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COMBATING COVID-19

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with ASEAN, China
& US**

**Declaration on
Maintaining Essential
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by Ghana, Indonesia, Liechtenstein,
Norway, Singapore and Switzerland**



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E-TRAVEL CAMPAIGN

Unspoilt
VIETNAM



Featuring



including
**INTERACTIVE
VIDEO LINKS**





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DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR CORPS SINGAPORE

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.



COMBATING COVID-19



Photo: UN Photo / Mark Garten

Op Ed on Drafting UNGA Resolution on COVID-19

The Foreign Ministers of Ghana, Indonesia, Liechtenstein, Norway, Singapore and Switzerland have jointly submitted an Op Ed on the drafting of the first resolution at the United Nations General Assembly on the combat against COVID-19

The following Op Ed was jointly submitted by HE Ms Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey (Ghana), HE Ms Retno L.P. Marsudi (Indonesia), HE Dr Katrin Eggenberger (Liechtenstein), HE Ms Ine Eriksen Søreide (Norway), HE Dr Vivian Balakrishnan (Singapore) and HE Mr Ignazio Cassis (Switzerland).

“We the peoples of the United Nations...” reads the immortal opening line of the Charter of the United Nations (UN). It paints a picture of the creation of an organisation from the ashes of WWII. A coming together of nations to overcome adversity.

Now 75 years on, in the face of a global pandemic, we must again live up to our founding principles. As the Secretary-General of the UN, Antonio Guterres has underlined, COVID-19 is the greatest test that we have faced since the formation of the United Nations. A virus that is oblivious to national boundaries or immigration procedures in its trajectory of destruction and pain across our world. A formidable threat to the human race, this challenge undoubtedly requires a multilateral response for meaningful impact.

This is why our countries Ghana, Indonesia, Liechtenstein, Norway, Singapore and Switzerland have come together at the UN to draft the first resolution on the fight against COVID-19 (A/RES/74/270 “Global Solidarity to fight the COVID-19”).

While a resolution on the given crisis of the day is to be expected from the UN, this one represents much more. It is a signal of global solidarity. It is a show of force.

It is the first intergovernmental statement from the UN on COVID-19 but it certainly will not be the last. This resolution is an overdue first step, to convey a message to people around the world that the UN is responding to this crisis.

Beyond the words of the General Assembly, we must now give our full support to the UN’s operational work at the service of the countries and the people most in need of in-

ternational cooperation. This human crisis has proven to be a monumental national challenge for every government, to re-allocate their resources, and reformulate their priorities. While on the frontline, our health care professionals and other essential workers are risking their lives – literally, to save humanity.

The UN system, in particular the World Health Organisation (WHO), is playing a central role in mobilising and coordinating the worldwide response to this pandemic and supporting national efforts. Beyond the short term, the WHO, in addition to addressing urgent humanitarian needs, is also dealing with the inevitable long-term economic, social and developmental consequences of this crisis, and building future resilience.

The UN with its convening power, and resources on the ground is best placed to bring together not just every country, but also every possible partner, from civil society to the private sector. To overcome this health emergency with a spirit of solidarity, we need to promote action without stigma or discrimination, and to ensure that no one in our society is left behind.

It is imperative to underscore that personal and individual efforts are required to complement national and international response to the pandemic. The world’s population is, therefore, reminded that the first frontline of the fight against COVID-19 is your front door. Hence, the call on people to stay at home for better containment. It is vitally important that every individual adheres to the social distancing and enhanced hygiene protocols.

The challenges we face remain vast. Nevertheless, the resolution adopted on 2 April 2020 expresses our optimism. We have put on record our conviction that the unprecedented crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic can be mitigated, and successfully reversed, through leadership and sustained global cooperation. We hope this resolution is one of “we the peoples”, towards a new kind of multilateralism, where the UN again rises to face a global challenge with a truly united response.

COMBATING COVID-19

PM Lee @ Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19

ASEAN Chair Vietnam convenes meeting to mount a united response in meeting the most serious public health crisis facing the world. Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong proposed three ways for ASEAN to respond together

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong participated in the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 and the Special APT Summit on COVID-19 on 14 April 2020. Following is an extract of his intervention at the Summit:

"It is critical for ASEAN to mount a united response, because of how connected and interdependent we are. Four of the world's 10 busiest air routes are between ASEAN member states, and we also have the world's busiest land crossing, the causeway between Johor Bahru and Singapore. Therefore, none of us in ASEAN can be truly safe unless the entire region is safe. I would like to suggest three ways for ASEAN to respond together.

Firstly, by sharing information, strategies and experiences. We face a common enemy, so what works in one country may well be relevant in other countries. We should therefore keep one another updated on the situation in our own countries and cooperate with one another on issues which have to be handled together, for example, repatriation of citizens from other countries back home.

Also in terms of sharing of information, we should make use of technology to deal with this pandemic. For example in Singapore, we have used WhatsApp and Telegram to set up dedicated channels to disseminate updates and advisories. We have also developed a mobile app, TraceTogether, to facilitate contact tracing, and used technology to monitor compliance with quarantine orders. We see other examples of the use of technology across ASEAN. The ASEAN Smart Cities Network can be a platform to share these best practices, and help cities better prepare for future public health emergencies.

Secondly, ASEAN should collaborate to keep trading routes and supply lines open. Especially for essential goods, such as medical supplies and food. None of us are self-sufficient in these essential items. Many of us also export goods and agricultural products overseas. Closing our borders completely would therefore only deprive us all of goods and products that we can produce together, hurting our economies and worsening unemployment. One practical example of cooperation is the Singapore-Malaysia Special Working Committee on COVID-19. Through this Working Committee we have kept goods



(Source: PMO)

flowing between us, despite current restrictions on the movement of people. Under stress, the global network of trade is fracturing. ASEAN members cannot control what other countries do, but we should stand together, maintain trade among ourselves and persuade our partners to keep trade flowing. Let us task our Economic Ministers to follow up on what more we can do

together to preserve supply chain connectivity, particularly among ASEAN member states.

Thirdly, we must build resilience to deal with future economic shocks. It would be useful for ASEAN to have a set of common criteria or guidelines on when to impose travel or trade re-

Continued on next page...



Declaration To Maintain Resilient Global Supply Chains During COVID-19 Crisis

The rapid expansion of the COVID-19 outbreak has created a borderless world. Nations world-wide are grappling with the far reaching impact of this deadly virus and highlighted the importance of maintaining international supply links

Amongst the greatest challenges that nations face today is to ensure that the global connect of demand and supply of essentials remains strong and resilient to the ripples created by COVID-19, be it in the field of healthcare or food services.

The business of feeding a nation is a national security priority. An excellent case in point is Singapore and New Zealand recently making a pledge to ensure that trade lines for essential items will be kept open during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 17th April 2020, a meeting convened by Canada, tabled a **Declaration on Maintaining Essential Global Links**. It was issued by the Ministerial Coordination Group on COVID-19. The members of this group include Brazil, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico,

Morocco, Peru, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

The purpose of this Declaration was to encourage nations to maintain essential global links, especially when it involved trade and travel.

Member nations of the Declaration agreed to continue to promote and protect free trade and avoid creating unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains.

The group was keen that other countries also adopt a similar approach in delivering a strong and coordinated global health response including developing a vaccine and relevant treatments and to identify best practices to emerge from the crisis as a stronger, more interconnected world.

**For the full text of the Declaration visit www.indiplomacy.com
or click [here](#)**

Singapore and China Touch on Key Issues

Singapore and China's Foreign Ministers discuss well-being of Chinese migrant workers here, supply chain connectivity and reinstitution of international travel

Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement on issues discussed by Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan who spoke with PRC State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi on 28th April 2020 via telephone.



PRC Minister Wang Yi

Minister Balakrishnan and State Councilor Wang expressed appreciation for the mutual support and effective collaboration between Singapore and China amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. Minister Balakrishnan also reassured State Councilor Wang that Singapore would continue to look after the well-being of Chinese migrant workers in Singapore, including providing them with the necessary medical care and treatment.

Minister Balakrishnan and State Councilor Wang welcomed the ongoing discussions between both countries to gradually resume economic activity and exchanges. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to maintain supply chain connectivity, especially for medical supplies and food. Minister Balakrishnan and State Councilor Wang also exchanged views on how safe international travel can be reinstituted in the near future.

ASEAN-US Special Foreign Ministers' Meeting on COVID-19

ASEAN and US agree to share best practices on dealing with COVID-19 outbreak and work closely together towards post-pandemic economic recovery

Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan participated in the ASEAN-US Special Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The meeting, which was co-chaired by Lao PDR Minister of Foreign Affairs Saleumxay Kommasith and US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, was held via videoconference.

The Foreign Ministers exchanged views on the COVID-19 situation in their respective countries, as well as information and best practices on dealing with the outbreak from a public health perspective. They noted the grave socio-economic impact of COVID-19, and emphasised the need for ASEAN and the US to work closely together on a forward-looking approach to address post-pandemic economic recovery.

At the meeting, Minister Balakrishnan expressed appreciation for the US' efforts in the region to

combat COVID-19 through health and humanitarian assistance. He also emphasised the need for trust and effective collaboration between ASEAN and the US to mount a united response to contain and recover from the pandemic. The Foreign Ministers discussed possible areas of cooperation that included sharing best practices and the use of technology to contain the spread of the pandemic, as well as having the scientific communities from ASEAN and the US to work together towards the development of vaccines and cures.

Minister Balakrishnan reiterated the critical importance of working with ASEAN and Dialogue Partners to ensure that trade lines and supply chains remained open and connected amid the pandemic, especially for necessities such as medical supplies and food. Maintaining open trade would also better position our countries for post-pandemic economic recovery



Photo: Singapore MFA

...continued from previous page.

strictions, and when and how we can relax them and with what appropriate safeguards. We each have our own domestic considerations, but clear guidelines would help us take a balanced, rational approach that takes into account both health and economic considerations. The ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies should study this issue.

Conclusion

This crisis will fundamentally change globalisation. There will be controls on movement of people across borders. Governments will intervene to prevent over-dependency on other countries for food, medical products, and other essential goods. And on all parties, I fear that there will be diminished confidence that international rules will hold and be respected in a crisis.

ASEAN countries will have to consider these issues too, but we should do our best to build cooperation and trust with one another. Whatever the

shape of the post-pandemic world, economic and strategic ties with our partners will still matter. We should build on the relationships and institutions that ASEAN has created over half a century. We must resist the temptation to turn inwards and away from one another.

As leaders, we have a responsibility to rebuild domestic confidence in the value of cooperating with one another, and maintaining an open approach to our partners in the region and around the world, even during this extraordinary period. We should put in place systems and guidelines to effectively handle future public health emergencies. Because this will not be the last one. We should also not lose sight of the work that is in progress. Therefore, I propose ASEAN should still aim to sign the RCEP this year and should also continue pursuing the Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement with the European Union. Dealing with the immediate crises, while not losing sight of the longer term objectives is the best way to enable our economies to survive this crisis, and to bounce back after COVID-19 passes.

"And on all parties, I fear that there will be diminished confidence that international rules will hold and be respected in a crisis..."

ASEAN countries will have to consider these issues too, but we should do our best to build cooperation and trust with one another. Whatever the shape of the post-pandemic world, economic and strategic ties with our partners will still matter. We must resist the temptation to turn inwards and away from one another."

COMBATING COVID-19



Singapore Citizens Repatriated Safely in April

Apart from the return of 224 Singaporeans from Egypt on 8th April 2020 that was reported in the last issue of *IN Diplomacy*, there were other repatriation flights in the same month organised by Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs with assistance from foreign and neighbouring countries in returning home stranded citizens because of the COVID-19 outbreak travel restrictions.

Malaysian Help

Twenty-two Singapore residents safely arrived from Kathmandu, Nepal on 4th April 2020. The Singapore residents had boarded a repatriation flight arranged by the Malaysian government for its nationals from Kathmandu to Kuala Lumpur, and they subsequently returned to Singapore from Kuala Lumpur. The Singapore Government expressed its heartfelt gratitude to the Malaysian government and the Embassy of Malaysia in Kathmandu for accepting Singapore's request for them to join the Malaysian flight.

At least 699 Singapore citizens and residents have also safely returned from India to Singapore on 10th and 11th April 2020. Due to the national lockdown across India, many of them had to travel from surrounding states to reach the airports in New Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai where the chartered flights operated.

In addition to the above, 85 Singapore citizens and residents have arrived safely in Singapore this morning from Saudi Arabia on 24th April 2020. Seven Singapore residents have arrived safely in Singapore from Fiji, following their transit through Tokyo on 25th April 2020. The Singapore Government has expressed its thanks to all the above governments for facilitating the return of its citizens and residents.

Returning passengers are subject to serve 14-day self-isolation at dedicated Stay-Home Notice (SHN) facilities upon arrival in Singapore.

Singapore Assists Indonesia with Medical Supplies



Singapore's Ambassador to Indonesia Anil Nayar hands over the latest shipment to Home Affairs Minister Tito Karnavian, who received it on behalf of the Indonesian Government on 3rd April 2020. (Photo: Singapore MFA)

A Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs media release announced that the Singapore Government has contributed additional medical supplies to support Indonesia's efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic at the latter's request. This is a follow up from the discussions between Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and President Joko Widodo on 11th March 2020 on strengthening collaboration between Singapore and Indonesia to combat COVID-19. To date, the Singapore Government has contributed a total of 30,000 diagnostic tests and five Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) machines for the detection of COVID-19, as well as 1,050 sets of personal protective equipment, 100 viral transport media, and four thermal scanners. These items will be deployed in Jakarta, the Riau Islands, and North Sumatra.

Uzbekistan Now An 'Observer' in the Eurasian Economic Union



The Legislative Chamber approves the proposal of the government on cooperation of Uzbekistan with the EAEU as an observer (Source: uzdaily.com)

The move was approved by the Legislative Chamber of the Uzbek Parliament on 28th April 2020 and signals closer cooperation with the EAEU

The Uzbek lawmakers opined that it was "reasonable" for the country to participate as an Observer (a status that will allow the country to study the opportunities the organization could offer) joining Moldova, which also has observer status, in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) which comprises Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Studies show this pragmatic decision to

participate in a regional grouping such as the EAEU can lead to an increase in foreign trade, strengthen the competitiveness of Uzbek's economic sectors and protection of the rights of the country's nationals working in foreign countries.

As a result of this new status, Uzbekistan expects its export oriented value-added products rates will grow by US\$1.6 billion; rail

transportation costs will decrease by US\$220 million and the income of labour migrants will increase by 15 to 20%.

Another welcome outcome is that it will also lead to greater simplification of customs procedures in agriculture and the volume of fruits and vegetables exports from Uzbekistan to EAEU members will increase. Other simplified international transportation procedures are also expected to result in greater freedom of movement for passengers, goods and vehicles between Uzbekistan and the EAEU.

At the same time, Uzbekistan which is already an economically modern and global player, is ready to face the fact that the interaction with the EAEU might also lead to a reduction of production in some sectors of the economy but with a population of 34 million Uzbekistan could potentially become the second-biggest consumer market in the EAEU after Russia. According to forecasts, on the whole cooperation is expected to positively affect foreign trade, the balance of payments of the country as well as the stability of the national currency.

Fullerton's New Take-Away Service Heralds A 'New Normal' in Home Fine Dining



Traditional-Style Sautéed Boston Lobster with X.O. Chilli Sauce, Egg Noodles and Wok-Fried French Beans with Dried Shrimps

'At Home with Jade Signatures & Fullerton Specials' is a new service the landmark heritage hotel just launched today to offer food lovers who miss its five-star cuisine

FULLERTON Hotel Singapore; in fact, the Diplomatic Consular Corps meet regularly here for its Welcome/Farewell functions. But since the start of the Circuit Breaker many have missed the venue and food, especially the dim sum and Cantonese cuisine served at The Jade Restaurant, which is recommended by the Michelin Guide.

That situation is about to change beginning today as the hotel seems to have herald a new age or 'new normal' for dining during these days of social distancing. You can either order and drive-in to collect or have the meal delivered to your home. There is a choice of seven dishes from its At Home with Jade Signatures & Fullerton Specials menu.

The Jade Signature dishes include its Roasted Duck, Steamed Chilean Seabass, Traditional-Style Sautéed Boston Lobster, Simmered Ee-Fu Noodles and Jade Sautéed Chicken. Under its Fullerton Specials there are the Fullerton Hainese Chicken Rice and Beef Rendang.

For more details visit shop.fullertonhotels.com to order. Take note if you would like to have the food delivered rather than picking it up via its driving through facilities, you can enjoy complimentary delivery with orders worth more S\$100 in a single receipt.



Slow Braised Australian Lamb Rogan Josh, Organic Vegetable Biryani (Halal); contains nuts



Sambal Sustainable Fish Fillet, Steamed Organic Rice; contains nuts



Grilled Beyond Meat Beef or Grilled Australian Grass-fed 220gm Beef Cheese Burger, Pickles & Fries; contains nuts

Celebrating Ramadhan with Grand Hyatt's Take Out Meal Box

Grand Hyatt Singapore's fuss-free and economical (each meal box is just S\$10) positions its foods also as a wellness option, some of them containing Halal ingredients as well as one or two vegetarian options. Self-collection, drive thru' and delivery are offered (from 10am to 9pm) so literally you can experience wellness anytime, anywhere with the hotel's meal in a box.

As you have guessed variety is its strong point as the meals are made with quality-driven ingredients from the hotel and featuring the best of the Grand Hyatt's restaurants with crowd-favourites such as grilled Beyond Meat beef burger, Solanki's butter chicken, and chilli sustainable prawns with rice.

Featured here are just several items from a choice of 17 meals. You can also mix it up with items from their 'Take Home' menu to supplement or just get your favourite dish such as one kilo of Australian grass-fed Beef Rendang (Halal) or Australian Mottainai Lamb Korma (Halal) or even Australian grass-fed beef bolognese, vegetable salad and soup etc.

For the full menu and to order visit:

store.grandhyattsingapore.com/product/new-meal-box/



Mui Ne



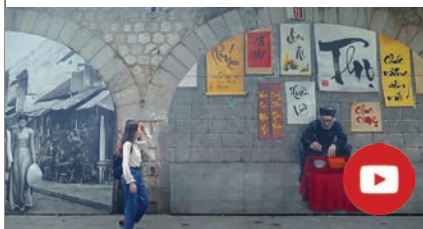
Discover the captivating port town of **HOI AN** with Châu Lê, a receptionist at local coworking space Hub Hoi An. Apart from her views on the UNESCO-listed Ancient Town, Châu reveals her favourite parts of life in Hoi An, including cycling through rice paddies, afternoons on An Bang Beach and tempting noodle dishes.



Huong Lan is a private tour guide from the city of **HUE** in Central Vietnam. A part-time blogger and long-time Hue enthusiast, Lan walks us through her version of Hue - an imperial city whose tombs and citadels still echo with poetry - and talks about her special connection with the Perfume River.



Born in **CÁI BÈ**, homestay manager Kieu Nhi grew up cycling and rowing along the canals of the Mekong Delta. In this video she reveals the charms of Cái Bè, and gives us a look at its delicious tropical fruits.



Hanoian artist Nga Pham invites us on a motorbike ride around her hometown of **HANOI**. See Nga's favourite spots around the Vietnamese capital and find out why she feels the city is the perfect blend of old and new.

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Unspoilt VIETNAM

Real discoveries in store for those seeking thrilling new sights and experiences from the sand dunes of Mui Ne and rice terraces of Sapa to the most beautiful island paradises of Southeast Asia




While the COVID-19 crisis has put a crimp on international tourism, there is no reason to stop exploring new travel destinations searching and discovering new sights and gathering info on new places to go when the crisis recedes. Beginning this week, IN Diplomacy will be working with foreign missions here to compile and present a series of armchair travellers to enjoy via video clips through IN Diplomacy and its social media platforms.

Vietnam is the first destination and we are indebted to H.E. Tao Thi Thanh Huong, the Ambassador of Vietnam to Singapore who said: "I welcome the initiative by IN Diplomacy to start E - Travel Campaigns. Many people are operating from home and this will keep them mentally prepared to get back to business and explore various tourism destinations in Vietnam".

Vietnam is not just the ASEAN Chair in 2020; it is also a 'hidden' gem of Southeast Asia with many attractions to be discovered. Just take a look at these videos to see what we mean. The following series of videos appear here by arrangement and kind permission of the Ambassador of Vietnam to Singapore H.E. Tao Thi Thanh Huong and Vietnam Tourism Board: Click on each individual destination to see its video or click below to see all videos in succession. Happy travels!



If you like the above videos ...

Vietnam Tourism Board Timeless Charm 
Destinations Vietnam (Asia Vacation Group) 
Singapore MFA Travel Page - Vietnam 



www.vietnam.travel

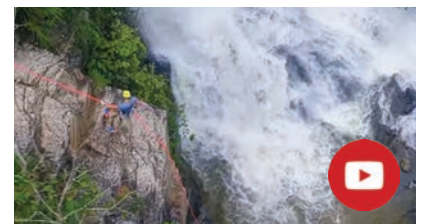


Sapa

In the mountains of **SAPA**, Ker takes us inside the culture of Black H'Mong tribe. From making their own textiles, to cooking ethnic dishes, Ker strives to pass her traditions on to her children, and show visitors there's more to Sapa.



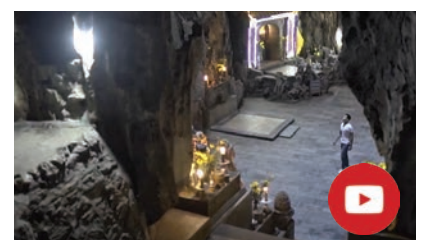
See up-and-coming **HO CHI MINH CITY** with Nam Quon. Nam is a fashion designer, entrepreneur, avid sneakerhead and true Saigonese at heart. Through #MyVietnam, he shares why he loves Ho Chi Minh City and how the southern hub inspires his work.



Thanh Liem is a travel company manager with a knack for conquering **ĐÀ LẠT'S** waterfalls. Liem shows us exactly why he loves living in Đà Lạt: quiet lakes, great weather, and thrilling adventures in nature.



Tourism student and **NHA TRANG** local Đại splits his time between his university and the beach. Here he shares the beauty of his coastal city, his favourite dish, and why Nha Trang has so much to offer travellers.



Spend a day with Nguyen Văn Đông, a personal trainer who loves the healthy lifestyle of the coastal city he calls home. Here, Đông shares his top things to do in **ĐÀ NẴNG**, from beach-side runs to local lunches