

JOINT STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER LEE HSIEN LOONG AND PRIME MINISTER DATO' SRI MOHD NAJIB TUN ABDUL RAZAK AT THE SINGAPORE-MALAYSIA LEADERS' RETREAT IN SINGAPORE ON 5 MAY 2015

1. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak met in Singapore on 5 May 2015 for the 6th Singapore-Malaysia Leaders' Retreat. The Leaders expressed satisfaction at the progress made in bilateral relations since the Leaders' Retreat in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 7 April 2014, and reaffirmed their commitment to a stronger and mutually beneficial partnership between the two countries.
2. On behalf of the people and the Government of Malaysia, Prime Minister Najib expressed his deepest sympathies on the demise of the late Mr. Lee Kuan Yew on 23 March 2015. Prime Minister Lee conveyed the appreciation of his family, the Government and the people of Singapore for their condolences on the passing of Mr. Lee.
3. Prime Minister Lee congratulated Prime Minister Najib for Malaysia's successful hosting of the 26th ASEAN Summit in April 2015, and expressed Singapore's continued support for Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN. The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of ASEAN in maintaining regional stability and promoting closer economic integration. The Leaders looked forward to the historic establishment of the ASEAN Community at the end of 2015.
4. The Leaders noted the steady progress on the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail (HSR) project. The Leaders noted that agreements have been reached on the dual co-located Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) configuration, the frequency bands to be reserved for HSR operations, as well as locating the depot and stabling facilities in Malaysia. Prime Minister Lee was pleased to announce that the Singapore HSR terminus will be sited at Jurong East, which dovetails with Singapore's overall plans to transform the area into its second Central Business District. The two Prime Ministers further noted that since the HSR is the first of its kind in the region, the project has received great attention, both domestically and internationally, with many countries offering to share their experience and expertise for the project. The Leaders noted that the initial target of 2020 may need to be re-assessed given the scale and complexity of the project, but reaffirmed that both countries are fully committed to the success of the project. Both Leaders were encouraged by the support and attention from the global community, and looked forward to further progress on this game-

changing iconic project, which will boost connectivity, facilitate travel between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, enhance business linkages, and improve people-to-people ties.

5. The Leaders reaffirmed the strategic importance of Iskandar Malaysia for both countries and welcomed the progress made by the Work Groups under the Joint Ministerial Committee for Iskandar Malaysia (JMC). The Leaders took note of the decision by the JMC to conduct a study on Causeway congestion with a view to exploring measures to further enhance connectivity between the two countries. Both Leaders commended the efforts by the Immigration Work Group of the JMC to reduce congestion at the Causeway and the Singapore-Malaysia Second Link while taking security requirements into account. Both countries have committed to reducing congestion and have taken steps to achieve this. Singapore is automating all motorcycle counters at the Woodlands and Tuas Checkpoints by the end of 2016, compared to about a quarter currently. Automated counters at the Singapore checkpoint will speed up motorcycle immigration clearance by up to 30% and help reduce congestion for all checkpoint users. Malaysia also has plans to introduce automated motorcycle counters. Malaysia is studying the introduction of RFID stickers in passports for Malaysian motorcyclists to allow for faster self-clearance at the Causeway as part of its Automated Clearance for Malaysian Citizens Motorcyclist initiative. Both sides are also working towards increasing daily laden train services between Johor Bahru and Woodlands Train Checkpoint. In addition, Singapore is also developing a BioScreen project to capture and tag biometric identifiers of visitors to facilitate immigration clearance at the Singapore checkpoints. Both Leaders also welcomed the signing of the Supplemental Agreement to the Agreement for the Construction and Operation of a Ferry Terminal and the Operation of a Ferry Service between Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore.

6. Both Leaders stressed the importance of strengthening bilateral economic cooperation, and discussed the opportunities and challenges in business and industrial cooperation, noting the good progress made by the Industrial Cooperation Work Group (ICWG) under the JMC. The Leaders affirmed the benefits to Iskandar Malaysia from cooperation in manufacturing and other industrial activities, and looked forward to the holistic and comprehensive development of Iskandar Malaysia by leveraging on the complementarities between Iskandar Malaysia and Singapore. The Leaders called on the ICWG to continue its efforts to strengthen the Singapore-Malaysia ecosystem through approaching companies with synergistic investment linkages across both countries, particularly in advanced materials

engineering, electronics, creative services, and food industries. The Leaders agreed to work together to realise the full implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) measures before the end of the year and to further deepen economic integration beyond 2015.

7. Recalling the signing of a Letter of Intent (LOI) for Defence Cooperation between the Singapore and Malaysia Defence Ministries in March 2015, both Leaders reaffirmed the importance of bilateral security ties and noted with satisfaction the close cooperation between both militaries. The Leaders welcomed the agreement between the Defence Ministers to intensify cooperation and exchanges between the two defence establishments in order to address common defence concerns within their jurisdictions. The Leaders also noted with satisfaction the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cooperation in Developing Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Capabilities between the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) and Malaysian National Security Council (NSC). The MOU will further strengthen and promote cooperation between the two agencies on training, the development of Standard Operating Procedures and doctrines for USAR operations, and the sharing of information pertaining to USAR and disaster management.

8. Recognising the importance of a skilled labour force to ensure the enhancement of socio-economic development, the Leaders encouraged discussions between both countries on possible partnerships to promote Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The Leaders noted the Agreement on Terms of Collaboration entered between the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Malaysia and ITE Education Services Pte Ltd, Singapore (ITEES) on 13 November 2014 which seeks to develop a core group of trained TVET leaders and trainers for the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Malaysia and to enhance the TVET capability of the Youth Skills Institutes under the Ministry. The Leaders also noted that ITEES is currently engaging the Malaysian Ministry of Education on similar collaborations.

9. The Leaders noted the good progress made in tourism collaboration, and welcomed the on-going discussions on the Sematan Riveria cruise project between the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise and the Sarawak State Government.

10. Both Leaders reaffirmed the importance of implementing the necessary measures, including the timely completion of the Johor River Barrage, to ensure reliable water supply

from the Johor River as provided under the 1962 Water Agreement. The Prime Ministers also expressed their appreciation to both the Singapore and Johor water authorities for their ongoing cooperation and encouraged both water authorities to continue their excellent working relationship.

11. The Leaders welcomed the close and continuous inter-agency cooperation on environmental issues with transboundary implications and navigational issues through platforms such as the Malaysia-Singapore Annual Exchange of Visits, Malaysia-Singapore Joint Committee on the Environment and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore-Johor Port Authority Operational Meeting. The Leaders emphasised the importance of adopting best practices for addressing areas of concern, including the implementation of mitigation measures, where appropriate and in accordance with international law.

12. Both Leaders acknowledged that transboundary haze pollution continues to be a recurring problem in the region. As both Malaysia and Singapore are equally affected, the Leaders reaffirmed the commitment of both countries to cooperate as close partners and as fellow ASEAN members to take decisive actions to resolve the problem, such as through appropriate information sharing to address mutual concerns for the benefit of both countries, taking actions on the prevention and early suppression of land and forest fires and the strengthening of the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution.

13. Both Leaders reaffirmed the importance of deepening the cultural bonds between the two peoples. They welcomed collaborative initiatives in the field of arts and culture between both countries such as discussions on the arrangements between the two countries relating to the loan of artworks through the National Gallery Singapore and the National Visual Arts Gallery of Malaysia. The Leaders also looked forward to the Titian Budaya Singapore-Malaysia Cultural Showcase, which will be held in Kuala Lumpur in 2015 to mark fifty years of diplomatic relations between Singapore and Malaysia.

14. The Leaders agreed to hold the next Retreat in 2016 in Malaysia.

5 May 2015, Singapore