

## **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:**

### **Diversities**

New and Old

*25 – 26 October 2018*

*Sands Grand Ballrooms (Level 5), Sands Expo and Convention Centre  
Marina Bay Sands, Singapore*

## **CONCEPT**

Singapore has achieved a remarkable standard of living since gaining independence some 53 years ago. The city-state has one of the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in the world, surpassing that of Japan, United Kingdom, and Australia (The World Bank, 2017). On the social front, the multi-racial and multi-religious communities in this country have maintained a largely harmonious relationship for decades, a rare feat in an increasingly fractious sea of identities.

Notwithstanding these accolades, there are nascent signs that the city-state is facing greater and more volatile headwinds in the years to come. What has been particularly noticeable is the proliferation of new schisms arising from different lifestyles, values and wealth. These fault lines are symptoms of a deteriorating sense of “togetherness” in a rapidly evolving world.

For Singapore as a city-state to continue to prosper, there is an imperative to forge a new social compact that is not zero-sum based and to reach a consensus in managing the plurality of differences. The goal of this conference is therefore to discuss the new Singapore polity that will be inclusive for all.

**PROGRAMME**  
*(as at 27 July 2018)*

**Thursday, 25 October 2018**

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|-------------------|--|
| 6.30 pm – 7.00 pm | <b>Registration</b>  |
| 6.55 pm           | <i>Guests to take their seats in the ballroom.</i>   |
| 7.00 pm – 7.10 pm | <b>Welcome Remarks</b>   |
|                   | Mr Janadas Devan<br>Director<br>Institute of Policy Studies  |
| 7.10 pm – 7.20 pm | <b>Special 30th Anniversary Remarks by</b>   |
|                   | Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong   |
| 7.20 pm – 8.20 pm | <b>Dinner</b>  |
| 8.20 pm – 8.25 pm | <b>Video</b>   |
| 8.25 pm – 9.10 pm | <b>Dialogue with Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies</b> |
|                   | <b>Chairperson</b>   |
|                   | Professor Tommy Koh<br>Special Adviser<br>Institute of Policy Studies  |
| 9.10 pm – 9.25 pm | <b>30 Years and Beyond</b>   |
| 9.10 pm – 9.20 pm | <i>Cake Cutting</i>  |
| 9.20 pm – 9.25 pm | <i>Toast</i>   |
| 9.25 pm           | <b>Dessert Bar</b>   |

## **Friday, 26 October 2018**

7.45 am – 8.30 am      **Registration**

8.30 am – 8.45 am      **Opening Remarks**

Mr Janadas Devan  
Director  
Institute of Policy Studies

8.45 am – 10.15 am      **PANEL I**  
**Unequal and Immobile Structures**

This panel will look at factors that serve to create class disparities in Singapore society. The discussion will focus on the use and impact of policy levers in mitigating the negative outcomes of issues such as the income divide, gaps in the social safety net, the cycle of poverty and the emerging underclass.

### **Chairperson**

Mr Manu Bhaskaran  
Adjunct Senior Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies  
and  
Partner and Member of the Board  
Centennial Group Inc

### **Speakers**

Mrs Josephine Teo  
Minister for Manpower  
and  
Second Minister  
Ministry of Home Affairs

Dr Walter Theseira  
Senior Lecturer  
School of Business  
Singapore University of Social Sciences

### **Question-and-Answer Session**

10.15 am – 10.45 am      **Tea Break**

10.45 am – 12.15 pm      **PANEL II**  
**Emerging Forms of Social Identities and Social Formation**

This panel identifies the challenges created by emerging forms of social identities including those shaped by new intersectionalities that fall outside of our traditional policy frameworks. The panel will discuss the future of the Singapore identity discourse and what it means to be different. Ultimately, the focus will be on the processes required for building national unity and the search for a new social compact. Examples of emerging social identities are those created by non-CMI resident communities such as the Filipinos and Myanmarese, Caucasian PRs, unmarried single-parent families, LGBTQ marital unions, same gender family structures, surrogate offspring and separatist religious identities.

### **Chairperson**

Associate Professor Eleanor Wong  
Vice Dean, Student Life & Global Relations  
and  
Director, Legal Skills Programme  
Faculty of Law  
National University of Singapore

### **Speakers**

Mr Desmond Lee  
Minister for Social and Family Development  
and  
Second Minister for National Development

Professor Paulin Straughan  
Dean of Students and Professor of Sociology (Practice)  
School of Social Sciences  
Singapore Management University

### **Question-and-Answer Session**

12.15 pm – 1.15 pm

### **Lunch**

1.15 pm – 2.45 pm

### **PANEL III Politics of Diversity Management**

This panel discusses how reconstituted social groups and identities have resulted in changing ideologies and contending political demands. The fluid socio-demographic landscape may, however, lead to “push-backs” between competing social camps. How do we then balance these opposing demands so as to create an environment for constructive dialogue? Are the current policies and frameworks sufficiently flexible and porous to accommodate the diversity of these “voices”? What policy levers can we rely on to bring us back as one? Opposing groups are formed by situations such as those brought about by the class divide, the longevity divide, inter-ethnic/intra-ethnic divide, Interfaith/Intra-faith divide, political divide, the divide over sexual orientations, the divide over disabilities/different abilities and even neighbourhood divides.

### **Chairperson**

Associate Professor Suzaina Kadir  
Vice Dean (Academic Affairs)  
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

### **Speakers**

Dr Janil Puthucheary  
Senior Minister of State  
Ministry of Transport  
and  
Ministry of Communications and Information

Professor Cherian George  
Department of Journalism  
and  
Director  
Centre for Media and Communication Research  
Hong Kong Baptist University

**Question-and-Answer Session**

2.45 pm – 3.15 pm

**Tea Break**

3.15 pm – 4.45 pm

**PANEL IV  
Dialogue**

A general round-up of the points of discussion surfaced from Panels I – III.

**Chairperson**

Ms Debra Soon  
Chief Customer Officer  
and  
Head  
English Audience Segment  
Mediacorp Pte Ltd

**Speakers**

Mr Chan Chun Sing  
Minister for Trade and Industry

Ms Chua Mui Hoong  
Opinion Editor  
*The Straits Times*  
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

Ms Han Yong Mei  
Editor  
NewsHub  
Chinese Media Group  
*Lianhe Zaobao*  
Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

**Question-and-Answer Session**

4.45 pm – 5.00 pm

**Closing Remarks**

5.00 pm

**End**

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