



Plenary sitting

A8-0023/2019

24.1.2019

REPORT

containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Singapore, of the other part (15375/2018 – C8-0026/2019 – 2018/0403M(NLE))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Rapporteur: Antonio López-Istúriz White

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT NON-LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Singapore, of the other part (15375/2018 – C8-0026/2019 – 2018/0403M(NLE))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the draft Council decision (15375/2018),
- having regard to the draft Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Singapore, of the other part (08224/2014),
- having regard to the request for consent submitted by the Council in accordance with Article 212, in conjunction with Article 218(6)(a) of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (C8-0026/2019),
- having regard to the EU-Singapore Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), signed in Brussels on 19 October 2018,
- having regard to the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and Investment Protection Agreement (IPA), signed in Brussels on 19 October 2018,
- having regard to the ASEAN-EEC Cooperation Agreement signed in March 1980, which constitutes the legal framework for EU-ASEAN relations¹,
- having regard to the 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit, held in Brussels on 18 and 19 October 2018,
- having regard to the 10th EU-Singapore inter-parliamentary meeting, held in Singapore on 23 May 2017,
- having regard to the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, published by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) in June 2016,
- having regard to the Guidelines on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy in East Asia, approved by the Council on 15 June 2012,
- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 28 May 2018 on enhanced EU security cooperation in and with Asia,
- having regard to the EU Strategy on Connecting Europe and Asia, which is based on the concept of sustainable connectivity,
- having regard to its recent resolutions on ASEAN, in particular those of 3 October 2017

¹ OJ L 144, 10.6.1980, p. 2.

on EU political relations with ASEAN¹ and of 15 January 2014 on the future of EU-ASEAN relations²,

- having regard to its legislative resolution of ...³ on the draft decision,
 - having regard to Rule 99(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A8-0023/2019),
- A. whereas EU-Singapore relations go back several decades, and are built on a long history of friendship and close historical, political and economic ties; whereas the bilateral partnership is founded on shared values and a commitment to a peaceful and prosperous world;
- B. whereas both parties to the EU-Singapore Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) reaffirm their respect for democratic principles, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other applicable international human rights instruments;
- C. whereas Singapore is a founding member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2017;
- D. whereas during its 2018 Chairmanship of ASEAN, which bore the tagline ‘Resilient and Innovative’, Singapore hosted two ASEAN Summits and promoted ASEAN unity, security and economic cooperation, launching initiatives such as the ASEAN Youth Fellowship;
- E. whereas Singapore is a close ally of the United States, with which it concluded an FTA in 2003, and which it considers indispensable for security, stability and balance in the Asia-Pacific region;
- F. whereas Singapore ranked 9th on the UN Development Programme’s Human Development Index in 2017;
- G. whereas Singapore ranked 6th on Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index 2017, making it one of the least corrupt countries in the world;
- H. whereas the first EU-ASEAN Young Leaders Forum took place in February 2018;
- I. whereas Singapore experienced record air pollution levels as a result of the forest fires in neighbour countries, largely due to intentional burning to clear land for cultivation of palm oil and timber plantations;
- J. whereas Singapore’s Constitution guarantees the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, which are however severely restricted on the grounds of security, protection of public order, morality, parliamentary privilege, and racial and religious harmony; whereas Singapore ranked 151st out of 180 on the 2018

¹ OJ C 346, 27.9.2018, p. 44.

² OJ C 482, 23.12.2016, p. 75.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(0000)0000.

World Press Freedom Index; whereas Singapore's laws on contempt, sedition, and libel are used to restrict critical voices among activists, bloggers and the media;

- K. whereas Singapore still applies the death penalty; whereas after a brief period of no executions, the number of executions has been on a rise since 2014;
- L. whereas the rights of the Singapore's LGBTI community are severely restricted; whereas a consensual sexual relationship between two men is illegal and carries a punishment of up to two years in prison; whereas same-sex relationships are not recognised under law in Singapore;
- M. whereas Singapore has yet to ratify two core ILO conventions, notably the Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and the Convention on Discrimination;

EU-Singapore Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

1. Welcomes the conclusion of the PCA, which is of strategic importance and will provide a legal framework for the long-standing bilateral relations and commitment to strengthening and widening cooperation in regional and international forums, and in areas such as environmental protection, international stability, justice, security and development;
2. Highlights the opportunities provided by the PCA for new areas of cooperation, such as human rights, justice, freedom and security and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and for scientific and technological cooperation in fields such as energy, the environment, the fight against climate change, protection of natural resources, and transport, in particular maritime and air transport;
3. Welcomes cooperation on people-to-people links, the information society, the audio-visual and media fields, education and cultural exchanges, employment and social affairs, health and statistics that will help to evaluate the progress of the agreement;
4. Considers that the PCA, the framework agreement, is politically closely associated with and complements the FTA and the IPA; recalls that Article 44 of the PCA allows for the non-execution of the agreements in cases of systematic and serious violation of essential elements, including democratic principles, the rule of law and human rights;
5. Welcomes Singapore's signing on 21 June 2017 of the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement (MCAA) for implementing the global standard for the automatic exchange of information for tax purposes and its notification to the OECD on 30 June 2017 of its intention to activate automatic exchanges under that agreement with all the EU Member States for which there was no bilateral agreement for the same purpose in place; encourages the Parties to make full use of the tax cooperation provisions in the PCA;

Human rights and fundamental freedoms

6. Reaffirms the needed commitment and engagement with regard to respect for human rights, including social rights, democracy, fundamental freedoms, good governance and

the rule of law, and to working together in this regard; recalls that human rights are at the centre of the EU's relations with third countries; calls on the Singaporean authorities to ensure, in all circumstances, respect for international law, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the UN Charter and Universal Declaration on Human Rights and considers that the EU should continue providing support to Singapore for social inclusion, respect for human rights and the rule of law, and the promotion of peace, security and judicial reform; welcomes the open public debate on the revision of the unenforced law on the punishment of consensual same-sex relations and calls on the Government of Singapore to fully protect the rights of the LGBTI community; insists that the Government of Singapore abolish the laws penalising sexual relationships between people of the same gender; stresses the need for further cooperation on women's rights and urges the Government of Singapore to facilitate the adoption of legislation prohibiting all forms of discrimination against women and based on sexual orientation;

7. Calls for the EU to enter into a dialogue with the Government of Singapore with the aim of introducing an immediate moratorium on capital punishment as a step towards the abolition of the death penalty;
8. Calls on the Government of Singapore to protect freedom of expression and assembly, as these are core elements of a well-functioning democracy;
9. Calls on the EU to engage in a dialogue with the Singaporean authorities with a view to facilitating the ratification by the country of the human rights instruments and core ILO conventions; acknowledges that Singapore has not yet ratified the conventions on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and on Discrimination, and that it denounced the Convention on Forced Labour; expects Singapore to further engage with the ILO with a view to progressing towards full alignment with the content of and ultimately pursuing the ratification of these conventions;

EU-Singapore relations

10. Stresses that the conclusion of the PCA provides a strong impetus for greater engagement between the EU, Singapore and the Southeast Asia region in general;
11. Highlights the political value of strong trade and investment relations between Singapore and the EU;
12. Underlines the EU's particular experience in institution-building, the single market, regulatory convergence, crisis management, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and human rights and democracy; stresses that the EU should intensify policy dialogues and cooperation on issues such as fundamental rights and on matters of common concern, including the rule of law and security and protection of freedom of expression;
13. Welcomes the fact that the PCA supports people-to-people exchanges, such as academic mobility under the Erasmus Mundus Programme, and facilitates the further development of cultural exchanges in order to increase mutual understanding and knowledge of respective cultures;
14. Underlines the role of the Singapore-based Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) as the main

instrument for cultural exchanges between Asia and Europe; welcomes its role in including civil society concerns as a vital component of the deliberations at the ASEM;

15. Highlights that the European Union Centre in Singapore, which was established in 2009 in partnership with the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University, promotes knowledge and understanding of the EU and its policies and is part of the global network of EU Centres of Excellence;
16. Encourages Singaporean researchers to carry out joint research and innovation projects with EU entities under EU research initiatives such as the Horizon 2020 programme, and to address common global challenges relating to climate change, the environment, biotechnology, health, aging populations, energy, natural resources and food security;

Regional and international cooperation

17. Considers that Singapore is a key partner in responding to humanitarian disasters in Southeast Asia, as well as an important player for the political stability of the whole region;
18. Is concerned that climate change will have a major impact on Singapore and the ASEAN region; welcomes Singapore's positive contribution towards the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals; welcomes Singapore's ratification of the Paris Agreement on 21 September 2016 and expects it to meet the planned emissions reduction targets by 2030; aims to work together with Singapore and ASEAN to speed up the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement; highlights the need to provide assistance to Singapore and the rest of the ASEAN countries in order to enhance the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity, in particular coral reefs, and the systematic rehabilitation of forest ecosystems; welcomes the role of Singapore on the regional issue of reducing deforestation; urges further EU-Singapore cooperation to effectively curb forest fires and to adopt more environmentally friendly technologies for transport and buildings;
19. Believes that there is scope, interest in and a need for the EU and ASEAN to work together to develop a joint circular economy strategy;
20. Welcomes the creation of an EU-ASEAN Young Leaders Forum, which will allow young leaders from the EU and ASEAN countries to exchange ideas and build relationships in order to support EU-ASEAN relations;
21. Stresses that the PCA will provide an opportunity for the EU to reinforce its contribution to the implementation of shared objectives in the Indo-Pacific area; calls for strengthened joint efforts for a free and open Indo-Pacific region;
22. Calls for cooperation with Singapore in the pursuit of common interests relating to the implementation of ASEAN's and the EU's connectivity policies; stresses the need for collaboration regarding the Belt and Road Initiative in order to work towards the implementation of the connectivity targets and criteria that were agreed during the recent EU-China Summit; reiterates the need to promote multilateral governance;
23. Stresses that Singapore has advocated regional multilateralism in Southeast Asia; takes

note of Singapore's role in the EU-ASEAN inter-regional diplomatic, economic and institutional dialogues and underlines Singapore's support for regional integration in Southeast Asia;

24. Notes that Singapore is strategically located; takes note of Singapore's contribution to regional and global security; welcomes the annual Asia Security Summit, otherwise known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, which has been held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore since 2002;
25. Expresses its deep concern at the growing tensions in the South China Sea; calls on ASEAN to speed up consultations on a Code of Conduct for the peaceful resolution of disputes and controversies in this area and for the EU to support this process; insists that the issue should be solved according to international law under the United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea (UNCLOS); is pleased that Singapore, a non-claimant country, has urged the parties to manage differences peacefully and in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS;
26. Calls, alongside Singapore, for freedom of navigation and overflight in the area and stresses that the EU has a strong interest in promoting stability in Southeast Asia; highlights the key role of the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asia Summit in promoting security dialogues between the region and the extra-regional powers of China and the United States;
27. Welcomes the ASEAN Cyber Capacity Programme launched on the initiative of Singapore, which aims to assist ASEAN nations in identifying and responding to cyber threats; understands that ASEAN has no mutual norms for cyber protection, which could impede cyber security cooperation in the region; calls for the EU to share its experiences of dealing with cyber and hybrid threats and to support ASEAN capacity building in this area;
28. Commends Singapore on its deployment of troops and materiel to support the multinational coalition in Iraq from 2003 to 2008 and its subsequent contribution to the anti-ISIS operations in Iraq and Syria;
29. Recognises Singapore's readiness to host and role in hosting summit meetings to promote peace and confidence building in Asia and beyond;

Institutional framework under the PCA

30. Welcomes the establishment under the PCA of a Joint Committee composed of representatives of both sides at an appropriately high level, to ensure the proper functioning and implementation of the agreement, set priorities and make recommendations to promote the agreement's objectives;
31. Calls for regular exchanges between the European External Action Service (EEAS) and Parliament, to allow Parliament to follow up on the implementation of the PCA and the achievement of its objectives;

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32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of Singapore.

PROCEDURE – COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Title	Council decision on the conclusion of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Singapore
References	2018/0403M(NLE)
Date of consultation / request for consent	8.11.2018
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	AFET 17.1.2019
Committees asked for opinions Date announced in plenary	INTA 17.1.2019
Not delivering opinions Date of decision	INTA 21.1.2019
Rapporteurs Date appointed	Antonio López-Istúriz White 9.10.2018
Date adopted	22.1.2019
Result of final vote	+: 49 –: 2 0: 6
Members present for the final vote	Michèle Alliot-Marie, Francisco Assis, Petras Auštrevičius, Amjad Bashir, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Mario Borghezio, Klaus Buchner, James Carver, Aymeric Chauprade, Javier Couso Permuy, Arnaud Danjean, Georgios Epitideios, Knut Fleckenstein, Eugen Freund, Michael Gahler, Sandra Kalniete, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Wajid Khan, Andrey Kovatchev, Eduard Kukan, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Barbara Lochbihler, Sabine Lösing, Andrejs Mamikins, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, David McAllister, Clare Moody, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Demetris Papadakis, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Tonino Picula, Julia Pitera, Cristian Dan Preda, Jozo Radoš, Alyn Smith, Jordi Solé, Dobromir Sośnierz, Dubravka Šuica, Charles Tannock, László Tőkés, Ivo Vajgl, Geoffrey Van Orden
Substitutes present for the final vote	Asim Ademov, Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Elisabetta Gardini, Rebecca Harms, Patricia Lalonde, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Bodil Valero, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Janusz Zemke, Željana Zovko
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Norbert Erdős, Axel Voss, Martina Werner
Date tabled	24.1.2019

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

49	+
ALDE	Petras Auštrevičius, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Patricia Lalonde, Jozo Radoš, Ivo Vajgl
ECR	Amjad Bashir, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Charles Tannock, Geoffrey Van Orden
PPE	Asim Ademov, Michèle Alliot-Marie, Arnaud Danjean, Norbert Erdős, Michael Gahler, Elisabetta Gardini, Sandra Kalniete, Manolis Kefalogiannis, Andrey Kovatchev, Eduard Kukan, Antonio López-Istúriz White, David McAllister, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Julia Pitera, Cristian Dan Preda, Dubravka Šuica, László Tőkés, Axel Voss, Željana Zovko
S&D	Francisco Assis, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Knut Fleckenstein, Eugen Freund, Doru-Claudian Frunzulică, Wajid Khan, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Andrejs Mamikins, Clare Moody, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Demetris Papadakis, Ioan Mircea Pașcu, Tonino Picula, Martina Werner, Janusz Zemke
VERTS/ALE	Klaus Buchner, Rebecca Harms, Barbara Lochbihler, Alyn Smith, Jordi Solé, Bodil Valero

2	-
NI	Georgios Epitideios, Dobromir Sośnierz

6	0
EFDD	James Carver, Aymeric Chauprade
ENF	Mario Borghezio
GUE/NGL	Javier Couso Permuy, Sabine Lösing, Marie-Christine Vergiat

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention