

## **Press Release**

# **Singapore to host second South Asian Diaspora Convention aimed at “Connecting Global South Asians”**

***Event will feature lively debates on topics spanning politics, business, media and arts amongst some of South Asia's most prominent thought leaders***

**SINGAPORE, 21 August 2013** – The Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), which is part of the National University of Singapore, will host the second South Asian Diaspora Convention (SADC) in Singapore from 21-23 November 2013. The theme for this year's convention is *Connecting Global South Asians* and the event will be held at Suntec Singapore. Prominent political, business, and social leaders from India and Pakistan as well as other countries in South Asia are expected to speak at SADC 2013. Senior Cabinet Ministers from Singapore will also engage in a constructive dialogue with the attending South Asian leaders.

SADC 2013 will feature more than 40 thought leaders including some of the region's top policymakers, business and industry leaders, as well as key figures in academia, media, culture, and civil society.

“The inaugural SADC event in 2011 was very well received with close to 1,000 delegates. This year we expect to welcome over 1,500 delegates from around the globe,” said Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, Chairman of ISAS and Chairman of SADC Organising Committee. “With Singapore providing a neutral and dynamic platform, we aim to foster deeper links within the South Asian diaspora as well as between South and South East Asia.

He added: “SADC 2013 will aim to provide a unique, one-of-a-kind platform to tap into the investment opportunities in South Asia.”

For this purpose, a focused South Asia business meet will be arranged on the sidelines of the conference to facilitate partnerships between organizations looking to grow their presence in the region and expand their network. Delegates will also get a chance to meet first hand a wide spectrum of business leaders of South Asia.

SADC is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore (MFA), Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore (MTI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Singapore Business Federation (SBF).

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The event will be inaugurated by Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Home Affairs, **Mr Teo Chee Hean** who will give the keynote address. This year's convention will showcase an impressive line-up of speakers that includes:

- **Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Singapore
- **Mr P. Chidambaram**, Minister of Finance, India
- **Mr K Shanmugam**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law, Singapore
- **Mr Shashi Tharoor**, Minister of State, Human Resources Development, India
- **Dr Sarath Amunugama**, Minister (Senior) for International Monetary Co-operation, Sri Lanka
- **Mr Yaseen Anwar**, Governor, State Bank of Pakistan
- **Dr Gowher Rizvi**, International Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh
- **Mr S. Gopalakrishnan**, Co-Founder and Executive Vice Chairman, Infosys, and President, CII
- **Mr Malvinder Mohan Singh**, Executive Chairman, Fortis Healthcare

The event will also feature prominent figures from the fields of social entrepreneurship, arts and culture that include:

- **Ms Chhavi Rajawat**, Sarpanch, Elected Head, Village Council of Soda, India, and Co-Chair, World Economic Forum on India, 2012;
- **Dr Mallika Sarabhai**, classical dancer and social activist;
- **Ms Nandita Das**, award-winning Indian film actress and director;
- **Mr Mohsin Hamid**, renowned author of novels like *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Moth Smoke*.

In addition to interactive Plenary Sessions and Debates, as well as dialogue sessions with high profile South Asian political and business leaders, there will be several business sessions to spotlight and facilitate discussion on select growth industries in South Asia. The CII India Symposium will be one such forum.

"SADC has established itself as the leading platform for those who believe in the future of South Asia and its culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. It reflects our belief that South Asia has a tremendous growth potential with a significantly growing middle class population that will contribute positively to the growth of the global economy in the next two decades," said Prof Tan Tai Yong, Director ISAS.

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An Encyclopedia of the Sri Lankan Diaspora, published by ISAS and Editions Didier Millet (EDM), which focuses on the socio-economic and political developments of the Sri Lankan Diaspora and their contribution to host societies around the world, will also be launched at the event.

The convention is also planning an activity close to the hearts of many South Asians – a friendly cricket match. The social and recreational event will feature some of the well-known players from South Asia who will be announced at a later date.

**Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam**, President of Singapore, will be the Guest-of-Honour this year at the SADC gala dinner.

Early bird registration will be open till 30 September 2013, and delegates interested in attending the event can visit [www.sadc-singapore.com](http://www.sadc-singapore.com) to register or find out more.

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#### ABOUT THE INSTITUTE OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES (ISAS)

The Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), established in July 2004, is an autonomous research institute at the National University of Singapore. ISAS is dedicated to the study of contemporary South Asia. Researchers at the Institute conduct long-term and in-depth studies on social, political and economic trends and developments in South Asia and study their impact beyond the immediate region. In addition, ISAS produces regular up-to-date and time-sensitive analyses of key issues and developments in South Asia. ISAS disseminates its research output to policymakers, the academia, business community and civil society.

For more information, please visit [www.isas.nus.edu.sg](http://www.isas.nus.edu.sg) and [www.sadc-singapore.com](http://www.sadc-singapore.com).

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