

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY PRESIDENT WEE KIM WEE AT THE STATE BANQUET
IN HONOUR OF HER EXCELLENCY, MISS AGATHA BARBARA,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA,
AT THE ISTANA ON TUESDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 1986

I take great pleasure in extending a warm welcome to you, Your Excellency President Barbara, and members of your delegation. The Government and people of Singapore are honoured to have you visit us.

Your role in the political life of Malta has been considerable. You have contributed much to the progress and development of Malta, especially the education of her people and the political stability of the country. You were the first woman in Malta to be elected to the House of Representatives and the only woman candidate to have contested successfully every election held since 1947.

You represent a country, which in several ways is similar to Singapore. We are island states. Both our countries are small in size and well placed geographically. Both were former British colonies and are, today, independent Republics within the Commonwealth.

The emergence of our countries as independent states has increased the ties between us. Close links between Singapore and Malta have been established through our participation in the Commonwealth, Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations. We share a belief in the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and are committed to the principles of non-intervention and non-interference. As small states, Malta and Singapore have

been firmly opposed to the use or threat of force in the region around us. We appreciate the support Malta has given the ASEAN countries in our efforts to seek a political settlement in Cambodia.

Singapore Airlines weekly flights to Malta have brought Singapore and Malta closer together. Trade between Singapore and Malta is still relatively small. I am confident more can be done to expand these links between us. It will be to our mutual advantage.

I look forward to the further expansion of the existing good relations between our two countries.

Finally, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I ask you to join me in a toast to the good health, success and happiness of Her Excellency, the President of the Republic of Malta.

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