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THE LITTLE **RED DOT**

Reflections by Singapore's Diplomats
Volume II

Editors

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Published by

World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd.

5 Toh Tuck Link, Singapore 596224

USA office: 27 Warren Street, Suite 401-402, Hackensack, NJ 07601

UK office: 57 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9HE

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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Reflections by Singapore's Diplomats

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ISBN-13 978-981-4271-86-8 (pbk)

ISBN-10 981-4271-86-1 (pbk)

Printed in Singapore.

About Institute of Policy Studies

The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) was established in 1988 as a think-tank dedicated to fostering good governance in Singapore through strategic policy research and discussion. An autonomous research centre in the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, IPS focuses on domestic developments in Singapore and on external relations. It employs a multi-disciplinary approach in its analysis with an emphasis on long-term strategic thinking.

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Foreword

To survive and prosper, Singapore as a small country must be exceptional. To achieve this, we need not only men and women who are exceptional but who are also fully committed to the Singapore cause.

The Foreign Ministry has been able to attract such men and women into its ranks. This collection of essays from a third generation of ambassadors bears testimony to this. Their reflections, thoughtful, insightful and often times heartwarming, are infused with a palpable sense of mission and shared purpose in the service of Singapore. That sense of mission manifests itself in their clear-sighted appreciation, passionate promotion and steadfast defence of our national interest.

Pursuing the national interest is the *raison d'être* of every country's foreign policy and Singapore is no different. Undergirding this is an acute awareness that no strategic or competitive advantage that we enjoy is a permanent advantage. Even as we sign the latest international agreement that expands our external political and economic space, our diplomats are looking at what more needs to be done.

We are perpetual worriers. We take nothing for granted. We are too small to change the world but we can change to stay relevant to the world. This constant restlessness sets Singapore apart from

many countries. It makes us imagine and invent our future beyond the limits of our physical size. Our diplomats embody this spirit.

I believe above all it is this spirit that makes the “Little Red Dot” and its people exceptional.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Raymond Lim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Raymond Lim
Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore
2009

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Acknowledgements

The Little Red Dot, a collection of essays by the first and second generation of Singapore's diplomats, has been very well received. Published in 2005, it has been reprinted three times in 2005, 2006 and 2008. The editors have felt the need to include the voices of the third generation in a new volume. We are very pleased that our objective has been achieved.

We would like to thank Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Raymond Lim for his foreword to this new volume of essays, and our colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, particularly, Mr. Peter Ho, Mr. Bilahari Kausikan, Mr. Lee Chiong Giam, Mr. Ho Cheok Sun and their colleagues, and Ms. Lily Ng for their generous support for this book. Ms. Lim Bee Leng has meticulously expanded the list of the milestones of Singapore's external relations.

We would like to thank our contributors for sharing their stories, reflections and the lessons learnt. We hope that the stories of this younger generation of diplomats will bring different insights to our readers.

Our gratitude also goes to our colleagues at the Institute of Policy Studies, including Mr. Ong Keng Yong, Mr. Arun Mahizhnan, Ms. Irene Lim, and, our intern, Ms. Sinni Lim for their help in the preparation of this book.

We wish to thank our publishers, Prof. K K Phua, Mr. Max Phua and our editors, Ms. Yvonne Tan and Ms. Lim Shujuan of World Scientific Publishing for doing a great job.

Tommy Koh
Chang Li Lin
September 2008

List of Abbreviations

AMED	Asia-Middle East Dialogue
AMM	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
BGC	Bonifacio Global City
BITP	Bangalore International Tech Park
BMW	Bavarian Motor Works
CDA	Charge d’Affairs
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIAC	Clark International Airport Corp
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DBS	Development Bank of Singapore
EALAF	East Asia-Latin America Forum
EAS	East Asia Summit
EDB	Economic Development Board
EDSA	Epifanio de los Santos Avenue
EU	European Union
FEALAC	Forum of East Asia-Latin America Cooperation
FOS	Friends of Singapore
FSO	Foreign Service Officer
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
FUNCINPEC	National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia

G77	Group of 77
GATT	General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade
GILAS	Gearing up Internet Literacy and Access for Students
GK	Gawad Kalinga
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
HQ	Headquarters
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IE	International Enterprise (Singapore)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMM	Informal Ministerial Meeting
INTAN	Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara
IP	Intellectual Property
IPOS	Intellectual Property Office of Singapore
ISEAS	Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
IT	Information Technology
KPNLF	Khmer People's National Liberation Front
LEAP	Leaders and Educators in Asia Programme
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MINDEF	Ministry of Defence
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NAMFREL	National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections
NAT	Needs Assessment Team
NEDA	National Economic Development Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NIE	National Institute of Education
NOK	Next Of Kin
NUS	National University of Singapore
PF	Prison Fellowship
PM	Prime Minister
PPA	Policy, Planning and Analysis
PSC	Public Service Commission
R&D	Research and Development
R&E	Regional and Economic
RAM	Reform the Armed Forces Movement
RSIS	S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
SAF	Singapore Armed Forces
SAR	Search and Rescue
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SCDF	Singapore Civil Defence Force
SCP	Singapore Cooperation Programme
SGH	Singapore General Hospital
SIA	Singapore Airlines
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMS	Short Message Service
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
TPN	Third Person Note
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIKOM	United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission

USA (US)	United States of America
USTR	United States Trade Representative
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction

The Little Red Dot has been very successful. Published in 2005, it has been reprinted in 2005, 2006 and 2008. Encouraged by its success, we have decided to update volume one and to publish a new volume two, consisting of 21 essays by our third generation of ambassadors and high commissioners.

The essays in volume two contain stories which have never been told before. Some of them are inspiring. Others show the resilience and inventiveness of our young diplomats. All the essays contain important lessons learnt.

With the help of MFA's Librarian, Ms. Lim Bee Leng, we have updated the milestones which serve as a useful record of the history of Singapore's external relations

We hope that volume two will be as successful as volume one.

*Tommy Koh
Chang Li Lin*