

PRESS RELEASE BY PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE

**Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Bilateral Relations Between
the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Singapore**

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations, Speaker of Parliament Mr Tan Chuan-Jin and Acting Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM) Mr Levent Gök were the Guests of Honour at a reception in Ankara on 24 June 2019. The reception was hosted by Singapore's Ambassador to Turkey Mr Jonathan Tow. Mr Tan is currently on an official visit to Turkey with Members of Parliament Dr Teo Ho Pin, Prof Fatimah Lateef, Dr Chia Shi-Lu and Ms Joan Pereira.

2 To mark the occasion, Mr Tan and the guests viewed an archival exhibition charting out key bilateral milestones between Singapore and Turkey. Mr Tan also presented to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs a framed copy of the 1969 Singapore Press Statement announcing the establishment of diplomatic relations.

3 Mr Tan's remarks at the reception in Annex A and photographs from the reception in Annex B and are also for your reporting.

**Office of the Clerk of Parliament
25 June 2019**

**Remarks by the Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, the Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore,
at the Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Bilateral Relations Between
the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Singapore on
24 June 2019 in Ankara**

His Excellency Levent Gök, Acting Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM),
Ambassador Jonathan Tow,
Excellencies,
Parliamentary colleagues from both Singapore and Turkey,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1 It is a great honour to be here this evening to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Singapore and Turkey. It is truly a milestone event in the history of our countries. Bilateral ties have come a long way, and I am glad that the archival exhibition presented here today helps to capture some of these important moments.

2 I would now like to share a few brief observations.

3 First, although this is the 50th anniversary, a little known fact is that official interactions can be traced back a hundred years before Singapore's independence - to 1865, when the Ottoman Empire established the first Turkish Consulate in colonial-era Singapore.

4 Second, Turkey is not just an old friend, but an important partner for Singapore. Our bilateral relations are being built on two important pillars, namely the Strategic Partnership and the Turkey-Singapore Free Trade Agreement. Through these two pillars, our economic ties will grow stronger in the years to come.

5 Third, people-to-people and cultural ties are just as important as developing strong economic ties. In this regard, our archival agencies have signed an agreement to collaborate to uncover past histories and old ties between Ottoman Turkey and Singapore. We hope that from this cooperation, we will be able to further enrich our knowledge, and people-to-people ties.

6 Finally, as for our Parliamentary friendship, I am grateful that former Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM) Ismail Kahraman visited us in 2016. I am glad that we can reciprocate with a visit this year, to continue this interaction and friendship. Together with my delegation, I would like to thank our hosts, Speaker Mustafa Şentop; Acting Speaker Levent Gök; Chairperson of the Turkey-Singapore Parliamentary Friendship Group Ms Nilgun Ök; and the TBMM Deputies, for their warm hospitality and friendship accorded to us.

7 In turn, I look forward to welcoming Speaker Mustafa Şentop and his delegation to visit Singapore, and to allow us to reciprocate your warm friendship.

8 Thank you all for your presence this evening. Last but not least, I would also like to express my appreciation to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for your support and to the Singapore Embassy for hosting this event.

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ANNEX B

Photographs from the Reception to Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Bilateral Relations Between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Singapore on 24 June 2019 in Ankara

[NOTE: High resolution versions are available upon request. If featured, the photographs are to be credited to the “Parliament of Singapore”.]



1. A group photograph with Guests of Honour, Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore Mr Tan Chuan-Jin (sixth from the right) and Acting Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Mr Levent Gök (fifth from the left). They were hosted by Singapore's Ambassador to Turkey Mr Jonathan Tow (extreme right).
2. The Singapore Members of Parliament are (from left to right) Prof Fatimah Lateef and Dr Teo Ho Pin, as well as Dr Chia Shi-Lu (second from right) and Ms Joan Pereira (third from right).



Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore Mr Tan Chuan-Jin delivering his remarks at the reception in Ankara on 24 June 2019.