

REGULAR FEATURES

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SINGAPORE ON INTERNATIONAL LAW

by TAN THENG KOK JASON*

Singapore maintained her momentum in negotiations for numerous Free Trade Agreements (F.T.As) in the period from April 2006 to March 2007. She also held reviews for several concluded F.T.As and was successful in signing many other economic and air services agreements. Singapore continued to be active in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which took a step closer to the ASEAN Community with an agreement to commence the drafting of the ASEAN Charter. Besides regional engagements, Singapore also participated at various international fora such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank Group and the World Intellectual Property Organisation.

I. FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS¹

A. *The China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement*

On 25 August 2006, China and Singapore launched negotiations for a bilateral F.T.A. which is expected to bring long-term economic benefits to the parties, and contribute to the drive towards regional economic integration, as a building block for the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area.

The first round of the China-Singapore F.T.A. (CSFTA) negotiations was held on 26 October 2006 in Beijing and the negotiating mechanism as well as the scope of the CSFTA were considered. When concluded, the CSFTA is expected to be a comprehensive agreement which will not only include the chapters on trade in goods, trade in services and investment, but also cover cooperation initiatives in other areas.

The second round of CSFTA negotiations took place on 29 to 30 March 2007 in Singapore. Both sides had constructive discussions on a wide range of topics including trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic cooperation, legal issues and various other matters.

B. *The Gulf Cooperation Council-Singapore Free Trade Agreement*

In November 2006, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Singapore agreed to launch negotiations for a F.T.A. which will strategically link the Gulf region and Singapore. The

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¹ More information on Singapore's F.T.As can be found at the official FTA website < <http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/wps/portal/FTA>>.

GCC consists of six member countries namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Singapore's previous bilateral F.T.A. negotiations with Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE will now be subsumed under the GCC-Singapore F.T.A. (GCCSFTA). The first round of negotiations for the GCCSFTA took place from 17 to 18 January 2007 in Riyadh. There was good progress made in the areas of trade in goods, trade in services and investment.

C. The Canada-Singapore Free Trade Agreement

Bilateral negotiations for the Canada-Singapore FTA were launched in October 2001. Six rounds of negotiations were completed by October 2003. After a hiatus of about three years, Canada and Singapore met for the seventh round of negotiations for the Canada-Singapore F.T.A. which took place in Singapore from 26 February to 2 March 2007. There was good progress made in the areas of trade in goods, trade in services, investment, institutional provisions and dispute settlement chapters.

D. The Peru-Singapore Free Trade Agreement

Peru and Singapore completed the second round of negotiations on the Peru-Singapore F.T.A. from 12 to 16 June 2006 in Lima. The negotiations on sanitary and phytosanitary measures as well as competition policy were concluded, and there was significant progress on the other issues at this round. There were further steps forward at the third round of negotiations in Singapore from 25 to 28 September 2006. The negotiations for the chapters on rules of origin, investment, e-commerce and dispute settlement were successfully concluded. As for the chapters on trade in goods, customs procedures, trade in services, government procurement and technical barriers to trade, the negotiations are close to completion with only a few outstanding issues to be resolved.

E. The Pakistan-Singapore Free Trade Agreement

The third round of negotiations for the F.T.A. between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Singapore took place from 3 to 5 May 2006 in Singapore. The parties made progress on the key issues concerning trade in goods, rules of origin, trade in services, investment, government procurement, customs and the legal elements of the F.T.A.

F. The Egypt-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement

Egypt and Singapore signed a Declaration of Intent to proceed with negotiations on the Egypt-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. The Declaration was signed in Cairo on 13 November 2006 and officials from both countries are expected to meet to discuss the scope and modalities of the agreement.

G. Review of the Agreement between Japan and Singapore for a New-Age Economic Partnership

The second review of the Agreement between Japan and Singapore for a New-Age Economic Partnership (JSEPA) was launched in April 2006 in Tokyo. The Supervisory Committee for JSEPA agreed on the scope of the review which would include expansion of the product coverage, improvement of the rules of origin and enhancement of financial services

commitments. In January 2007, it was announced that there was an in-principle agreement on the major elements to be improved pursuant to the review of JSEPA. The major elements include improved market access in the area of industrial and agricultural products, revised rules of origin, revised customs procedures, improved financial services commitments, and technical alteration to competition provisions.

The in-principle agreement was then formalised in a Protocol Amending the JSEPA which was signed by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on 19 March 2007 in Tokyo. The revised JSEPA will result in greater liberalisation in trade in goods and services as well as enhance trade and investment links between the two countries.

H. *Review of the India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement*

With regard to the review for the India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement which was concluded in March 2007, it was agreed that by 1 July 2007, DBS Bank will be permitted to open up to eight new branches in India and United Overseas Bank will get approval to open one branch. The State Bank of India will also get qualifying full bank (QFB) status in Singapore by the same date. India and Singapore also agreed to further liberalise trade in goods. India will eliminate tariffs on 368 additional goods items by 1 July 2007 under a supplementary agreement. These are the same items on which India is prepared to offer ASEAN duty-free access, but Singapore will be getting the concessions ahead of ASEAN.²

I. *Review of the European Free Trade Association-Singapore Free Trade Agreement*

The Member States of the European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) and Singapore held their second Joint Committee meeting on 14 March 2007 and discussed various aspects of the European Free Trade Association-Singapore Free Trade Agreement. The Joint Committee adopted five Decisions³ that will, after their entry into force, further facilitate the trade in goods between the parties.

J. *The ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement*

The *Agreement on Trade in Services of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between ASEAN and the People's Republic Of China*⁴ was signed on 14 January 2007 in Cebu. The ASEAN-China Agreement on Trade in Services grants ASEAN service suppliers preferential market access into the Chinese market, beyond China's WTO market access commitments. There is a first package of specific commitments under the Agreement and Article 23(2) of the Agreement provides that the parties shall, with the aim of substantially improving on the first package of specific commitments, conclude the second package within a year from the date of entry into force of the Agreement.

The *Second Protocol to Amend the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic*

² Vikram Khannah "India go-ahead for S'pore banks expected by July; DBS may open up to 8 branches and UOB, one; State Bank of India to get QFB licence: Indian official" *the Business Times Singapore* (26 March 2007).

³ The texts of the Decisions can be found at <http://secretariat.efta.int/Web/ExternalRelations/PartnerCountries/SG/SG_Decisions/SG_Archive_JCD>.

⁴ The text of the ASEAN-China Agreement on Trade in Services can be found at <[http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/wps/wcm/connect/resources/file/eb64b1045580efc/ASEAN-CHINA_TIS_\(main_agreement\).pdf?MOD=AJPRE-RES](http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/wps/wcm/connect/resources/file/eb64b1045580efc/ASEAN-CHINA_TIS_(main_agreement).pdf?MOD=AJPRE-RES)>.

of China⁵ was signed on 8 December 2006 in Cebu. This Protocol incorporates the early harvest programme between Philippines and China, and also includes amendments to the specific product list made by the parties.

The *Protocol to Amend the Agreement on Trade in Goods of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China*⁶ was also signed on 8 December 2006 in Cebu. This Protocol seeks to, *inter alia*, incorporate the outstanding trade in goods issues between Vietnam and China and include amendments to sensitive list and highly sensitive list made by some parties.

The negotiations for the *Agreement on Investment* are continuing.

K. *The ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement*

The *Agreement on Trade in Goods Under The Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Among the Governments of the Member Countries of ASEAN and the Republic of Korea*⁷ was signed on 24 August 2006 in Kuala Lumpur. There has been significant progress in the negotiations for the *Agreement on Trade in Services* and substantial agreement on the main text has been reached. The negotiations for the *Agreement on Investment* are in progress.

L. *The ASEAN-Australia and New Zealand Free Trade Agreement*

The fifth round of negotiations for the ASEAN-Australia and New Zealand F.T.A. was held from 3 to 6 April 2006 in Rotorua. The sixth round was held from 24 to 26 July 2006 in Brunei while the seventh round was held from 25 to 28 September 2006 in Hobart. There was an inter-sessional held from 27 to 30 November 2006 in Singapore. The eighth round was held from 3 to 9 March 2007 in Wellington. The negotiations for trade in goods, trade in services, investment, rules of origin, as well as legal and institutional issues are continuing.

M. *Other Free Trade Agreements*

On the multilateral front, Singapore has been participating in the negotiations of ASEAN F.T.As with India and Japan. The negotiations for these multilateral F.T.As are still ongoing.

II. OTHER ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS

A. *Double Taxation Agreements*⁸

A number of double taxation agreements (D.T.As) were signed in the period from April 2006 to March 2007. The *Agreement between Singapore and the Republic of Estonia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to*

⁵ The text of the Second Protocol can be found at <http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/wps/wcm/connect/resources/file/eb41c608c3dd3d3/Second_Protocol_to_Amend_the_Framework_Agreement_on_Comprehensive_Economic_Cooperation_Between_ASEAN_and_the_Peoples_Repub.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

⁶ The text of the Protocol can be found at <<http://www.iesingapore.gov.sg/wps/wcm/connect/resources/file/eb41c808c410268/protocool.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>>.

⁷ The text of the ASEAN-Korea Agreement on Trade in Goods can be found at <<http://www.aseansec.org/AKF-TA%20documents%20signed%20at%20aem-rok,24aug06,KL-pdf/TIG%20-%20ASEAN%20Version%20-%2022August2006-final.pdf>>.

⁸ The texts of Singapore's Double Taxation Agreements can be found at <http://www.iras.gov.sg/ESVPortal/tax_resources/treaties/index.asp>.

Taxes on Income was signed on 18 September 2006. The *Agreement between Singapore and the Republic of Kazakhstan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* was signed on 19 September 2006. The new *Agreement between Singapore and the Kingdom of Belgium for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* was signed on 6 November 2006. The provisions of the old D.T.A. with Belgium, signed on 8 February 1972, as amended by a Supplementary Agreement signed on 10 December 1996 will cease to apply upon ratification of the new D.T.A.

The *Agreement between Singapore and the State of Qatar for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* was signed on 28 November 2006. The *Agreement between Singapore and the Kingdom of Morocco for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* was signed on 9 January 2007. The *Agreement between Singapore and Ukraine for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* was signed on 26 January 2007.

There were also several D.T.As that were ratified in 2006 and they include the *Agreement between Singapore and the Sultanate of Oman for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* which entered into force on 7 April 2006; the *Agreement between Singapore and the Slovak Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* which entered into force on 12 June 2006; the *Third Protocol to the Agreement between Singapore and New Zealand for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* which entered into force on 17 August 2006; the *Agreement between Singapore and the Republic of the Fiji Islands for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* which entered into force on 28 November 2006; the *Agreement between Singapore and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* which entered into force on 12 December 2006; and the *Agreement between Singapore and Brunei Darussalam for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income* which entered into force on 14 December 2006.

B. *Investment Guarantee Agreements and other Economic Cooperation Agreements*

Singapore signed an investment guarantee agreement with Saudi Arabia on 10 April 2006. The key provisions of the agreement include non-discriminatory treatment for investments of the other country, free flow of capital for investors between the two countries, and treatment of Saudi government entities responsible for investing public funds overseas as “investors”. Further links were forged when Singapore signed investment guarantee agreements with Ukraine on 18 September 2006, and the Slovak Republic on 13 October 2006. In addition there were investment guarantee agreements negotiations with the Sultanate of Oman, the Republic of Finland and People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Saudi Arabia and Singapore also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Trade Cooperation between the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Industry on 10 April 2006. The MOU will provide the basis for the parties to work together and have exchanges in areas such as export development and promotion as well as development of small and medium enterprises.

On 25 June 2006, Indonesia and Singapore signed a Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation in the islands of Batam, Bintan and Karimun. Under the Agreement, Singapore will assist Indonesia in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Batam, Bintan and Karimun to draw foreign investment and boost economic growth.

Russia and Singapore also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Economic Cooperation in SEZs on 15 August 2006. Under the MOU, Singapore will advise on the development of SEZs in Russia and share its expertise in the development of local and overseas industrial parks.

Singapore and Uzbekistan signed an economic cooperation agreement on 2 November 2006. Under the agreement, both countries shall encourage private sector business collaboration in areas such as light industry, transport and energy. On 25 November 2006, Singapore and the Emilia-Romagna Region of Italy signed a Memorandum of Understanding on economic cooperation. Under the MOU, both parties will aim to create manufacturing platforms and boost cooperation in various areas. They will also explore, *inter alia*, the creation of joint ventures and industrial cooperation.

III. INTERNATIONAL AIR AGREEMENTS

A. *Air Services Agreements*

Greece and Singapore signed a new Air Services Agreement (A.S.A.) on 8 June 2006 in Athens. The new A.S.A. will allow airlines of both countries to operate a greater number of passenger flights between Greece and Singapore with no restrictions on aircraft type.

On 13 December 2006, Ireland and Singapore concluded an Open Skies Agreement which will allow airlines of both countries to fly on any route between Singapore and Ireland, via and beyond to any third country, without restrictions in capacity, frequency or aircraft type.

India and Singapore held air services consultations from 8 to 9 January 2007 in New Delhi and concluded the consultations with a Memorandum of Understanding to expand air services between the countries. Under the MOU, carriers of both sides may increase the number of services between Chennai, Bangalore and Delhi, and Singapore. A new service between Coimbatore and Singapore is also made possible. There are additional fifth freedom traffic rights granted to the carriers of both sides.

Singapore also engaged in air services consultations with the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Cyprus, Japan, the Republic of Slovenia, Ukraine and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

B. *Other Air Agreements*

Singapore and the European Union (EU) signed a landmark aviation agreement on 9 June 2006 in Luxembourg. The *Agreement between the European Community and Singapore on Certain Aspects of Air Services*, otherwise known as the Horizontal Agreement (HA), will allow all European airlines to fly between any EU Member State and Singapore; and grant Singapore the flexibility to pursue the liberalisation of her bilateral air services agreements with individual EU Member States. This HA will also pave the way towards an Open Aviation Agreement between Singapore and the EU.

IV. INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES

Sovereignty over Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge (Malaysia/Singapore)

On 6 February 2003, Singapore and Malaysia signed a Special Agreement to submit to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) their dispute over the sovereignty of Pedra Branca, Middle Rocks and South Ledge.⁹ Both parties submitted the first round of written pleadings

⁹ More information on the dispute and the hearing before the ICJ can be found at the official ICJ website at <<http://www.icj-cij.org>>.

(the Memorials) to the ICJ on 25 March 2004. In accordance with Article 4 of the Special Agreement, the next round of written pleadings (the Counter-Memorials) was submitted to the ICJ on 25 January 2005. The third round of pleadings (the Replies) was submitted to the ICJ on 25 November 2005, following the Order of 1 February 2005 which fixed the November date as the time-limit for the filing of a Reply by each of the Parties. In a joint letter dated 23 January 2006, the Parties informed the Court that they had agreed not to submit Rejoinders. The Court decided that no further written pleadings were necessary and the case became ready for hearing. The public hearings in the case concerning *Sovereignty over Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge (Malaysia/Singapore)* will open on 6 November 2007 before the ICJ.

V. OTHER INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. *Maritime Boundaries between Indonesia and Singapore*

Indonesia and Singapore held their third round of technical discussions on maritime boundaries from 28 to 29 March 2007 in Singapore. Agreement was reached on a number of matters for the delimitation exercise. Both sides also presented views on the principles of delimitation to be used in territorial sea boundary delimitation. Singapore reiterated the position that its reclamation would not be a factor in the boundary negotiation with Indonesia. Indonesia took note of Singapore's position.

B. *Negotiations for Bilateral Agreements between Indonesia and Singapore*

Indonesia and Singapore held parallel negotiations for an Extradition Treaty (ET), a Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA), and a Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Agreement. There were significant progress made and outstanding issues were narrowed by the negotiating teams. There was agreement between President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to negotiate the ET and the DCA in parallel and as a package. In March 2007 the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Singapore agreed on joint negotiations to conclude the ET and the DCA.

C. *ASEAN Charter*

On 13 January 2007, Singapore together with the rest of the ASEAN countries signed the *Cebu Declaration on the Blueprint of the ASEAN Charter*.¹⁰ The Declaration endorsed the Report of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on the ASEAN Charter¹¹ and it was agreed by the parties that the High Level Task Force should commence the drafting of the ASEAN Charter on the basis of the views and directives given by the Heads of State/Government at the eleventh and twelfth ASEAN Summits, the relevant ASEAN documents and the EPG recommendations. The High Level Task Force was directed to complete the drafting of the ASEAN Charter in time for the thirteenth ASEAN Summit in Singapore in November 2007.

D. *ASEAN Agreements*

Singapore signed the *ASEAN Framework Agreement on Visa Exemption*¹² on 25 July 2006. Singapore was also a party to two ASEAN-United States agreements, namely the *Framework*

¹⁰ The text of the Declaration can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19257.htm>>.

¹¹ The Report of the Eminent Persons Group can be found at <[http://www.mfa.gov.sg/internet/press/16012007/ReportOfTheEminentPersonsGroup\(EPG\)OnTheAseanCharter.pdf](http://www.mfa.gov.sg/internet/press/16012007/ReportOfTheEminentPersonsGroup(EPG)OnTheAseanCharter.pdf)>.

¹² The text of the Agreement can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/18570.htm>>.

Document for the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership, and the *Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement between ASEAN and the U.S.* A number of ASEAN economic agreements were signed in December 2006 and they include the *ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Nursing Services*,¹³ *Protocol to Implement the Fifth Package of Commitments under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services*,¹⁴ *ASEAN Sectoral Integration (Amendment) Protocol for Priority Sectors*,¹⁵ *ASEAN Framework (Amendment) Agreement for the Integration of Priority Sectors*,¹⁶ and the *Protocol to Establish and Implement the ASEAN Single Window*.

Several ASEAN Agreements were also signed during the ASEAN Summit which took place in Cebu in January 2007. The agreements that were signed include the *ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism*,¹⁷ the *Cebu Declaration on the Acceleration of the Establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015*,¹⁸ the *Cebu Declaration Towards One Caring and Sharing Community*,¹⁹ and the *ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers*.²⁰ In February 2007, Singapore signed a few ASEAN transport agreements which include Protocol 1 of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit – Designation of Transit Transport Routes and Facilities and its Annex of List of Transit Transport Routes,²¹ the *Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Memorandum of Understanding on Air Freight Services*,²² and the *Protocol to Implement the Fifth Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services under the ASEAN Framework*.²³

E. *Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation: Intellectual Property Rights Experts' Group*

Singapore continued to play an active role in supporting a strong intellectual property rights system in the region. The twenty-fourth Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Intellectual Property Rights Experts' Group (IPEG) took place in Canberra, Australia on 24 to 25 January 2007 under the chairmanship of the principal senior state counsel of the International Affairs Division of the Attorney-General's Chambers. The discussions were focused on the APEC Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy Initiative, and its three Model Guidelines and suggested reporting templates. There was also sharing of information on harmonising patent application practices, proceedings and laws in the region.

F. *United Nations: Comprehensive and Integral Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities*

Singapore participated at the eighth session of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the *Comprehensive and Integral Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities* from 14 to 25 August 2006, which adopted the draft text of the Convention including an optional protocol, as a whole, without a vote.

¹³ The text of the Arrangement can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19210.htm>>.

¹⁴ The text of the Protocol can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19207.htm>>.

¹⁵ The text of the Protocol can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19204.htm>>.

¹⁶ The text of the Agreement can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19200.htm>>.

¹⁷ The text of the Agreement can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19250.htm>>.

¹⁸ The text of the Declaration can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19260.htm>>.

¹⁹ The text of the Declaration can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19254.htm>>.

²⁰ The text of the Declaration can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19264.htm>>.

²¹ The text of the Protocol can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19734.htm>>.

²² The text of the Protocol can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19736.htm>>.

²³ The text of the Protocol can be found at < <http://www.aseansec.org/19738.htm>>.

The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* was adopted on 13 December 2006 by the General Assembly by Resolution A/RES/61/106. The Convention and the optional protocol will be open for signature by all States and by regional integration organisations at United Nations Headquarters in New York as of 30 March 2007.

G. *United Nations: Group of Legal Experts*

The United Nations Secretary-General appointed a legal officer from the International Affairs Division of the Attorney-General's Chambers as a member of the Group of Legal Experts to Advise on Making the Standards Contained in the Secretary-General's Bulletin Binding on Contingent Member and Standardising the Norms of Conduct so that they are applicable to all Categories of Peacekeeping Personnel. The Group undertook and completed its work in September/October 2006.

H. *United Nations Commission on International Trade Law*

Singapore has been participating actively in the work of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), particularly in the Working Groups on Procurement, International Arbitration and Conciliation, Transport Law, Electronic Commerce and Insolvency.

On 6 July 2006, Singapore became one of the first signatories of the *United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts*. The Convention was formulated by the Working Group on Electronic Commerce under the chairmanship of the principal senior state counsel from the Civil Division of the Attorney-General's Chambers. The Convention provides, *inter alia*, for criteria to establish the equivalence between electronic communications and paper documents and between electronic authentication and handwritten signatures.

Singapore participated in the seventeenth and eighteenth sessions of the UNCITRAL Working Group III on Transport Law from 3 to 13 April 2006 and 6 to 17 November 2006 respectively. The work centred on a new international convention for the carriage of goods from door-to-door including sea carriage.

I. *Annual Meetings of the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group*

Singapore hosted the Annual Meetings of the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (S2006) in September 2006. The Annual Meetings are the largest and most comprehensive gathering of global financial representatives in the world. The S2006 was attended by about 16,000 participants, including delegates from the member groups of the IMF and the World Bank Group, representatives of observer states, non-governmental organisations, members of private businesses and the banking community and the media.

There were discussions on the prospects of and risks to the global economy, and how the IMF can become more responsive to its members' needs. There were also discussions on the IMF reform program for quota and voice.

J. *World Intellectual Property Organisation*

Singapore and the World Intellectual Property Organisation signed a *Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Joint Cooperation Activities in the Field of Intellectual Property*

on 26 June 2006 in Geneva. The MOU consolidated the previous two MOUs between Singapore and WIPO, and broadened the cooperation in promoting IP awareness and strengthening IP capabilities in developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region.²⁴

On 26 March 2007, Singapore deposited its instrument of ratification for the *Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks*, and was the first member of WIPO to do so. The Treaty was adopted at the WIPO Diplomatic Conference held in Singapore in March 2006 and Singapore signed the Treaty on 18 May 2006. The Treaty updates the 1994 WIPO *Trademark Law Treaty* and further harmonises trademark application procedures as well as provides for electronic filing of trademark applications.

K. *Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia*

The *Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia* (ReCAAP), which is the first regional government-to-government agreement to promote and enhance cooperation against maritime piracy and armed robbery in Asia, entered into force on 4 September 2006. An Information Sharing Centre (ISC) was established by parties to the ReCAAP as a platform for cooperation. Singapore is the host of the ReCAAP ISC, which was launched on 29 November 2006.

L. *Kyoto Protocol and Montreal Protocol*

Singapore acceded to the *Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* on 12 April 2006. Under the Kyoto Protocol, non-Annex I countries such as Singapore can participate in Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects. The National Environment Agency will serve as the Designated National Authority for the approval and registration of CDM projects in Singapore.

On 10 January 2007, Singapore also acceded to the 1999 Beijing Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The Amendment introduced control measures for production for hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and imposed restrictions on trade with non-Parties for these HCFCs. The amendment further introduced control measures for both production and consumption for bromochloromethane.

VI. LIST OF TREATY ACTION

The following is a list of some of the treaty actions taken by Singapore from 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007:

Agreement between Singapore and the Sultanate of Oman for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income
Entry into force: 7 April 2006

Agreement between Singapore and Saudi Arabia on the Promotion and Protection of Investments
Signature: 10 April 2006

Memorandum of Understanding on Trade Cooperation between the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Singapore and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Saudi Arabia
Signature: 10 April 2006

²⁴ More information can be found at < http://www.wipo.int/edocs/prdocs/en/2006/wipo_pr_2006_451.html>.

Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Accession: 12 April 2006

Entry into force: 11 July 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between RSM International and International Enterprise Singapore

Signature: 3 May 2006

Entry into force: 1 June 2006

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Royal Brunei Police Force and the Singapore Police Force on Combating Transnational Crime and Developing Police Cooperation

Signature: 7 May 2006

Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks

Signature: 18 May 2006

Ratification: 26 March 2007

Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement

Entry into force: 28 May 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Air Accident Investigation Bureau of Singapore and the Transportation Safety Board of Canada on cooperation relating to aircraft accident and incident investigation

Signature: 29 May 2006

Entry into force: 29 May 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Agency for Science, Technology and Research and the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation

Signature: 1 June 2006

Agreement between the European Community and Singapore on Certain Aspects of Air Services

Signature: 9 June 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Slovak Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Entry into force: 12 June 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between Kingdom of Bahrain and the Republic of Singapore

Signature: 12 June 2006

Entry into force: 12 June 2006

Research Collaboration Agreement and Service Agreement for immunology research between the Agency for Science, Technology and Research and the Australian National University

Signature: 16 June 2007

Memorandum of Understanding between Korean Broadcasting Institute and Media Development Authority

Signature: 18 June 2006

Entry into force: 18 June 2006

Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding between Republic of Singapore Ministry of Education & International Enterprise Singapore and People's Republic of China Liaoning Provincial Education Department

Signature: 23 June 2006

Entry into force: 23 June 2006

Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding between Republic of Singapore Ministry of Education & International Enterprise Singapore and People's Republic of China Liaoning Province Labour and Social Security Bureau

Signature: 23 June 2006

Entry into force: 23 June 2006

Framework Agreement between Indonesia and Singapore on Economic Cooperation in the islands of Batam, Bintan and Karimun

Signature: 25 June 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between Singapore and the World Intellectual Property Organisation Concerning Joint Cooperation Activities in the Field of Intellectual Property

Signature: 26 June 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between International Enterprise Singapore Board and Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency

Signature: 30 June 2006

Entry into force: 30 June 2006

United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts

Signature: 6 July 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between International Enterprise Singapore Board and Development Bank of Japan

Signature: 24 July 2006

Entry into force: 24 July 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Air Accident Investigation Bureau of Singapore and the Air Accidents Investigation Branch of the United Kingdom on Cooperation relating to Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation

Signature: 24 July 2006

ASEAN Framework Agreement on Visa Exemption

Signature: 25 July 2006

Framework Document for the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership

Signature: 28 July 2006

Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement between ASEAN and the U.S.

Signature: 5 August 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between Russia and Singapore on Economic Cooperation in Special Economic Zones

Signature: 15 August 2006

Third Protocol to the Agreement between Singapore and New Zealand for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Entry into force: 17 August 2006

Agreement on Trade in Goods Under The Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Among the Governments of the Member Countries of ASEAN and the Republic of Korea

Signature: 24 August 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Singapore and the Ministry of Communications of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Kingdom of Norway on Maritime Research and Development and Education and Training

Signature: 28 August 2006

Entry into force: 28 August 2006

Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia

Entry into force: 4 September 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Royal School of Administration of Cambodia and the Civil Service College of Singapore

Signature: 6 September 2006

Entry into force: 6 September 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Republic of Estonia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Signature: 18 September 2006

Agreement between Singapore and Ukraine on the Promotion and Protection of Investments

Signature: 18 September 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Republic of Kazakhstan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Signature: 19 September 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Qatari Ministry of Interior on Security Cooperation

Signature: 8 October 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Slovak Republic on the Promotion and Protection of Investments

Signature: 13 October 2006

Agreement between Singapore and Uzbekistan for Economic Cooperation

Signature: 2 November 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Kingdom of Belgium for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Signature: 6 November 2006

Annex 3 to Memorandum of Understanding Between the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore and the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission

Signature: 9 November 2006

Entry into force: 9 November 2006

Declaration of Intent on the Egypt-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)

Signature: 13 November 2006

Framework for Establishing Relationship and Partnership between the Public Administration Institute within the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Civil Service College (CSC) Singapore

Signature: 21 November 2006

Entry into force: 21 November 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between Singapore and the Emilia-Romagna Region of Italy on Economic Cooperation

Signature: 25 November 2006

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Singapore and the Government of the State of Qatar for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Signature: 28 November 2006

Memorandum of Understanding on the Asia-Middle East Dialogue Regional Training Centre

Signature: 28 November 2006

Memorandum of Understanding on Information and Communications Technology Collaboration between the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore and ictQATAR

Signature: 28 November 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Republic of the Fiji Islands for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Entry into force: 28 November 2006

Agreement between the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre and the Government of Singapore for the Establishment of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre in Singapore

Signature: 29 November 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the National Film Board of Canada and the Media Development Authority of Singapore

Signature: 29 November 2006

Entry into force: 29 November 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Thailand) and the Media Development Authority of Singapore

Signature: 29 November 2006

Entry into force: 29 November 2006

Memorandum of Understanding on Activities to Favour Cinematographic, Audiovisual and Media Innovation and Development in Italy and Singapore

Signature: 29 November 2006

Entry into force: 29 November 2006

Cooperation Arrangement between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Vietnam Ministry of Public Security in Preventing and Combating Transnational Crimes

Signature: 5 December 2006

Second Protocol to Amend the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China

Signature: 8 December 2006

Protocol to Amend the Agreement on Trade in Goods of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China

Signature: 8 December 2006

ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Nursing Services

Signature: 8 December 2006

Protocol to Implement the Fifth Package of Commitments under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services

Signature: 8 December 2006

ASEAN Sectoral Integration (Amendment) Protocol for Priority Sectors

Signature: 8 December 2006

ASEAN Framework (Amendment) Agreement for the Integration of Priority Sectors

Signature: 8 December 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Singapore and the International Civil Aviation Organization Establishing a Developing Country Training Programme

Signature: 11 December 2006

Entry into force: 11 December 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Entry into force: 12 December 2006

Agreement between Singapore and Brunei Darussalam for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Entry into force: 14 December 2006

Memorandum of Understanding between Singapore and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development on Collaboration on Learning and Knowledge-Sharing Programs in Human Development in Africa

Signature: 14 December 2006

Haikou Partnership Agreement on the Implementation of Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia

Signature: 15 December 2006

Protocol to Establish and Implement the ASEAN Single Window

Signature: 20 December 2006

Agreement between Singapore and the Kingdom of Morocco for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Signature: 9 January 2007

Beijing Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Accession: 10 January 2007

Memorandum of Understanding to Foster Greater Cooperation in Healthcare between Singapore and Dubai

Signature: 11 January 2007

ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism

Signature: 13 January 2007

Cebu Declaration on the Blueprint of the ASEAN Charter

Signature: 13 January 2007

Cebu Declaration on the Acceleration of the Establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015

Signature: 13 January 2007

Cebu Declaration Towards One Caring and Sharing Community

Signature: 13 January 2007

ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers

Signature: 13 January 2007

Agreement on Trade in Services of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between ASEAN and the People's Republic of China

Signature: 14 January 2007

Agreement on Basic Directions of Economic and Humanitarian Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Government of the Republic of Singapore

Signature: 25 January 2007

Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan and Singapore on Bilateral Consultations

Signature: 25 January 2007

Agreement between the Agency for Standardisation, Metrology and Certification of Uzbekistan and the Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board of Singapore on Cooperation in the field of Standardisation, Metrology and Accreditation

Signature: 25 January 2007

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Singapore and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Air Services

Signature: 25 January 2007

Entry into force: 25 January 2007

Agreement between Singapore and Ukraine for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income

Signature: 26 January 2007

Joint Communiqué to establish diplomatic relations between the Gabonese Republic and Singapore

Signature: 6 February 2007

Protocol 1 – Designation of Transit Transport Routes and Facilities and its Annex of List of Transit Transport Routes

Signature: 8 February 2007

Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Memorandum of Understanding on Air Freight Services

Signature: 8 February 2007

Protocol to Implement the Fifth Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services under the ASEAN Framework

Signature: 8 February 2007

Memorandum of Understanding to Foster Greater Cooperation in Healthcare between Singapore and Brunei Darussalam

Signature: 9 February 2007

Letter of intent to formalise a Third Country Training Programme for Southeast Asian Countries between France and Singapore

Signature: 16 March 2007

Protocol amending the Agreement between Japan and Singapore for a New-Age Economic Partnership

Signature: 19 March 2007

Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services between the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Government of the Republic of Singapore

Signature: 23 March 2007