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## Russia-Singapore Inter-Governmental Commission marks important milestone in bilateral relations

By Saifulbahri Ismail



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Mr Goh Chok Tong at the Russia-Singapore Business Forum

Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong says the inaugural Russia-Singapore Inter-Governmental Commission launched yesterday marks another important milestone in bilateral relations.

The Commission aims to facilitate trade and investment by fostering greater high-level dialogue.

It was first discussed last November during a state visit here by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

The first Inter-Governmental Commission meeting was co-chaired by Russia's Deputy Chairman and Chief of Staff, Sergey Sobyenin and Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong at the Istana.

They explored opportunities for broad-based cooperation in a wide range of fields, including economics, trade and investment, science and technology, and education.

The Commission also identified projects and discussed the framework for their collaboration.

Senior Minister Goh explains the significance of the Commission :

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Senior Minister Goh explains the significance of the Commission :

"The IGC is important because it signals a commitment by both countries to enhance bilateral ties, and to facilitate business and investment. Singapore is primarily interested in getting Russian companies to use Singapore as a platform to explore the region to seize opportunities over here, and of course Singapore is also interested in seizing opportunities in the emerging large economy of Russia to invest over there."

Singapore also wants to learn about nuclear energy from Russia.

"Deputy Chairman offered his assistance in getting Singapore to understand this subject better and we've been invited to their country where they are doing research and we'll be showing interest and take our people there."

The next commission meeting will be held in Moscow next year.

In Singapore, the Russian leader also met Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew - where they reaffirmed the positive bilateral relations and discussed international issues.

Mr Sobyenin will meet Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and Health Minister Khaw Boon Wan on Tuesday.