



SINGAPORE CHESS FEDERATION

Affiliated to Federation Internationale Des Echecs (FIDE)
ASEAN Chess Confederation (ACC)
International Correspondence Chess Federation (ICCF)
People's Association (PA)
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FIDE OFFICE/SECRETARIAT - Proposal to Re-locate to Singapore

FIDE's Service Quality & Response Readiness in the Pacific Century The Case for Locating the FIDE Office in Singapore

1 Preamble

This century, the mini-United Nations that FIDE has become needs a rapid response Office that delivers quality service to its far-flung constituents in a technology-empowered global village that doesn't sleep.

This calls for an accessible Office that functions at a high level 24/7.

2 The Case For Asia

The media and social thinkers have made much of this being the Pacific Century, the century when Asia flowers.

In economic matters, the powerhouse performances of newly-ascendant China and India, a resurgent Japan and the steady progress of the "Asian Tigers" of Korea, Taiwan, SAR Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore lend credence to such an assessment. Commodity-rich Malaysia and Australia are huge beneficiaries of the Asia-led global boom.

In chess, Asia has come a long way since the early euro-centric days. The world champions V. Anand, Xie Jun and Zhu Chen are but trailblazers. Both India and China have deep pools of young chess talents.

The signs point to Asia's hour in the large scheme of things.

3 The Case For Singapore

3.1 Geopolitics

Compact and densely-populated, the metropolis-island-city-state Singapore is blessed with freedom from natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, windstorms, heatwaves, droughts, floods, bushfires and the like. It was unscathed by the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004. The flat terrain, land reclamation, the building of high-rises and underground amenities have maximised land use. Its physical smallness has advantages: transit time for sea-

air cargo is less than 24 hours; visitors can get from Changi International Airport to the city centre in about 30 min and most other parts of the main island in less than 1 hour.

With a friendly foreign policy, Singapore is plugged into an extensive international network. With goodwill to all, it regards all places within a 6-hr flight circle as its hinterland.

Open yet ever alert on security issues, Singapore has mercifully been unmarked by the scourge of international terrorism.

3.2 Brand Name

Singapore has been dubbed the “Switzerland of the East”. In many international surveys it has been repeatedly ranked high in terms of business-friendliness, cost and financial efficiency, work efficiency, work ethic, workforce quality, incorruptibility, transparency, governance, innovation and quality of life and health services. Its airport, seaport and national airline have won accolades for many years. It is a telecommunication and IT hub. Its tech-savvy population has high PC and broadband penetration. Broadband is about to get even faster. Teleconferencing is a part of conducting business long-distance. Singapore has various counter-intuitive successes: for example, it is a leading exporter of cut orchids despite its lack of horticultural space and is a leader in membrane and water treatment technology despite or maybe because of its naturally scarce water resources.

Singapore is the only Asian country invited by the World Health Organisation to be part of its global response force on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (Sars).

Though tsunami-free, Singapore is part of the tsunami alert system being set up in the Indian Ocean.

3.3 Infrastructure

For its excellent infrastructure and stable and dynamic business environment, Singapore remains an extremely cost-competitive place to live and do business. Property prices and rentals, residential or commercial, are low compared with many capital cities, both within and outside Asia.

3.4 Tax

The tax regime is business friendly. Corporate tax rates have been trimmed for several years. Income tax is low as is sales tax. Large corporations have set up Operational Headquarters (OHQs) in Singapore to take advantage of its tax breaks.

4 Benefits to FIDE

By locating its Office in Singapore, FIDE stands to reap significant cost savings while enjoying the advantages of being able to deliver quality service rapidly and

efficiently 24/7 and thereby free itself of the constraints imposed by time zone differences.

5 Recommendation

In order to maximise the benefits to itself, FIDE would do best to locate its Office in Singapore soon after the coming Presidential Elections and the close of the FIDE Congress.

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2nd March 2006