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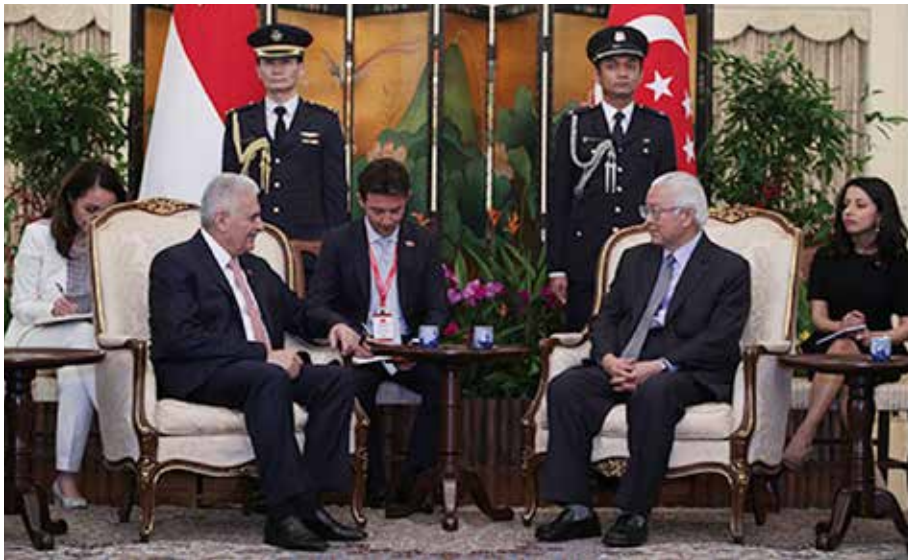
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Turkey-Singapore Bilateral Ties Strengthened with New FTA



PM Yildirim calling on President Tony Tan Keng Yam at the Istana (Source: Istana.gov.sg)

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, HE Binali Yildirim, made his first official visit to Singapore from 20 to 22 August 2017, at the invitation of PM Lee Hsien Loong. The visiting delegation included: Deputy PM Mehmet Şimşek and Recep Akdağ, Minister of Science, Industry and Technology Faruk Özlü, Minister of Economy Nihat Zeybekci, Minister of Customs and Trade Bülent Tüfenkçi, senior government officials and a business delegation. During the visit a Free Trade Agreement was ratified between Turkey and Singapore and PM Yildirim also delivered the 41st Singapore Lecture, titled “Turkey-Singapore Relations: Building a Smart Strategic Partnership.”

An orchid was also named in his honour at the Botanical Gardens and the delegation also made site visits to Jurong Island and the PSA’s port facilities. Prime Minister Yildirim’s visit reaffirms the warm and growing bilateral relations between Singapore and Turkey, and builds on the Strategic Partnership signed in 2014.

The FTA will come into force on 1st October 2017 following its signing in November 2015 and covers many sectors including goods, services, e-commerce, competition and transparency. PM Yildirim was reported as saying that bilateral trade is increasing and the FTA would contribute to raising the trading volume between the two countries. Since 2007, bilateral trade has passed S\$1 billion mark annually.

Last year, Turkey was Singapore’s 46th largest



PM Binali Yildirim delivered the 41st Singapore Lecture (Source: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute)

Trading partner with total trade in goods worth S\$1.41 billion. Last year, imports from Turkey totalled S\$753 million which mainly consisted of petroleum oils, turbo propellers and parts, and semi-manufactured silver. Singapore’s exports to Turkey during the same period totalled S\$657 million, comprising mainly polyethylene and turbo jet components while Turkish direct investment in Singapore was S\$135 million as of 2015; Singapore’s direct investment in Turkey as of 2015 was S\$218 million.

Presently both countries cooperate in areas like defence, counter-terrorism, education and provision of technical assistance to other countries.

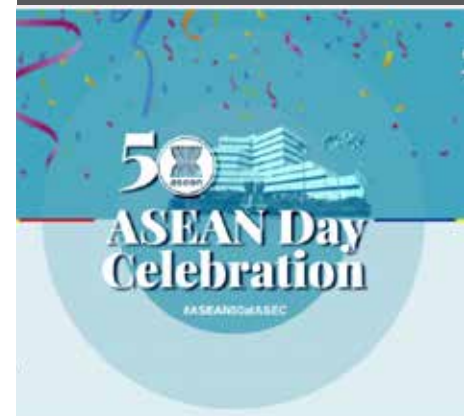
ALSO INSIDE:

Interview with Swiss Ambassador HE Thomas Kupfer

Switzerland-Singapore Celebrations 2017



ASEAN Day Report



On 21 August 2017, Prime Minister Binali Yildirim delivered the 41st Singapore Lecture, which was chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam. The lecture which is an “intellectual highlight designed for world statesmen and leaders to present their insights on relevant issues of regional significance to a wider audience in Singapore” was organized by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies or ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute. The last speaker in the Singapore Lecture series was former French President François Hollande.

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SWITZERLAND - SINGAPORE ON THE SAME PAGE

Switzerland's Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore, HE Thomas Kupfer, shares many aspects of the close links between the two countries, the cultural exchanges they share and the importance of Asia and the ASEAN region to his country, while speaking to Ms Nomita Dhar, Editor-in-Chief In Diplomacy

It's an important juncture in Switzerland-Singapore bilateral relations as the two countries celebrate their ties which go back to the 1830s, even before Singapore became an independent nation. The ambassador, HE Thomas Kupfer, emphasised how the many similarities between Switzerland and Singapore have been the glue for the strengthening of bonds between the two nations. Singapore was an important hub for trade in South East Asia and many Swiss firms involved in the food business, textiles and banking business had set up a base on this strategic island, well before it gained independence. "We started our nation to nation co-operation almost immediately after

Singapore. This makes for an excellent giveaway which can be presented to ministers, businessmen and even school kids. The year has been marked by high level visits and cultural events. The President of the Swiss Parliament visited Singapore along with some of his colleagues earlier this year, a piano recital at the Botanic Garden and the Swiss-Singapore Football Festival were also organised.

The similarities between the two countries continue to be a major factor in their growing support of each other and the strengthening of this co-operation. Both are small countries but tall in their aspirations and inspirations. Their pursuit of excellence is a common thread that



dreds of Swiss companies here....many of them big companies in banking, pharma, food, logistics, science....also many medium-sized companies who have built up their headquarters here, for South East Asia, ASEAN and Asia Pacific... all which are expected to grow exponentially." Singapore is also Switzerland's most important trading partner in South Asia, but there is also excellent co-operation in the economic, financial, science and technology and educational fields.

Over 350 Swiss firms have representative offices in the island-nation with excellent support from the Swiss Business Hub (SBH) and the Swiss-Asian Chamber of Commerce in



Today the two countries are celebrating 50 years of good relations and cooperation in many areas. To mark this special occasion the Swiss embassy in Singapore has designed a special logo and brought out postcard booklet commemorating these 50 years by highlighting some of the attractions of Switzerland and Singapore. This makes for an excellent giveaway which can be presented to ministers, businessmen and even school children.

Singapore's independence and because of our many similarities from the very beginning Switzerland and Singapore have been an inspiration in many areas for constructing our countries, our societies and our economic development," says the ambassador.

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runs through all operational areas whether its trade, finance, science and technology and is a great driving force in their movement forward. Though the system of governance between the two nations may be different they have many common goals such as good governance and stability for the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural environment that both share. Both countries have balanced the old with the new...rooted yet innovative, to serve their people, says the ambassador.

HE Kupfer points out, "The Swiss economy is very present in Singapore...we have hun-

Asia. The main thrust of these regional offices is in the area of banking, financial services and software. Science and technology is another area of importance and in the light of this in 2015, a science and technology office (STO) was set up as an integral part of the diplomatic section of the Swiss embassy in Singapore. The STO is part of the global swissnex network of the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) which aims at strengthening Switzerland's leadership as a world-class location for science, education and innovation.

This provides an excellent medium for both

scholars and artists from Singapore to apply for Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships. It has played a pioneering role in promoting exchanges in the area of Swiss and Singaporean education and research.

In fact, the area of science, research and education are rapidly growing areas of co-operation for the two nations. Three top Swiss public universities ETH Zurich, (ETH-Centre (SEC) for research with the CREATE (Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise), Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) and the university of St Gallen with the St.Gallen Institute of Management in Asia, are represented in Singapore; the ambassador shares that Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL), one of the world's leading hospitality institutes, is even looking at setting up a campus here. Exchanges and discussions are an important aspect of this drive between the two nations. Singapore has particular interest in the Swiss vocational training system as employment is one of its key concerns.

In 2016, HE reveals, Switzerland became a Sectorial dialogue partner of ASEAN. "It is a part of our overall Asian policy. It is a key factor for us to be interested in Asia and ASEAN—both very important for us. Being a member of Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), an exclusively Asian-European forum to which facilitates discussions on political, economic and cultural relations and various forms of cooperation between its partners, underscores the importance the region of Asia is for Switzerland, which, though it is not a member of the European Union (but is close to it) continues to pursue its own interests in a region growing in importance for Europe. ASEM, he reiterates, links Asia and Europe by facilitating discussion on political, economic and cultural relations and this is very important. With Singapore as the ASEAN Chair next year, the ambassador says they will be able to build on the dialogues they want to initiate in Manila, which is the present Chair. "I think it's very essential for both sides, for Europeans to have these strong relations with Asian countries as there is a huge potential for further economic development," says HE.

"We don't have a military presence here in Asia," he shares, "but we are also interested in what's happening here and what the concerns in Asia are... and as I said before, a bilateral co-operation covers many areas." He points out that apart from the modern issues of technologies etc what is also important for co-operation is people-to-people relations and cultural co-operation. This has to be organised not by the state but by civil society, because this is a very important way to understand that this is not all about business. It's also about exchange of culture. Speaking about the importance of tourism between the two countries HE shares that it's a very important part of cultural exchange for it is how societies learn about each other.

He points out that while countries such as Switzerland and Singapore heighten their co-operation to become more advanced one cannot rule out the challenges that come in the way of that development and desire to maintain a high quality of life. All societies who strive for this also have to see the importance of national cohesion which is increasingly a challenge in a world where hatred and racism is prevailing, "Maybe not in our countries, but in the regions out there and we have to fight against them to maintain peace and prosperity in our countries," he says.

On a lighter note he shares the things he enjoys best about Singapore...the *laksa* (even if you need to change your shirt because it is spicy hot!); playing golf on the weekends when he's not busy, not just with other diplomats but also Singaporean friends and how he enjoys strolls around China Town, Little India and the city's scenic hotspots especially looking at its wonderful skyline. He also touched on Swiss cuisine and how pleased he was to see how Singaporean tastes in food are changing. Now when they serve fondue, the famous Swiss dish with cheese, there are long waiting queues as it is a popular item.

EVENT Swiss National Day | August 2017

Celebrations at the... Swiss Residence

The official celebrations for Switzerland's National Day in Singapore was held at the Swiss Residence on 1st August 2017 where HE Thomas Kupfer welcomed guests, who included guest of honour Singapore's Senior Minister of State Ms Sim Ann and two Members of Parliament, Ms Tin Pei Ling and Mr Saktiandi Supaat. He started his address by not just outlining the similarities and differences between the two nations but also highlighted what he felt were the two most significant factors the two countries share, "The responsibility our governments and authorities put in serving their country: good governance is central. And also the determination to provide our inhabitants with the tools for welfare and prosperity - whereby we put the necessary emphasis on self-responsibility and self-initiative." For the full text of his speech click [here](#).



(Above): Ambassador Kupfer (middle) with Ms Sim Ann (2nd from left) and (4th & 5th from left) Ms Tin Pei Ling and Mr Saktiandi Supaat resp. (Below): Afterparty photo of the hardworking Swiss embassy team at the Swiss Residence



Swiss Club



The party mood moved on to the Swiss Club for more fun and spirited celebration by the Swiss community and friends in Singapore! (Photo source: Swiss Club, Singapore FB Page)

Paragon

All things Swiss were definitely in the limelight from 27 July to 13 August 2017 at one of Singapore's leading shopping centres on Orchard Road. A slew of activities were held that included themed displays and performances on tourism & travel, sports and timepieces. Items that made quite an impression on visitors included musical performances by the Swiss Classical Folk Trio, the 50 Years Switzerland-Singapore Postcard and Swiss Watch Making exhibitions, 360 Virtual Reality videos and games of Alpine Golf and Table Cow Football!



BT Newspaper Supplement

The *Business Times* newspaper published a supplement on the Switzerland-Singapore National Day click [here](#) to view

ASEAN Still Going Strong at 50



(Top): ASEAN ambassadors and high commissioners engaged in the ASEAN handshake. (Right): Launch of "Fifty Years of ASEAN and Singapore" by Ambassador-at-Large Tommy Koh and his co-authors Chang Li Lin and Sharon Seah. (Photo source: Dr Vivian Balakrishnan FB page)

It was 50 years ago, five foreign ministers – Adam Malik of Indonesia, Narcisco Ramos of the Philippines, Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia, S Rajaratnam of Singapore, and Thanat Khoman of Thailand came together and decided that as small states in Southeast Asia should not let their differences divide them. Singapore Foreign Minister, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, together with members of the ASEAN ambassadors and high commissioners in Singapore came together on 22 August 2017 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the regional group. He said this grouping had, "...committed that we would not be balkanised, we would not be manipulated, we would not be divided or rendered weak by outside forces."

The ASEAN Declaration was signed on 8th of August 1967 in Bangkok and ASEAN came into being. Dr Balakrishnan shared how, "The Declaration was very succinct, only two pages long, but it shows you that in history, sometimes the shortest documents are the most potent. It affirmed our collective commitment to economic growth, social progress, cultural development, and the promotion of regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law."

Since then the regional grouping has enjoyed peace and prosperity. Much of the

...continued from page 1

In a report by ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute covering the talk: "Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim focused his presentation on major deliverables this year for three levels of the Singapore-Turkey relationship. At the bilateral level, the two countries have ratified a 'new generation' free trade agreement, Turkey's first one in Southeast Asia, that will come into operation by October. This year, Turkey became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN with the Prime Minister hoping this will be deepened next year when Singapore assumes

reason for this said the Singapore Foreign Minister was because of the "wisdom and foresight of our founding fathers. If I may borrow the wise words of my predecessor, Mr S Rajaratnam, being part of ASEAN means that we must not only think of national interests but posit them against regional interests. We must accept the fact that regional existence sometimes means painful adjustments from the practice of just thinking in our own national hat, within our respective countries."

He said that ASEAN will need this spirit to remain united, credible and relevant in the next 50 years.

The anniversary celebrations also

the chairmanship of ASEAN. Finally, Singapore and Turkey are major connectivity hubs for trade and exchange between East Asia and Europe. Turkey is committed to supporting China's Belt and Road Initiative both on land and sea through its Middle Corridor plan linking Europe to Central Asia, Afghanistan and China." Click [here](#) to see the full report.

The Singapore Lecture series is "an intellectual highlight designed for world statesmen and leaders to present their insights on relevant issues of regional significance to a wider audience in Singapore". The last one was delivered by French President François Hollande.

ASEAN Today

- Population:** 630 million (60% below 35 years old)
- Combined GDP:** US\$2.5 trillion. Projected to double or triple in the next 10 years and become world's 4th largest economy by 2030.
- Singapore's Trade with ASEAN:** US\$217.1 billion (Singapore's largest trade partner or 25.7% of Singapore's total trade with the world)



A live 'Instagram' message from Indonesian Ambassador HE Ngurah Swajaya (standing far left)

coincided with the launch of the book *Fifty Years of ASEAN and Singapore* by Ambassador-at-Large Tommy Koh and co-authors, Sharon Seah and Chang Li Lin. It chronicles the experiences of the Singapore pioneers who worked tirelessly for the ASEAN cause. Mr Koh was a close friend and colleague of Mr Rajaratnam and one of Singapore's representatives in the High-Level Task Force that drafted the ASEAN Charter.



Hybrid orchid 'Dendrobium Binali Yildirim' named in honour of the Turkish Prime Minister at Singapore's National Orchid Garden. (Photo source: www.daily Sabah / AA Photo)

EVENTS

28 Jun - 9 Sep
Singapore International Festival of Arts 2017's theme is 'Enchantment' - full programme at www.sifa.sg

8 - 27 Aug 8pm
Forbidden City: Portrait of an Empress
 Restaging of arguably the most successful original musical produced in Singapore.

26 Aug 8pm-10pm
Foo Fighters Live in Singapore Winner of 11 Grammys including four Best Rock Albums.

26 Aug 7pm
ANZ Aotearoa Ball 2017 at Shangri-La Hotel with The Black Carpet theme will celebrate all things Kiwi with premium NZ produce, wines as well as traditional pies.

1 Sep 7:30pm - 10 Sep 10pm
Ballet Under the Stars Iconic outdoor dance event that is now in its 22nd edition!

1 - 17 Sep
Sandsational Fun at Sentosa 2017 is billed as Southeast Asia's largest sand festival and will be a great time for the family.

8 Sep 7:30pm-9:30 pm
The Sichuan Orchestra of China perform with special appearance from Seong-Jin Cho, as part of Sands for Singapore Charity Festival 2017.

8 - 10 Sep
Asia International Comedy Fest 2017 features internationally acclaimed comedians in September.

9 Sep
The Annual Africa Society Ball at Sofitel Sentosa for great food, company, drinks and dancing.

10 Sep 7:30am-11am
Singapore International Triathlon 2017 join thousands in this island's pioneer triathlon event

14 Sep 6:30pm-9:30pm
Flying Start F1 Networking Evening is organised by the British Chamber of Commerce Singapore. Venue is at the Atlantic Dining Room @ Tower Club, Republic Plaza



16 Sep 7am-10am
Believe B60 Charity Run 2017 is the only fundraising run with no registration fee (you can donate if you want to) for Care

15 - 17 Sep
The Podium Lounge 2017 at The Grand Ballroom, The Ritz-Carlton, Millenia Singapore feature a star-studded line-up of entertainment acts.

16 - 17 Sep at 10pm
Boudoir Blanc 2017 at the Clifford Pier @ Fullerton Bay Hotel. The premier waterfront trackside afterparty with the theme *Feast for All Senses* to celebrate 10 years of the Singapore GP

From the Embassies....

Click on the cover to read or download the issue



Opportunity Russia 2016



Opportunity Indonesia 2016



It's Time for Brazil in Singapore 2016



Opportunity Malaysia 2016



Saudi Arabia Your Gateway to the Middle East



Uzbekistan Jewel of the Silk Road



Opportunity Nigeria 2016



Partner Philippines 2017



Opportunity Indonesia 2017

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