

IN Diplomacy

MISSION TO COMMUNICATE

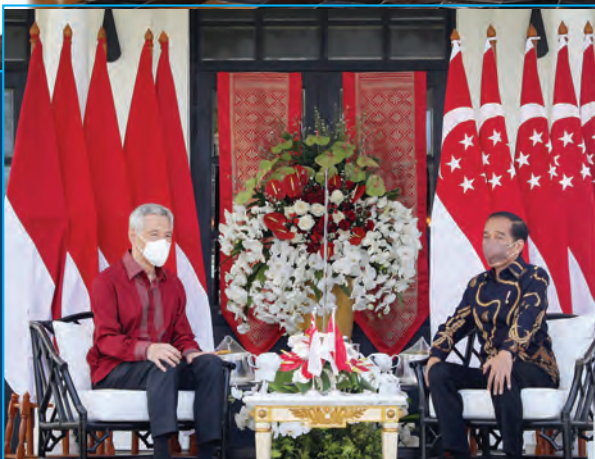
Supported by 

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR CORPS SINGAPORE

www.indiplomacy.com

Issue 71 February 2022

Agreements Finalised at Indonesia - Singapore Leaders' Retreat Bintan



ALSO INSIDE

■ **Presentation of Credentials - Iran**

■ **President Halimah Attends Beijing Winter Olympics**

■ **Kazakhstan - Peace and Calm Restored**

■ **Pacific Alliance - Singapore FTA Signed**

NEW: **Breakfast Talk With... Lawrence Anderson**



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

Photos appearing in this issue courtesy of:

- Singapore Prime Ministers Office
- Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Singapore Ministry of Communication
& Information
- Istana.org.sg



© Copyright 2022 by Sun Media Pte Ltd. The opinions, pronouncements or views expressed or implied in this publication are those of contributors or authors. They do not necessarily reflect the official stance of any other organisation or authorities. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of all information contained, the publisher cannot be held liable for loss incurred in any way whatsoever by a company or a person relying on this information.

CONTENTS **ISSUE 71**



Page 4

PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

- 3** ■ Islamic Republic of Iran

COVER STORY

- 4** ■ Agreements Finalised at Indonesia-Singapore Leaders' Retreat, Bintan

BREAKFAST TALK WITH...

- 5** ■ Lawrence Anderson

NEWS

- 6** ■ Kazakhstan - Peace and Calm Restored
■ Phil Foreign Affairs Sec Teodoro Locsin Visit
■ 15th Japan-Singapore Symposium: Working Towards Greater Cooperation and Coordination
- 7** ■ President Halimah Attends Beijing Winter Olympics
■ ESM Goh's Remarks at 3rd Hong Kong Forum on US-China Relations
■ Singapore Admitted as Dialogue Partner of the Pacific Islands Forum



Page 6

EVENTS

Featuring events related to

- 8** ■ Cambodia ■ Canada ■ Diplomatic & Consular Corps
■ European Union Delegation ■ Finland ■ Pacific Alliance

Page 8



Supported by



DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR CORPS SINGAPORE

Presentation of Credentials

The presentation of credentials to President Halimah Yacob was via videoconference, conducted at the Istana and the office of the foreign Head of Mission who is resident in Tehran on 18th January 2022



**H.E. Behnam Bolourian,
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

PRIOR to his appointment as Ambassador to Singapore, he served as the Advisor of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Political Affairs (2018 – 2021), Deputy Director General of the Northern and Eastern Europe Department (2015 – 2018), Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Vienna (2011 – 2015) and Deputy Director of the International Disarmament and Security Department (2006 – 2011).

Ambassador Behnam Bolourian is a career diplomat who joined the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1986. Ambassador Behnam Bolourian holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from the School of International Relations which is affiliated to the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran (1986), and a Master's degree in Environmental Law from Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran (2011). He is married with two daughters.



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.

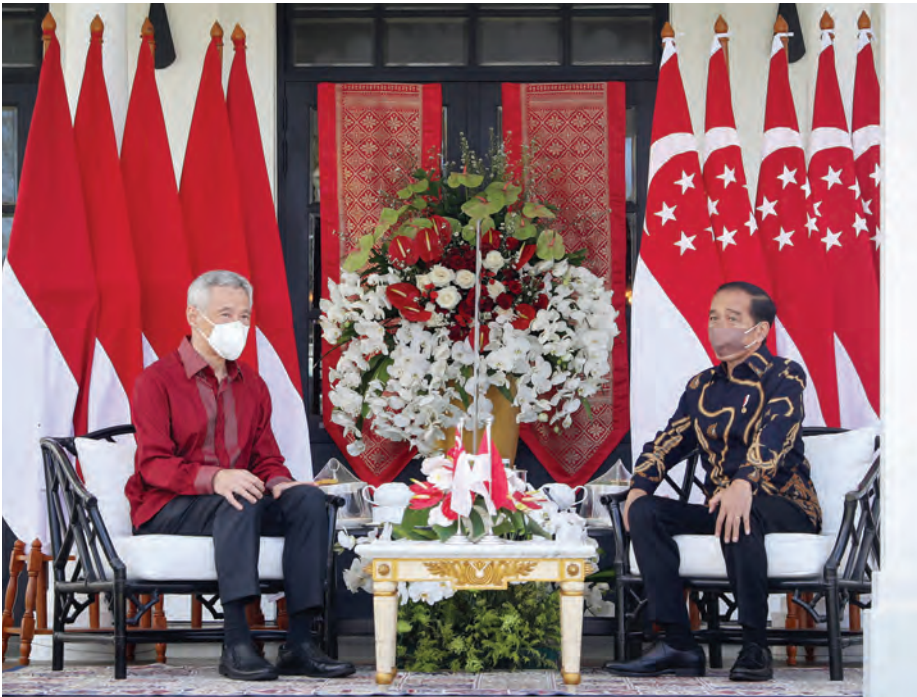


**What is the World Doing
about Sustainability?**
Read how almost 30 nations are tackling it in
IN Diplomacy ANNUAL 2021/22
Email edit@sunmediaonline.com
to order your print copy



Agreements Finalised at Indonesia-Singapore Leaders' Retreat

Three significant agreements were reached at the Retreat and both leaders were satisfied with the state of bilateral ties and progress in various joint projects



PRIME Minister Lee Hsien Loong visited Bintan, Indonesia, on 25 January 2022 to attend the Singapore-Indonesia Leaders' Retreat hosted by Indonesian President Joko Widodo. This is Prime Minister Lee's fifth Leaders' Retreat with the Indonesian President, following the Leaders' Retreat in October 2019, which was held in Singapore.

Prime Minister Lee and President Joko Widodo reviewed the progress made on bilateral cooperation since the last Leaders' Retreat and discussed ways to expand collaboration in key areas of priority for both countries. They also exchanged views on regional and global developments.

During the Leaders' Retreat, Prime Minister Lee and President Joko Widodo also witnessed the signing and exchange of a set of agreements negotiated on the basis of the 'Framework for Discussions'

announced at the Leaders' Retreat in 2019 (see accompanying box story).

The Leaders also endorsed the announcement of several Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), signed ahead of the Retreat, including in financial and economic cooperation, green and circular economy development, energy cooperation, and human capital development.

Prime Minister Lee was accompanied by Senior Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security Teo Chee Hean, Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law K Shanmugam, Minister for Transport S Iswaran, and Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng.

"President Jokowi and I also discussed the resumption of cross-border travel. Indonesia has resumed tourism travel from Singapore to Bintan and Batam. We implemented a travel bubble to Bintan and Batam, and Singapore will discuss with Indonesia, how we can make it bi-directional, and we hope without taking too long."

"President Jokowi and I agreed to continue discussions to expand air and sea travel more generally to more destinations in Indonesia. But we have to take into account the COVID-19 situation and in particular, the outbreak of the Omicron variant. And we will do so at a pace that both sides are comfortable with..."

- Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong

Highlights of Leaders' Remarks in Joint Press Conference

Both leaders noted the excellent level of bilateral and robust economic ties. On their agenda were discussions on ways to build on the success of projects such as the Kendal Industrial Park and the Nongsa Digital Park (NDP). They welcomed the launch of the Nongsa Digital Town (D-Town) in Batam as the next phase of NDP's development. They also recently signed MOUs on Financial and Economic Cooperation between the Singapore Ministry of Finance and Indonesian Ministry of Finance, and the MOU between the Monetary Authority of Singapore and Bank Indonesia to expand cooperation across central banking, financial regulation and payments innovation would also encourage more multi-faceted and forward-looking institutional linkages in developing both countries' digital economies.

Framework Agreements on...

- Realignment of the Boundary between the Jakarta Flight Information Region (FIR) and the Singapore FIR
- Treaty for the Extradition of Fugitives
- Joint Statement between the Defence Ministers on the 2007 Defence Cooperation Agreement and its Implementing Arrangement between the Singapore Armed Forces and the Indonesian Armed Forces (now referred to as "the Indonesian National Defence Forces") for the Military Training Area in Indonesia.

There was also an Exchange of Letters undertaking to bring the above agreements into force simultaneously.

Full text of speeches visit
www.indiplomacy.com

NEW The Breakfast Talk with...

Lawrence Anderson

RSIS Senior Fellow and former Singapore Ambassador to Saudi Arabia share rare insights into the Singapore diplomatic service and how Singapore engaged with ASEAN and various nations in the past

Excerpts...

...Foreign Policy Priorities

"By the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, our foreign policy priorities became more economic-centric. We forged closer links to friendly states and all the major powers, as well as reached out to the emerging markets of the former Soviet bloc and its allies in developing countries. We did this by concluding close to 30 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), as well as a host of other economic arrangements. Together with our ASEAN partners, we achieved the vision of ASEAN's founding fathers with the integration of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam, and milestones such as the ASEAN FTA, ASEAN Community and ASEAN Charter. Singapore took a proactive role in creating or shaping regional architectures like the ASEAN Regional



Forum (ARF), the ASEAN+3 process with China, Japan and South Korea, the East Asia Summit (EAS), and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Even though Singapore is not a member, we play an active role in the G-20 Summit process, having been invited to most of its meetings."

...COVID & Diplomacy

"COVID-19 has only reinforced my belief in the value of diplomacy. Building trust and friendships, understanding each other's valid concerns and constraints, are necessary steps to move forward in solving problems. Often, they require leaders and officials to spend time and effort in face-to-face meetings and private weekend retreats together. This is true whether it's between the leaders of two countries or a larger group of nations, or between CEOs of multinationals or owners of small and medium-sized enterprises. It cannot be done via Zoom alone. Human beings are social animals, and we crave the face-to-face contact and social interactions to build trust, friendships and camaraderie; the stepping stones to great deeds and achievements."

Full interview at www.indiplomacy.com



(Above): "We were all so very young then!" - 1988 Singapore Delegation to the United Nations, staff and friends (Lawrence last in the first row, seated next to him his wife, Maureen. Behind him the Permanent Representative Kishore Mahbubani, and first person in the first row Ong Keng Yong

(Centre): Greeting His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni on his Royal Visit to Singapore in March 2006



(Above): Meeting His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

(Left): Farewell dinner for Lawrence and his wife before leaving for Washington, D.C. hosted by Ambassador (later President) S. R. Nathan and Mrs. Nathan at their Residence.

NEWS

Kazakhstan - Peace and Calm Restored

18th Jan 2022



Ambassador Arystanov (centre) chairs hybrid press conference with leading media representatives in Singapore and the region

AMBASSADOR Arken Arystanov called a hybrid press briefing on 18th January to give the latest updates on developments in Kazakhstan and answer questions following the surprise attacks in the country. The Ambassador confirmed that the demonstrations and attacks on administrative as well as military buildings that erupted earlier in January have died down and the government is firmly in control of law and order in the country.

Initially, the demonstrations began in the Mangystau region, whose residents demanded reduction in the retail prices for liquefied gas. In response to this, on behalf of the Head of State, the Government promptly took measures to reduce the prices and introduced a moratorium on

price increases for socially significant food products, fuel, and utilities. All those detained in the first days of the protest were also released.

However, demonstrations in other major cities were taken over by armed bandits, described as "foreign militants" and turned into riots and attacks against government buildings.

The Ambassador reiterated that while things are now getting back to normal the Kazakh Government will be tackling the fundamental reasons for the initial unrest by raising the wages and the standard of living of those citizens in less economically developed areas to cope with higher living costs.

15th Japan-Singapore Symposium: Working Towards Greater Cooperation and Coordination

26th Jan 2022

THE 15th Japan-Singapore Symposium, co-sponsored by the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) and the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), was held online under the theme of "Japan-Singapore Partnership in Regional Cooperation." Opinion leaders from a range of sectors, such as government, academia, media, and business, including Mr. Hayashi Yoshimasa (pictured here), Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs attended this symposium.



The symposium was co-chaired by Ambassador Sasae Kenichiro, President of

JIIA, and Prof. Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore and Special Adviser of the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), National University of Singapore.

The focus of the discussions at this year's symposium was on how Japan and Singapore can deepen their cooperation and coordination in various fields including political and security issues and economic challenges, as the situation in the region dramatically changes. The symposium began with keynote speeches (by video message) from Minister Hayashi and Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore.

Phil Foreign Affairs Sec Teodoro Locsin Visit

31st Jan 2022



SECRETARY of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, H.E. Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. was in Singapore for a working visit where he also met Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan who hosted Secretary Locsin to breakfast. They reaffirmed the excellent and longstanding relations between Singapore and the Philippines, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2019. They noted the flourishing people-to-people ties between the two countries, and looked forward to the restoration of travel links once the COVID-19 situation has eased. They also discussed ways to enhance existing bilateral cooperation in the areas of security and defence, and education.

Earlier during his visit Secretary Teodoro Locsin on 28th January inaugurated the first Philippine ePassport Renewal Center (PaRC) in Singapore. He was assisted by Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Brigido J. Dulay and Philippine Ambassador Joseph del Mar Yap in the unveiling and ribbon-cutting ceremony at PaRC-Singapore office located at 79 Anson Road #15-02. PaRC is an initiative of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), through the Philippine Embassy in Singapore, in partnership with VFS Global Pte. Ltd.



Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. inaugurated the first Philippine ePassport Renewal Center in Singapore. Photo: VFS Global

President Halimah Attends Beijing Winter Olympics

4th - 5th Feb 2022

PRESIDENT Halimah Yacob attended the Opening Ceremony of the XXIV Olympic Winter Games on 4th February 2022. President Halimah was also a Guest at a Welcome Banquet hosted by President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping and Madam Peng Liyuan for foreign dignitaries on 5th February 2022. On the same day she had a bilateral meeting with Premier Li Keqiang.



Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a media statement that said President Halimah congratulated China on the successful Opening Ceremony of the Games and expressed appreciation of the unifying power of the Olympics to bring together athletes from around the world to achieve sporting excellence and promote sportsmanship.

President Halimah and Premier Li affirmed the strong ties between Singapore and China. They welcomed the good momentum in economic cooperation, including the robust growth in trade and investment as well as cooperation in new areas such as the digital economy, green economy and sustainable development. President Halimah and Premier Li agreed that there were many areas of convergence between Singapore's pursuit of innovative, sustainable and inclusive development, and China's current and future development strategies. President



Photo: (top) Xinhua News Agency

Halimah expressed Singapore's readiness to deepen bilateral cooperation and ensure that our relations remain substantive and forward-looking, as both countries work to secure post-pandemic recovery and a sustainable future. President Halimah also looked forward to the full resumption of air connectivity and people-to-people exchanges, including the return of all Singapore students to China for their studies, when conditions permitted.

Singapore Admitted as Dialogue Partner of the Pacific Islands Forum

27 January 2022



SINGAPORE has been formally admitted as a Dialogue Partner of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). The PIF Leaders had endorsed Singapore's application in principle at the PIF Leaders' Retreat in August 2021.

The PIF is a key regional forum in the South Pacific that seeks to foster cooperation between its members, and collaboration with international partners in areas such as climate change and sustainable development. There are 18 members in the PIF (see box below).

Singapore has long-standing and warm relations with the South Pacific. As

fellow small island states, the Island Republic share many common interests and concerns such as climate change. Singapore also enjoy excellent cooperation at international fora. Singapore has shared our development experience with more than 5,300 officials from the South Pacific through the **Singapore Cooperation Programme**, in a wide range of areas such as economic development, civil aviation, environment and urban development.

Singapore looks forward to strengthening its relations with the South Pacific through the Dialogue Partnership of the PIF.

PIF MEMBERS

■ Australia	■ French Polynesia	■ Palau	■ Tonga
■ Cook Islands	■ Kiribati	■ Papua New Guinea	■ Tuvalu
■ Federated States of Micronesia	■ Nauru	■ Republic of Marshall Islands	■ Vanuatu
■ Fiji	■ New Caledonia	■ Samoa	
	■ New Zealand	■ Solomon Islands	
	■ Niue		



ESM Goh's Remarks at 3rd Hong Kong Forum on US-China Relations

19th Jan 2022

THE 3rd Hong Kong Forum was organised by the China-United States Exchange Foundation and the China Center for International Economic Exchanges with its theme "Beyond Differences, Towards Cooperation". Emeritus Senior Minister (ESM) Goh Chok Tong delivered remarks virtually at the 3-day event which included speakers such as former Chinese vice premier Zeng Peiyan.

Mr Zeng said there was potential for more cooperation in areas of shared interests, such as pandemic control, climate change, economy and trade, global governance, and science and technology.

ESM Goh remarked "If trust is the currency of the realm, then the main deficit in the geopolitical ledger is the mutual strategic distrust between the US and China. It stems from a difference in values, ideologies, worldviews, political systems, and perspectives on global governance. If this distrust cannot be overcome, the world will be condemned like Sisyphus to roll the boulder of a contentious US-China relationship up a hill for eternity."

ESM Goh also offered some suggestions on how best to move forward and asked "What now? Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said that the US' approach to China will be "competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be and adversarial when it must be". Building on this frame, I suggest that the US and China should "Avoid Conflict over Differences, Embrace Healthy Competition, and Maximise Cooperation. My biggest concern is whether..."

For the full text of his speech visit
www.indiplomacy.com

EVENTS

Singapore Signs Pacific Alliance's FTA

26th Jan 2022

AFTER four years of negotiations, Singapore has finally signed the Pacific Alliance-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (PASFTA) and is the first associate member of the Pacific Alliance. This was announced at the 16th Pacific Alliance Summit at Bahía Málaga, Colombia on 26th January 2022. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loon in his pre-recorded message at the Summit said that it was a "landmark moment" in Singapore's partnership with the Alliance. He highlighted that the Pacific Alliance accounts for one-third of Singapore's total trade and investment with Latin America and the Caribbean. More than 100 Singapore companies do business in Pacific Alliance countries that span very diverse sectors. He also expressed Singapore's hope that "More companies

from the Pacific Alliance will use Singapore as a gateway to uncover markets and seize business opportunities in our region."



Celebrating 45 Years of EU-ASEAN Relations

11th Jan 2022

NANYANG Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) and the European Union Delegation to Singapore announced the partner institutions and artists selected for the inaugural cycle of SEA AiR – Studio Residencies for Southeast Asian Artists in the EU (SEA AiR) on 11th Jan 2022. SEA AiR is a new programme that positions Singapore as a hub for artistic exchange between the European Union and the vibrant Southeast Asian region. This happens in a landmark year as the EU and ASEAN commemorate the 45th anniversary of their dialogue relations. For more information visit: www.indiplomacy.com



(From l): Prof Ute Meta Bauer, Founding Director, NTU CCA Singapore, EU Ambassador to Singapore H.E. Iwona Piórko, and Prof Joseph Liow, Dean of College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, NTU

James Cook and Cambodian Universities' Tie-Up

11th Jan 2022

AN MoU was signed between the James Cook University and Beltei International University on closer cooperation between the two universities. The virtual signing ceremony was witnessed by H.E. Mr Sok Khoeun Ambassador of the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Singapore. H.E. Ambassador also took a tour around the James Cook University Singapore campus and also held talks over the expansion of education cooperation by the James Cook University with other Cambodian universities.

Speed Networking with Finnish Business

24th Jan 2022

FINNISH Business Council (FBC) in collaboration with the Embassy of Finland in Singapore organised a speed networking event for any business or individuals who wanted to expand their network by getting to know the Finnish business community, find business opportunities and share knowledge. The event was held at the Huone Hotel where up to 25 participants rotated every five minutes.



DCC: Asian Geopolitics

17th Jan 2022

THERE was a large and enthusiastic turnout of ambassadors for the Diplomatic and Consular Corps event – a discussion titled *Asian Geopolitics in 2022: What Lies Ahead?* Hosted by the Dean of the DCC here the Ambassador of Romania in Singapore, H.E. Florin-Marius Tacu and the Guest speaker was Mr. James Crabtree, Executive Director of International Institute



of Strategic Studies-Asia (IISS-Asia) who shared his insights with the diplomatic community. He is a leading figure in organising the annual IISS Shangri-La Dialogue and the IISS Fullerton Forum: The Shangri-La Sherpa Meeting, as well as the IISS Fullerton Lecture series.

Canada-ASEAN Business Leaders Series Launched

18th Jan 2022



REGISTRATION for the 2022 Canada-ASEAN Business Leader Series have opened and the inaugural webinar took place on 18th January titled *The Role of ASEAN in Global Supply Chain Diversification*. It was co-presented by TD and Global Affairs Canada | Affaires Mondiales Canada. Visit the Canada-ASEAN Business Council's EVENTS page for upcoming programmes at www.canasean.com