

For Immediate Release

**SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY
DR KOH POH KOON'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO BELARUS AND RUSSIA,
FROM 3 TO 7 JUNE 2019**

1. Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Dr Koh Poh Koon made an official visit to Minsk, Belarus, and St Petersburg, Russia, from 3 to 7 June 2019. The visit reaffirms Singapore's warm ties with countries in the Eurasian and Central Asian region which presents economic opportunities for our companies. Dr Koh drove progress on negotiations for the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) – Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EAEUSFTA) and participated in the St Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) 2019.
2. In Minsk, Belarus, Dr Koh met with First Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Turchin, Minister of Economy Krutoy Dmitry, Minister of Industry Utiupin Pavel Vladimirovich, and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Dapkiunas. Dr Koh and the Ministers highlighted the potential for bilateral economic relations to grow, particularly once the EAEUSFTA is completed. Dr Koh highlighted the importance of increasing awareness among businesses of each other's markets and encouraging greater business-to-business linkages, so that both sides can be poised to capitalise on the FTA when it is finalised. Both parties also recognised the important roles Belarus and Singapore can play as hubs in their respective regions.
3. While in Belarus, Dr Koh also visited the Great Stone Industrial Park and met with business leaders of the Bremino Group, a Belarusian logistics company, to explore possibilities for Singapore companies to participate in the development of the Bremino-Orsha Special Economic Zone and partner with Belarusian companies in the agriculture, transport, logistics, and technology sectors. Dr Koh took the opportunity to invite Belarus's Ministers to visit Singapore with a business delegation to attend the Singapore Week on Innovation and Technology (SWITCH) and Singapore FinTech Festival in November 2019. These events will provide companies with high-profile platforms to showcase their capabilities, identify potential business partnerships, and network with international investors.
4. In St Petersburg, Russia, Dr Koh participated in SPIEF 2019, Russia's annual business forum attended by prominent political and business leaders, to discuss pertinent geo-political and economic developments. Dr Koh met with Armenia's Deputy Prime Minister Mher Gigoryan, Kazakhstan's Deputy Prime Minister Alikhan Smailov, Russia's Deputy Minister of Economy Timur Maximov, the Minister of Integration and Macroeconomics from the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) Tatyana Valovaya, and the EEC's Minister of Trade Veronika Nikishina. The Ministers spoke about deepening

bilateral relations, progressing the EAEUSFTA negotiations, and supporting the integration efforts of the EAEU which opens up new market opportunities for Singapore. Dr Koh also met with Uzbekistan's Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade, Sardor Umurzakov. Singapore will welcome a delegation from Uzbekistan next month for an investment forum.

5. In St Petersburg, Dr Koh had good discussions with Acting Governor Alexander Belgov on opportunities for Singapore companies to contribute to St Petersburg's long term development goals, in areas such as intelligent transport systems and solid waste management.

6. Dr Koh was accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Enterprise Singapore.

Ministry of Trade and Industry
9 JUNE 2019

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