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Issue 72 March 2022

## UKRAINE CRISIS



### United Nations

- Demands End to Russian Offensive
- Safety of Ukrainians Top Priority



- ### Singapore
- Implications of Ukraine Situation



### Official Visit

- H.H. Prince Faisal Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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- State Visit Vietnamese President H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc

- International Women's Day Special: Women in Diplomacy



**PUBLISHER** Sun Media Pte Ltd

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** Nomita Dhar

**EDITORIAL** Raneey Sahaney  
Syed Jaafar Alkaff

**ADVERTISING & RESEARCH** Siddarth Koul  
Jenny Tan

**DESIGN & LAYOUT** Syed Jaafar Alkaff

**PHOTOGRAPHS** Singapore's Prime Minister Office, Ministry of Culture and Information and Ministry of Foreign Affairs

### Contact

Sun Media Pte Ltd  
20 Kramat Lane #01-02 United House,  
Singapore 228773.  
Tel: (65) 6735 2972 / 1907 / 2986  
Fax: (65) 6735 3114  
Email: edit@sunmediaonline.com

**Website** www.indiplomacy.com

For advertising enquiries contact:  
Swati Singh m: (65) 9082 9590  
Email: swati@sunmediaonline.com

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- H.E. Natália Carrascalão (Timor-Leste)



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# Presentation of Credentials

The presentation of credentials to President Halimah Yacob at the Istana on 15th February 2022

## H.E. Mauricio Nine, Ambassador of the Argentine Republic



**PRIOR** to his accreditation here Ambassador Mauricio Nine diplomatic career has taken him to the Argentine Embassies in Ecuador, Libya and Chile, where he held different positions. He headed the consular office in Ecuador, and the commercial

and political offices in Chile. He was also the Chargé d'Affaires in Libya.

The Ambassador joined the Argentine diplomatic service in 2002, starting out in the Directorate General for Environmental Affairs and rising through the ranks to the position of Director of the Office for Human Security, Innovation, and International Technological Affairs.

He graduated from the Law School of the Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina. He pursued his postgraduate studies in Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Spain, earning a Master's Degree in International Relations from the Instituto Universitario Ortega y Gasset. He subsequently obtained a Master's Degree in Foreign Affairs at the Université Libre de Bruxelles in Brussels, Belgium.

Mauricio Nine is fluent in Spanish, English, French and Portuguese. He is married to Abigail Charlotte Brown and they have two teenage children.

## H.E. Kent Härstedt, Ambassador of Kingdom of Sweden



**PRIOR** to his appointment as Ambassador to Singapore, Ambassador Härstedt served as the Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office. He remains the Swedish Government's Special Envoy for the Korean Peninsula.

From 1998 to 2018, Ambassador Härstedt was a Member of Parliament and served on the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees. He was a member of the Swedish Parliamentary Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) from 2010 to 2018 and acted as head of delegation from 2014 to 2018. Ambassador Härstedt was the OSCE PA Vice-President from 2015 to 2018, and took part in 19 international election observation missions, leading three of them. Other experiences include serving as political advisor in various parts of the Swedish Government offices, including the Prime Minister's Office. Ambassador Härstedt was also the President of Swedish UNICEF and board member of the Swedish National Institute for Public Health, and the Swedish Institute.

Ambassador Härstedt studied Political Science and South East Asian Program at Lund University. He has one son.



Singapore's national flower is a hybrid orchid - the Vanda Miss Joaquim

## Why Diplomacy Matters

**SINGAPORE** has more than 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's* mission is to communicate and be a bridge between the diplomatic community and Singaporeans.

## Cover Story

# Singapore's Position & What are the Implications

Singapore's Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan outlines Singapore's concerns and the actions the country has taken to "stand up for principles that are the very foundation for the independence and sovereignty of smaller nations, our own right to exist and prosper as a nation..."

**ON** 28th February 2022 Singapore's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan presented a Ministerial Statement on the situation in Ukraine and what are the implications for what he described as the "unprovoked invasion of a sovereign state."

The government expressed grave concern of the economic effects of the war such as rising electricity and petrol prices.

However, the Minister said the principal reason the situation is important to the country is because "The events in Ukraine go to the heart of the fundamental norms of international law and the UN Charter, that prohibit the use of force and acts of aggression against another sovereign State. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a clear and gross violation of the international norms and a completely unacceptable precedent. This is an existential issue for us. Ukraine is much smaller than Russia, but it is much bigger than Singapore. A world order based on "might is right", or where "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must", such a world order would be profoundly inimical to the security and survival of small states. We cannot accept one country attacking another without justification, arguing that its independence was the result of "historical errors and crazy decisions". Such a rationale would go against the internationally recognised legitimacy and the territorial integrity of many countries, including Singapore."

Foreign Minister Balakrishnan also highlighted that while Singapore values its good relations with Russia and the Russian people, it cannot accept such violations of sovereignty and territorial integrity of another sovereign state. That is why the Island Republic was one of the 82 co-sponsors of a UN Security Council draft resolution to condemn Russia's aggression against the Ukraine.

He also said, "Singapore has always complied fully with sanctions and decisions of the UN Security Council, but we have rarely acted to impose sanctions on other countries in the absence of binding Security Council

decisions or directions. However, given the unprecedented gravity of the Russian attack on Ukraine, and the unsurprising veto by Russia of a draft Security Council resolution, Singapore intends to act in concert with many other like-minded countries to impose appropriate sanctions and restrictions against Russia. In particular, we will impose export controls on items that can be used directly as weapons in Ukraine to inflict harm or to subjugate the Ukrainians. We will also block certain Russian banks and financial transactions connected to Russia."

The Ministerial Statement also outlined several lessons for Singaporeans to draw from the current Ukrainian crisis.

To read the full transcript of the Ministerial Statement visit:  
[www.indiplomacy.com](http://www.indiplomacy.com)



*"This is worth repeating – instead of choosing sides, we uphold principles. Consequently, when we conduct our foreign policy in a coherent and consistent manner, we also become reliable partners for those who operate on the same principles. However, there will be occasions when we will have to take a stand even if it is contrary to one or more powers on the basis of principle – as we are doing now."*

- Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan

## World's Response to Ukraine Crisis

The world unites to demand an end to the Russian offensive in Ukraine. Unprecedented total of 141 countries out of 193 voted for the UN resolution for Russia to immediately end its military operations in Ukraine

**UN** News report on 2nd March 2022 described how the General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a resolution on Wednesday demanding that Russia immediately end its military operations in Ukraine.

A total of 141 countries voted in favour of the resolution, which reaffirms Ukrainian sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Assembly President Abdulla Shahid struggled to read the results of the vote as ambassadors began applauding, and then standing up, as he started speaking.

### Unconditionally Withdraw

The resolution demands that Russia "immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces from the territory

of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders."

It was sponsored by more than 90 countries and needed a two-thirds majority in the Assembly to pass. Five countries - Belarus, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (more commonly known as North Korea) Eritrea, Russia and Syria - voted against it, while 35 abstained.

The voting capped off a rare special emergency session of the General Assembly that began on Monday, during which countries took to the podium to declare their positions on the crisis, now entering a second week.

For more reports & updates visit  
[www.indiplomacy.com](http://www.indiplomacy.com)

## State & Official Visits

# Saudi Arabia's New Foreign Minister Prince Faisal's First Official Visit



(Top row from l): His Highness Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud with President Halimah Yacob; Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong; Mr Kadir Maideen (MUIS), Minister in Charge of Muslim Affairs, Masagos Zulkifli, and Saudi Ambassador to Singapore Abdullah Mohammed A. Almadhi. (Far right): Second Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Mohd Maliki Osman and Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan

**THE** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Foreign Affairs Minister, His Highness Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud arrived in Singapore on January 13, 2022 on his maiden official visit, at the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan. The longstanding relations between Singapore and Saudi Arabia

## Strengthening Singapore - Vietnam Strategic Partnership

State Visit by President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, and Madam Tran Nguyet Thu from 24 to 26 February 2022 at the invitation of Singapore President, H.E. Halimah Yacob



**DURING** the visit President Nguyen Xuan Phuc and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong witnessed the exchange of a series of bilateral agreements, (see box story) On the sidelines of the State visit, 28 business MOUs were signed between Vietnam's provinces and businesses

with their counterparts. The Leaders reaffirmed the strong and substantive bilateral relationship, and reviewed the multi-faceted cooperation in areas including trade and investment, defence, education, finance, transport, agri-trade, intellectual property, technical assistance, and people-to-people ties. Both Leaders also noted the high-level engagements last year, including Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's meeting with Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh in April 2021.

For more information visit:  
[www.indiplomacy.com](http://www.indiplomacy.com)

### Bilateral Agreements Signed

- Renewal of the Defence Cooperation Agreement
- Memorandum of Understanding on Economic and Trade Cooperation between the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam and Singapore
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam and Singapore for cooperation in the field of Digital Economy
- Memorandum of Understanding on the Cooperation Programme for 2022-2024 between the Vietnam Fatherland Front and The People's Association
- Implementation Workplan on Intellectual Property Cooperation, pursuant to the Memorandum of Bilateral Cooperation



were underscored by the visit which comes at a time when the two nations are celebrating 45 years of diplomatic relations between this year. Prince Faisal called separately on President Halimah Yacob then, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Istana.

During the course of the reception, Prince Faisal conveyed the greetings from Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, to President Yacob, the government and the people of Singapore.

In response the Singaporean President conveyed her warm greetings and appreciation to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the Crown Prince and to the Saudi government and people. She also said she welcomed the inaugural Saudi-Singapore Joint Committee (SSJC) meeting held in Riyadh last month.

President Halimah congratulated Saudi Arabia for its successful management of the haj pilgrimage and reiterated Singapore's request for an increased haj quota when it is resumed for Singaporean pilgrims.

For the full report visit:  
[www.indiplomacy.com](http://www.indiplomacy.com)

# EVENTS

## Ministerial Forum on Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific 22nd Feb 2022



(From left): French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian, Dr Balakrishnan with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell in Paris

**SINGAPORE'S** Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan participated in the **Ministerial Forum on Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific** in Paris on 22nd February 2022. He co-chaired a roundtable discussion on **Connectivity and Digital Issues** alongside European Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen. The Forum was hosted by France in its capacity as the President of the Council of the European Union.

At the roundtable, Minister Balakrishnan spoke about the transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world, the need for interoperable, common and open standards whilst protecting privacy amidst the digital revolution, and the shared challenge of the global commons. He said digital interactions must be based on trust, protection of privacy, cybersecurity and inclusion. In his closing remarks the Minister emphasised the need for partnerships similar to some agreements already made in Singapore: "We concluded the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement with partners like Australia, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom. These establish a framework for G2G cooperation. This is particularly important when you deal with emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence."

## Seminar on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific 24th Feb 2022



(Above): Conversation between Ambassador Ong Keng Yong and Mr Gabriele Visentin, EU Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific. (Below right): H.E. Iwona Piórko Ambassador of the EU Delegation to Singapore

**THE** seminar on the EU Strategy for Cooperation on the Indo-Pacific organised by the EU and S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) took place on the same day as the invasion of Russia into Ukraine. The event started with the Ambassador of the EU Delegation to Singapore H.E. Iwona Piórko strongly condemning Russia for the act of aggression.

Mr Gabriele Visentin, the EU's Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific was the featured speaker for the seminar. He had flown directly from Paris where the first Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific had just ended a couple of days earlier. The EU published its strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in September 2021, including a commitment to maintain a rules-based order in the region that stretches from the Middle East to the Pacific Islands.

In light of the Russian invasion *IN Diplomacy* asked the Special Envoy will the EU still be able to keep up a high level of engagement with the Indo-Pacific theatre. He replied: "The European Commission and the EU is a geopolitical power and as a geopolitical power we are present all over the world. Even when there is a crisis in our immediate neighbourhood like Ukraine this does not take away our attention from the Indo-Pacific or any other part

of the world. The fact that the Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific took place in Paris on the same day of the Russian aggression makes it clear that we can take care of the various theatres at the same time."



This view was echoed by Ambassador Piórko who reiterated the commitment by the EU to stay engaged and active in the Indo-Pacific theatre. She highlighted: "The event (full scale invasion) is so unprecedented that the whole world is paying very close attention obviously. But I do think we will carry on cooperating with the same determination with all our partners around the globe. We are very serious about our partnerships and there is a very clear strategy in the Indo-Pacific and ASEAN is in the centre and a strategic partner for us." The Ambassador was pleased that despite the news of the invasion they still went on with the seminar and the Special Envoy was able to answer the many, detailed questions asked at the event.



### What is the World Doing about Sustainability?

Read how almost 30 nations are tackling it in **IN Diplomacy ANNUAL 2021/22**  
 Email [edit@sunmediaonline.com](mailto:edit@sunmediaonline.com)  
 to order your print copy



# WOMEN IN DIPLOMACY

IN Diplomacy Celebrates  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY  
8th March 2022

by inviting six outstanding diplomats to share their stories about life as a woman diplomat representing their country. What they find most satisfaction in their chosen profession, the challenges and how it has been (so far) looking after their careers and families



Following are extracts, for the full version of each of their stories visit:  
[www.indiplomacy.com](http://www.indiplomacy.com)



► **H.E. DR MICHAELA FROŇKOV**  
Czech Republic Ambassador to Singapore

WORKING in the diplomatic service is a wonderful opportunity for getting to know, understand and respect people from different parts of the world, while presenting your country and promoting its views and projects in bilateral relations or in the wider international environment, remains the main goal and engine of my work.

*Health Services, an important area of diplomacy, brings great satisfaction*

If I should focus on the important area of diplomacy, that brings me the most satisfaction and also the happiest moments, it is cooperation and help of my country in health services. The Czech Republic has a high level of credit in this area and is therefore able to be very effective where doctors or other health professionals are needed.



► **H.E. Sandra Jensen Landi**  
Ambassador of Denmark to Singapore

THE number of women in diplomacy is increasing and I am always happy when I have an opportunity to welcome another woman in the diplomatic group. However, we see in larger meetings that we are still a minority. During my career, I have found myself to be the only woman in a full meeting room so many times that I stopped counting. Luckily, it is becoming rarer and more women are moving up the ranks.

*A diplomatic career can be very exciting*

Today, dual careers are common in Denmark, which means that men and women in the Foreign Service share this challenge and it has become an obstacle to the mobility of all Danish diplomats. It is recognised as a legitimate challenge, but there are no easy fixes in a job, where you have to shift around the world.

► **H.E. IWONA PIÓRKO**  
Ambassador of the European Union to Singapore

THESE are difficult times. My thoughts go out to families in Ukraine who are showing immense courage. We hear stories of heroism that inspire. Of Ukrainian women and girls defending their homeland and fighting for universal values of freedom. They are not alone and never will be. This is a defining moment where we see the free world speaking with one voice.

During war, women and girls are the most vulnerable to exploitation and violence. We need to ensure that their rights and safety are upheld even more in such circumstances.

Women play an essential role in maintaining stable and secure democracies. Women are agents of change in society, and the strongly held view in the EU is that in order to transform economies and societies, women and girls must be empowered.

*Women are agents of change in society*





▶ **H.E. JUDIT PACH**  
Ambassador of Hungary to Singapore

*IN Hungary we have 21 women ambassadors and 5 consul generals which are numbers growing every year.*

*Personally I was appointed at the beginning of this process and back then the numbers were much more in favour of men. In 2015 I was the youngest ambassador AND a woman.*

*Before becoming an ambassador I was in other leading positions in the administration and everywhere I experienced that there are still some stereotypes which women need to face, but there are also several advantages and possibilities which we can use.*

*If we think of it, strategically it's always better to be underestimated. Although one might often experience a struggle to prove oneself, but at the same time there is more chance to amaze and to overwhelm and to make a lasting impression.*

*Fashion diplomacy is something which needs to be taken seriously and women have a much broader toolkit to formulate messages with their looks. Nowadays when social media and photo and video contents are important tools of diplomacy, fashion diplomacy and self-branding are inevitable.*

**Strategically it's better to be underestimated- there is more chance to amaze**

**H.E. MAGDALENA BOGDZIEWICZ** ◀  
Ambassador of Poland to Singapore

*SECURING equal access to the top positions among men and women should be our everyday concern. In my home country women were granted voting rights as early as in 1918, just two weeks after Poland regained independence. This was a strong message consolidating women's public roles and reflecting the acceptance for their civil rights in a society. Poland's transition to democracy and free market in the 90's opened new paths to develop individual entrepreneurial spirit and establish a privately own company. Women in Poland seized the opportunity in large numbers and throughout the years rose to SME's CEOs. In 2020 Poland was ranked the 5th best country in the world for female entrepreneurs.*

*Today Poland fares well in rankings reflecting women's position and rights*

*in the workplace. Women currently hold 29% of the seats in the Parliament, and since the 90's Poland has had three female Prime Ministers and two Speakers of the Parliament.*

*We do our part at the diplomatic service in promoting the policy of equal chances and implementing good practices. The most challenging issues women in diplomacy face are the balance between work and family and the perceived necessity to sacrifice one over another. Moving abroad and expanding responsibilities is a privilege but it also requires several adjustments by the diplomat and the entire family. I am proud to have climbed the diplomatic ladder from the very bottom. Learning diplomacy is a team work that requires excellence and passion, as well as the virtue of humility and respect.*



**Actively tapping into women's potential in the professional, public and political life**



▶ **H.E. NATÁLIA CARRASCALÃO**  
Ambassador Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste to the Republic of Singapore

*I was born in Timor-Leste, to an exiled political Portuguese father and strong and humble woman from the luxurious mountains of my small country. Timor-Leste is a developing country, that has been independent for over 20 years. During the period that Timor-Leste was under Indonesian administration, I embraced a political career, in Portugal, and served 3 terms as a member of the Portuguese parliament. With this background and with a strong belief that we all have a part in helping Timor-Leste develop to its full potential, I became an ambassador in 2009, after holding diverse political and public roles and offices, both in Timor-Leste and in Portugal.*

**Countering challenges conciliating a demanding professional and personal life in diplomacy**

*Becoming the third woman to be nominated Ambassador of the Republic of Timor-Leste has brought me a great honour and the sense of mission to not only represent my country but also women in diplomacy. Conciliating a demanding career in diplomacy with personal life and family life has presented its challenges.*

*It has been my challenge and victory to be able to achieve a recognised professional, political and diplomatic career (having been graced with 2 medals of honour distinctions by H. E. President Anibal Cavaco Silva in Portugal and by H. E. Peace Nobel Laureate Jose Ramos Horta in Timor-Leste), with many sacrifices in a man's world.*