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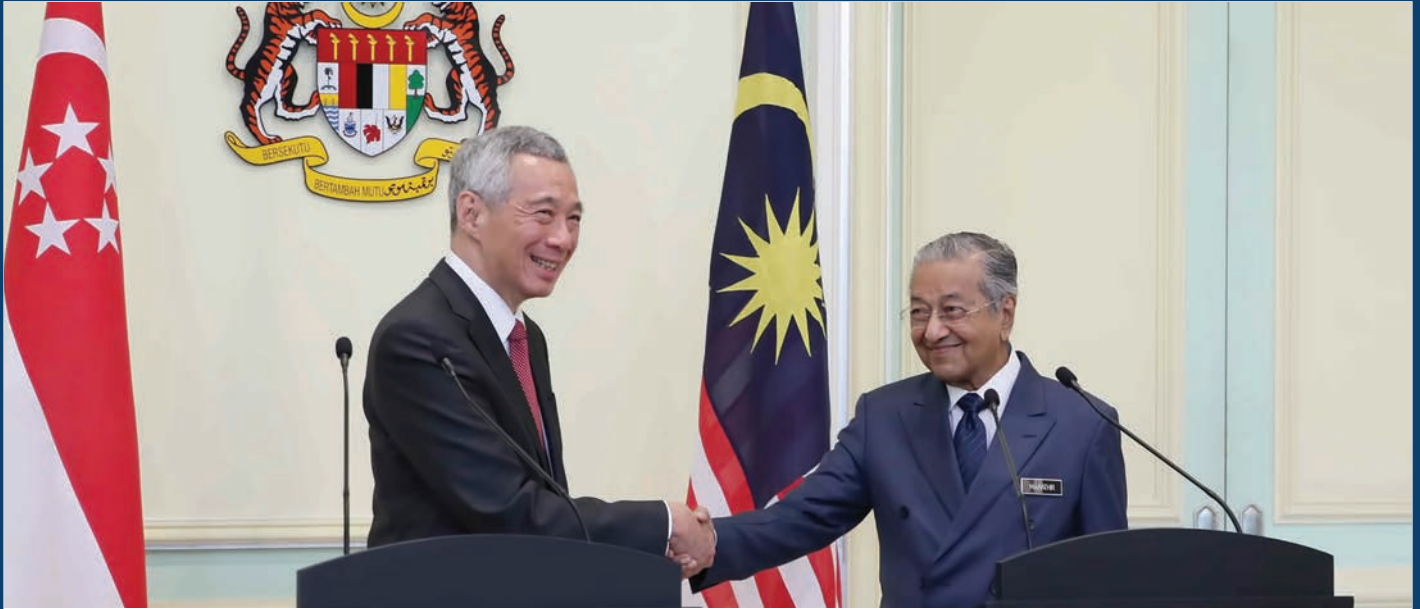


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Featuring

**Ambassador
HE Paula J. Parviainen**





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Presentation of Credentials

IN Diplomacy welcomes the new Heads of Mission following their presentation of credentials to the President of Singapore Her Excellency Halimah Yacob on 25th April 2019



*The High Commissioner of Jamaica
HE Antonia Hugh*



*The Ambassador of Uganda
HE Dinah Grace Akello*



*The Ambassador of the Slovak Republic
HE Jaroslav Chlebo*

Why Diplomacy Matters

Singapore is home to 70 resident foreign High Commissions and Embassies, 43 Consular Posts and 11 International Organisations. They act as a conduit between Singapore and their respective countries. Diplomatic missions are headed by influential newsmakers who open doors for business, trade, investment, education, the arts and culture.

IN Diplomacy has a mission to communicate and be a bridge between the diplomatic community and Singaporeans.



LATEST

Qatar Hosts 16th Asia Cooperation Dialogue Meeting

Senior Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman visited Doha from 30th April to 1st May 2019 for the 16th Ministerial Meeting of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD). The Meeting, which has the theme "Partners in Progress", was hosted by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. The ACD, an initiative by Thailand, was formed in 2002 to foster dialogue and cooperation in Asia.

While in Doha, SMS Maliki also met with senior Qatari office holders and officials who included Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid Bin Mohammed Al Attiyah, Minister of Commerce and Industry Ali Bin Ahmed Al Kuwari, and Minister of Justice Dr Issa Bin Saad Al Jafali Al Nuaimi.



Heads of delegation at the 16th ACD (Source: Dr Maliki Osman Facebook)

During his meeting with the Minister of Justice, he extended an invitation for the State of Qatar to participate in the signing ceremony of the Singapore Convention on Mediation on 7 Aug 2019. The Singapore Convention is a new treaty that allows international settlement agreements resulting from mediation to be enforced or invoked. He explained how the Singapore Convention will encourage the use of mediation in cross-border commercial disputes, and facilitate international trade, commerce, and investment.

(Right): Meeting Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid Bin Mohammed Al Attiyah. (Source: Office of the DPM and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, State of Qatar)



Senior Minister Dr Maliki Osman's Introductory Visit to Uzbekistan

A Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs release on SMS Dr Maliki's wide ranging visit acknowledges the growing scope for cooperation in sectors such as tourism, business and education



Warm greeting by Uzbekistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance HE Jamshid Kuchkarov for Dr Maliki (Source: MFA)

Senior Minister of State (SMS), Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohamad Maliki bin Osman, made his introductory visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan from 2 to 5 April 2019.

In Tashkent, SMS Maliki called on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Jamshid Kuchkarov, and acknowledged the growing cooperation between Singapore and Uzbekistan in sectors such as tourism, business and education. Both sides agreed that there was potential to do more together for mutual benefit.

SMS Maliki also met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulaziz Kamilov and Minister of Preschool Education Agripina Shin. During SMS Maliki's call on Minister Kamilov, both sides reviewed the bilateral relationship and reaffirmed the warm and friendly relations between Singapore and Uzbekistan. They also exchanged views on regional developments and security issues. SMS Maliki and Minister Shin welcomed the growing interest from Singapore's private sector in Uzbekistan's pre-school education sector, and discussed their respective policies in this field.



Dr Maliki with Uzbek's Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov (Source: MFA)

During the visit, SMS Maliki also met with Deputy Minister of Defence MG Azizbek Ikramov, Deputy Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Shukhrat Vafaev, Deputy Mayor of Tashkent Rakhmanov Sharof, Chairman of the Senate Committee on International Relations, Foreign Economic Affairs, Foreign Investment and Tourism of the Oliy Majlis Alisher Kurmanov, and Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies Eldor Aripov. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dilshod Akhatov also hosted SMS Maliki to lunch.

Deputy Minister Ikramov and Deputy Minister Akhatov had separate discussions with SMS Maliki on how both sides could strengthen cooperation and the need to collaborate with regional partners in counter-terrorism efforts and the fight against extremist ideology. SMS Maliki also had wide-ranging discussions with Deputy Minister Akhatov and Director Aripov on developments in Central Asia and regional security issues. SMS Maliki and Deputy Minister Vafaev agreed to explore ways to further expand economic cooperation, and welcomed

plans for a Singapore business delegation to visit Uzbekistan. Deputy Mayor Sharof also acknowledged the potential to further broaden and deepen cooperation, while SMS Maliki and Chairman Kurmanov reaffirmed the excellent ties between the respective parliaments.

SMS Maliki also visited Samarkand, which is the burial site of renowned Islamic scholar Imam Bukhari. SMS Maliki was received by Mayor of Samarkand Furkat Rakhimov, who also hosted him to lunch. "

INTERVIEW HE Paula J. Parviainen

Building Strong Bridges

As she readies to return to her home country, HE Paula Johanna Parviainen, Ambassador of Finland to the Republic of Singapore, shares the highpoints of her four year tenure with Editor-in-Chief, Nomita Dhar



Engaging with a wide cross section of Singapore society including (above) meeting with the President of Singapore Halimah Yacob as well as (middle column) civic and professional groups and organisations and students from Singapore Chinese Girls School

We met last week at your farewell, which had a phenomenal turnout. How do you do it, how do you have such a huge fan following?

Well that was a real surprise...I didn't do anything for that...It just happened.

I was really shaken and felt very emotional about it and it really was a big surprise as I didn't know that there would be so many friends who wanted to be there. I was really grateful. I get my energy from the people and from the good will generated. I think Singapore is a wonderful place and the concentration of great minds from all over the world here is amazing and the fact that in one's position as ambassador one gets to meet many of these amazing people who would otherwise be out of your reach. So it's going to be very different for me when I return to Finland!

There has been a heightened pace in the number of bilateral interactions and visits by governmental, business and trade delegations during your tenure. How did you manage to accomplish this?

Thank you for your kind words. I think it was just the momentum—the G-50 meeting was a good starting point and then we had our 100 years centenary celebration of Finland's independence. There are so many similarities between our two countries, and much can be done about bringing us closer together. And when you start thinking about it, it becomes a perfectly natural thing to do. What I'm especially happy about is that now we have delegations visiting both ways. We have also been able to put Singapore on the map of Finland through the many events we have been



organising and also by bringing businesses and Finnish experts here so that they have been able to see what Singapore has to offer and also in terms of our policy making and the implementation of our new policies and ideas. So I think it works better both ways... much better



Ambassador Parviainen in conversation with Ms Nomita Dhar

than before. I'm sure this will continue. Our team here is much bigger than when I arrived here. Since I arrived we now have more diplomats to represent us in areas such as trade and innovation matters.

What do you consider to be your biggest success here?

Helping to get Finns here to participate in and organise Finland's centenary celebrations. It was a success and the timing was just right coming relatively soon after the start of my four year tenure here. Altogether we had a year and half to make the preparations for the event with all the ideas and co-creating... there was no template here for us to work from, so everything was from scratch. It involved a lot of brainstorming about what Singapore should know about us; what is there for us to tell them and where should there be the connection. So making this whole thing a reality required a huge effort.

I saw it as a huge success, seeing the Finnish community wanting to work together and to help co-create the 110 events for the 100-year celebration throughout the year with our limited resources. In fact, it was that great team spirit with people wanting to do something for Finland and Singapore which was the great driver for this success. After that it was about seeing which areas were the best for future collaborations.

You have organised events such as the Finnish film festival with the help of volunteers and you do not even charge for admission. In Singapore we like to charge. What is your advice to us about this approach to organising activities?

Actually I feel many Singaporeans do a lot of volunteer work. I see much is being done for the communities here. In fact, this is something I'd like to bring back to Finland. We are most critical about ourselves as a society so when there's talk about our education system or being the happiest nation in the world we are quite critical. I think Singapore does a lot about giving back to society...of giving back some of the goodness. I like this giving back spirit.

Full transcript of interview visit
www.indiplomacy.com

US Congressional Delegation Visit

A bipartisan United States Congressional delegation led by Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Florida) called on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (pictured right) on 23rd April 2019 at the Istana. The delegation comprised



Photo by Ministry of Communications and Information

Congressman Ed Case (D-Hawaii), Congressman John Rutherford (R-Florida), Congressman Matt Cartwright (D-Pennsylvania), Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-New Jersey), and Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence (D-Michigan). During the call, PM Lee and the Congressional delegation affirmed the robust, multifaceted and long-standing relationship between Singapore and the US. The Congressional delegation expressed appreciation for Singapore's consistent support

for the US engagement of the region, including by providing the US access to Singapore's military facilities. Both sides also exchanged views on recent regional and international developments. The Congressional delegation visited Singapore from 22nd to 25th April 2019. During their visit, they were hosted to breakfast by Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen and met Speaker of Parliament Tan Chuan-jin.

8th FOSS Forum



The 8th Forum of Small States (FOSS) Fellowship Programme took place from 1st to 5th April 2019. Singapore hosted the study visit by 11 Ambassadors (pictured above) accredited to the UN Office at Geneva or based in London. They exchanged views and experiences with Singapore's leaders and policy makers on international developments, including the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Government agencies also briefed them on Singapore's approach towards sustainable development, urban development, maritime affairs, civil aviation, building social harmony, overcoming inequality, education, and governance.

Note: FOSS was founded by Singapore in 1992 as an informal forum at the UN for small states to exchange views and share best practices on issues of common interest. 107 countries are now members of FOSS.

DPM Teo Chee Hean Shanghai Stopover

Eighth business council to be set up in Shanghai between Singapore and China

Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security Teo Chee Hean visited Shanghai, the People's Republic of China on 13 April 2019. Shanghai is Deputy Prime Minister Teo's third leg of his six-day visit to China, after Beijing and Suzhou.

Deputy Prime Minister Teo met Member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Secretary of the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee Li Qiang. They reaffirmed the substantive and longstanding ties between Singapore and Shanghai. They discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation, including in financial services, urban management and social governance. Both leaders looked forward to the establishment of the Singapore-Shanghai Comprehensive Cooperation Council, which would further strengthen and broaden engagements between Singapore and Shanghai.

This is the eighth business council to be set up between Singapore and China. The council is one of the initiatives that was raised from the last Joint Council for the Bilateral Cooperation (JCBC) meeting held in Singapore last September. The JCBC is the highest level platform for directing bilateral relations between Singapore and China.

DPM Teo also attended Singapore Day in Shanghai with more than 3,500 overseas Singaporeans. He next travelled to Yan'an (Shaanxi) to co-chair the 7th Singapore-China Forum on Leadership with Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC and CPC Central Committee Organisation Department Minister Chen Xi.

Visit Marked 50th Anniversary of Polish and Singapore Diplomatic Ties



Polish Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz (seated in front left) met his counterpart Dr Vivian Balakrishnan and discussed the friendly and growing bilateral ties (Source: Singapore MFA)

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, HE Jacek Czaputowicz, made an introductory visit to Singapore, in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Poland and Singapore between 24th to 27th April 2019.

He was met by Singapore's Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan who hosted a luncheon for Minister Czaputowicz. The two discussed the friendly and growing bilateral relationship, and areas where they can enhance ties. They also reaffirmed their shared commitment to international law, free trade and multilateralism. Minister Czaputowicz expressed Poland's

continued support for the recently signed EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA), EU-Singapore Investment Protection Agreement (EUSIPA) and EU-Singapore Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (ESPCA).

During his visit he delivered the 37th International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)-Fullerton Lecture titled 'Poland's Perspective on the European Union, Asia, and the Rules-Based International System' on 24th April. The next day he attended the Poland Constitution Day Reception organised by the Embassy of Poland and met representatives from the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR).

Singapore - Malaysia Retreat: Leaders Address Maritime and Airspace Issues



The prime ministers at a joint press conference on the 9th Leaders' Retreat (Source: Singapore PMO)

A Joint Statement was issued by Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong following the 9th Leaders' Retreat in Putrajaya on 9th April 2019. At a joint press conference on the Retreat, Prime Minister Lee said, "Our relationship is rooted in our long history, and strong family and business ties. This has remained unchanged even with the new Malaysian government. We have worked hard to strengthen these ties and to overcome issues which have risen, for example, when Malaysia informed us of their wish to review the KL-Singapore High Speed Rail, we worked out a suspension arrangement together."

He also added that he and Prime Minister Mahathir have affirmed their commitment to a cooperative and forward-looking bilateral relationship and that "We also addressed current bilateral issues, including maritime boundaries and airspace."

Joint Statement

1. Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong met in Putrajaya on 9 April 2019 for the 9th Malaysia-Singapore Leaders' Retreat. This being their first Retreat together, both Leaders iterated their renewed commitment to this continuing annual engagement as a platform for cooperation and discussing issues of mutual concern.

2. Reflecting on the strong historical links, and 54 years of diplomatic relations that bind both nations, both Leaders reiterated their commitment to preserving the vital relations and to improving bilateral ties on the basis of equality and mutual respect. The steady stream of visits and exchanges over the past year demonstrates both countries' commitment to developing new areas of cooperation. The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to resolve issues of concern in an amicable and constructive manner.

3. Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir

Mohamad congratulated Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on Singapore's successful Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2018. The Leaders also welcomed the development of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network, as a platform to pursue smart city projects to improve the lives of ASEAN citizens. The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of ASEAN in maintaining regional stability and promoting closer economic integration. They reiterated their support for the ASEAN-centric regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based. Both Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together and the ASEAN Leaders' Vision for a Resilient and Innovative ASEAN.

4. Both Leaders underscored the strong bilateral economic ties between Malaysia and Singapore and emphasised the importance of deepening trade and investment cooperation in the current uncertain global environment.

5. Singapore and Malaysia have always been major economic partners. Singapore is Malaysia's largest source of tourist arrivals, while around 1.2 million visitors from Malaysia visit Singapore every year. Both countries are each other's second largest trading partner. Bilateral trade increased by an average of 12% per annum from 2016 to 2018. Likewise, both countries are also important investment partners to each other.

6. The Leaders noted the strong ties between the business communities from Singapore and Malaysia. They noted the broad scope for companies from both countries to collaborate widely, especially in areas such as digital economy and Industry 4.0.

For the full statement please visit
www.indiplomacy.com

COMMUNIQUÉ

Diplomats Join the Bazaar for Good

Diplomats join President Halimah Yacob in the launch of Singapore International Foundation's (SIF) first Bazaar for Good

The Bazaar which opened on 7th April showcased the Foundation's work across five focus areas and brought together 70 Citizen Ambassadors and Friends of Singapore to showcase the positive social impact that can be achieved through cross-border collaborations between Singaporeans and members of the international community.

President Halimah, the patron of the SIF, said: "In this era marked by global uncertainty, international communities have to work together to address shared challenges, from sustainable development to fostering



VIPs on the front row (from left): Ambassador Fabrice Filliez, Switzerland's Ambassador to Singapore; Ms Valerie Cheng, Director, Content & Services, National Library Board; Mr Lian Wee Cheow, SIF Governor; Ms Juthika Ramanathan, SIF Governor; Ms Jean Tan, SIF Executive Director; President Halimah Yacob, SIF Patron; Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, SIF Chairman; Mr Tan Kai Ping, SIF Governor; Ms Hidayah Ong, SIF Governor and Ms Lee Huay Leng, SIF Governor His Excellency Jawed Ashraf, High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Singapore

inclusiveness. The SIF's mission is especially relevant now because it enables cross-cultural collaborations and empowers global citizens to do their part in promoting lasting peace and

stability. I am hopeful that many Singaporeans and our friends of Singapore will come forward to pledge their commitment towards a better world."

South Africa's 25th Freedom Day 26th Apr 2019

The Hilton Ballroom

The South Africa High Commission in Singapore celebrated its Freedom Day here on 26th April at the Hilton Ballroom with Singapore being represented by Dr Maliki Osman, Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The celebration is a day earlier than usual as Freedom Day falls on 27th April each year to mark the country's first democratic elections in 1994. There was indeed much to celebrate as South Africa's High Commissioner HE Modise Casalis Mokitlane highlighted in his speech that there are many opportunities open to Singaporean companies and enterprises through the South African government's infrastructure and industrialisation programmes. He also said, by using South Africa as a base, Singaporean companies can tap into the continent's growing infrastructure corridors and expand their trade and investments to the rest of Africa.

Senior Minister Dr Maliki in his speech paid tribute to South African leader Nelson Mandela who was commemorated with a centenary celebration of his birth last year and said it was fitting that South Africa begins its two-year term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council this year. He said Singapore and South Africa are close partners in the United Nations and, "We stand ready to work with the Rainbow Nation to further the goals of the UN in line with Mr Mandela's commitment to peace." The Senior Minister was accompanied by his parliamentary colleagues Ms Foo Mee Har and Ms Cheng Li Hui to the event.

