Nigeria brand, I feel it helped to contribute in boosting bilateral trade and investment efforts. A cross section of prospective Singaporean investors were able to see in person how Nigerian products are

packaged, gained insights into the Nigerian commodity market and examined partnership possibilities.

Nigeria's cuisine was also featured prominently on the menu. Food such as Nigerian jolloff rice, fried plantain, peppered mutton, Semolina and Egusi soup and Zobo drink (hibiscus drink). Hilton Hotel also prepared a delicious Nigerian Chicken pepper soup.

Furthermore African music played throughout the night. I think the guests enjoyed themselves very much and many also danced along with the music.

5. As you mentioned earlier, this year a Nigerian Minister also graced the Africa Day celebrations, would you brief us on Nigeria Singapore relations and the new possibilities that await Singaporeans?

H. E. Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, Honourable Minister of Transportation was in Singapore on official business and we were very happy that he wanted to join us on this occasion. Just last year, the Honourable Minister was also in Singapore, when he led a Federal Government Committee on the establishment of a National Fleet, to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a Singapore company.

This MOU has opened up a whole new vista of business opportunities and investment for Singaporeans. **The Federal Government of Nigeria did take into consideration the importance of Public Private Partnership (PPP), in the shipping industry and thrown an invitation open to interested shipping operators to acquire the 60 per cent share of the Federal Government.**

Similarly, the Aviation sector which also falls under H. E. Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi purview also received a big boost in 2017, when H. E. Hadi Sirika Honourable Minister of State for Aviation signed on behalf of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Bilateral Air Service Agreement (BASA) with the Republic of Singapore.

The BASA provided a framework which enables the establishment of air linkages between Nigeria and Singapore. It is expected to open greater level of airline connectivity and infrastructure for both passengers and cargo between Nigeria and Singapore.

President Tony Tan Visit to Poland: Economic and Scientific Opportunities

The 3-day presidential tour strengthened economic cooperation and scientific exchanges between Singapore and Poland. It was a momentous occasion as President Tony Tan Keng Yam was the first Singapore head of state to visit Poland from 21 to 23 May 2017. He met Poland's head of state, President Andrzej Duda and they covered a wide range of subjects including developments, bilateral relations as well as the growing collaborations in the areas of the economy, science, technology, educations and culture.

The two nations shared 48 years of diplomatic ties this year. **President Tan and President Duda also jointly opened the Poland-Singapore Business Forum, organised by the Singapore Business Federation (SBF) and Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH). The visit was of economic significance as the ratification of the landmark European Union-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, President Tan said, will allow Poland to use Singapore as a platform to engage South-east Asia.**

The Singaporean leader pointed out that though investment levels continue to be quite modest between Singapore and Poland, bilateral trade has more than doubled to \$962 million from a decade ago. President Duma touched upon the importance of Singapore for Poland and said, "Though a relatively small state, it is a giant - one of the largest financial markets in the world." President Duma too envisioned greater potential for improving trade between the two countries and added that businessmen should take advantage of the trade office in Singapore to this end.

Three memorandums of understanding (MOUs) were signed during the course of President's Tan's state visit. Two involved both IE Singapore and the Singapore Business Federation — each signing an MOU with the Polish Investment and Trade Agency to set up trade links and investment opportunities, primarily in the area related to the auto and aerospace industries, wholesale trade of food and agricultural products, and transport and logistics sectors. **The third MOU involved Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology and Research and its Polish counterpart signing an agreement which was aimed at facilitating 'the sharing of scientific expertise and knowledge, cross-fertilisation of ideas, as well as talent development in both countries,'** as stated by Dr Tan at a press conference held jointly with President Duda. Dr Tan also extended an invitation to President Duada to also visit the island-nation. An official dinner was hosted for the Singapore leader by the Polish President as the Presidential Palace later on. President Tan also took time out from his hectic schedule on the second day of his tour to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, raised in memory of those soldiers who died fighting for Poland in a number of wars.

The last leg of President's Tan's visit (ahead of his 4-day state visit to the Czech Republic), included a meeting with Mr Stanislaw Karczewski and Mr Marek Kuchcinski, respective heads of the Upper and Lower Chambers of Parliament of Poland. On the first day of his visit President Tan also managed to fit in a meeting at The Westin Warsaw, over tea, with 80 businessmen and exchange students from Singapore.



(Above): Before the start of the State Banquet, the Presidential Couples were introduced. The banquet marked the deepening of friendship between the peoples of Singapore and Poland.



(Left): The President addressed the Poland-Singapore Business Forum organised by SBF and PAIH.

(Below): President Tan and President Duda witnessed the signing of three MOUs between Singapore and Poland, in the areas of trade and investment as well as research.

(Photos by Singapore Ministry of Communication and Information / Fyrol)



In a meeting with one of the Marshals, Mr Stanislaw Karczewski (Marshal of the Senate). They had both expressed their support for the swift ratification of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA).

COLLABORATIONS

Reception for First Batch of US-Singapore Summer Exchange Programme Recipients



(First row, 4th & 5th from left):
Ms Stephanie Syptak-Ramnath
and Dr Maliki Osman

On 30 May 2017 a reception was held in honour of the inaugural recipients of the US-Singapore Summer Exchange Scholarship Programme. Dr. Maliki Osman, the Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs congratulated the students and their parents. He also spoke on ties between the two countries.

The US Embassy in Singapore Chargé d’Affaires Stephanie Syptak-Ramnath also

related her summer exchange experiences and said the people-to-people connections such programmes offer help strengthen bilateral relationships. The Singaporean and American students were joined by their families, local university partners, Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff, and representatives from American corporate sponsors Applied Materials, Becton Dickinson, Mastercard, and Micron Foundation.

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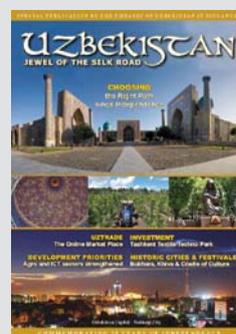
It's Time for Brazil in Singapore 2016



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