

# NEWS RELEASE

## **SINGAPORE FURNITURE COMPANIES HEAD TO NEW YORK FOR DESIGN MISSION TRIP**

**Local companies and designers to visit trade shows and seminars**

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**SINGAPORE, 15 May 2008** - SPRING Singapore, IE Singapore and Singapore Furniture Industries Council are organising a design mission to New York from 15-22 May 2008. This mission has several aims – to expose Singapore furniture companies to design-centric furniture trade shows, and to help participants understand and enter the US retail and export furniture markets.

Companies that will be attending this mission include Singapore Mozaic members such as HTL International Holdings Ltd , Four Star Industries Pte Ltd and Star Furniture Industries Pte Ltd. Singapore Mozaic is a Singapore furniture industry brand developed to differentiate Singapore furniture from international competition. With this mission, it is hoped that awareness of Singapore Mozaic, and in turn the Singapore furniture industry, will be raised in international markets.

Also joining in the mission will be local designers and design companies such as Jarrod Lim, Bacus Boo, Kelvin Teo, Moodoo Designs, BOMANIA DesignworX, Index Design, Keep Top Group, Luxx NewHouse, The Life Shop and Valencia Design who will make use of this opportunity to network and showcase their products to the US market.

Other than visiting the trade fair, the 17-member mission group has arranged for other meetings and educational activities. The group will meet with renowned furniture designer John Kelly who will share his expertise as well as explore possibilities of collaborating with Singaporean designers and companies. The mission group also plans to attend a seminar by Joseph Carroll, publisher of Furniture Today, which will cover an overview of USA furniture industry and current market conditions. In addition to these meetings with furniture industry experts, the group will also visit major furniture stores such as Crate & Barrel, Dune, stores at TriBeCa & Meat Packing Districts to observe and learn successful business methods and to better understand the needs and wants of the US market. They will also visit the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF), a design-centric furniture trade show.

The Life Shop, a homegrown Singapore company who will be a part of this design mission, will also be exhibiting at ICFF. A member of Singapore Mozaic, , The Life Shop will be showcasing some of their latest products within their 18 sqm booth.

Mr Por Khay Ti, Mission Leader, and Deputy Group Managing Director of HTL International Holdings Ltd, said, "This trip will be highly beneficial to the furniture industry as it brings about greater exposure for Singapore furniture companies and designers in an international market. This exposure is both important and valuable to us, especially with the recent launch of Singapore Mozaic at the International Furniture Fair Singapore 2008/25<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Furniture Show 2008."

Mr Neo Sia Meng, Vice President, SFIC and Executive Director, Four Star Industries Pte Ltd, remarked, "It's paramount that our local designers are given opportunities to network overseas and explore international markets. The mission and the furniture fair that we will be visiting together with our young designers and our design-centric companies will provide a good avenue for marketing opportunities and potential partnerships for them."

"Missions like this one will help to heighten the companies' understanding of new markets and open doors to greater opportunities. But most importantly, we hope that through the trade fair and interactions with international designers, Singaporean companies would be inspired to strategically integrate design into their business

strategies. SPRING will continue to help local furniture enterprises upgrade their business and design capabilities and work closely with SFIC and IE Singapore to raise the profile of Singapore Furniture overseas," said Mrs Kee Ai Nah, Director, Retail and Furniture, SPRING Singapore.

Mrs Tan Li Lin, Director (Lifestyle and Business Services), International Enterprise Singapore, said, "As the world's largest importer for furniture, the US offers many opportunities for Singapore furniture companies. As the lead agency for internationalisation, IE Singapore supports local furniture companies in their market expansion through business missions and study trips, and by profiling their capabilities in marketing trips and design-centric furniture trade shows. Through our global network and overseas offices, we hope to provide participating companies an in-depth understanding of the market, and better prepare them for entry into the US retail and export furniture markets."

This mission to New York is one of the many such trips that SFIC will be organizing in 2008. Discussions are currently underway to bring more furniture companies and designers to other important and emerging furniture markets such as Russia and Eastern Europe.

For more information on SFIC, please visit [www.singaporefurniture.com](http://www.singaporefurniture.com).

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#### **About Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC)**

Singapore Furniture Industries Council was established in 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture industry. It currently represents 95 per cent of established furniture manufacturers in Singapore, of whom 65 per cent have subsidiary manufacturing plants in the region including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. Its primary role is to promote the interests of its members and the Singapore furniture industry. Many of its initiatives aim to facilitate members' exposure to the world market, develop local talent and encourage entrepreneurship. SFIC organises the annual Furniture Design Award to spur trendsetting furniture designs from Asia. It also manages the International Furniture Centre, a year-round platform for international buyers to source and trade for a wide range of quality, well-designed furniture from Singapore and the region. To ensure the industry's growth and viability, SFIC continues to forge close partnerships with the

government and trade-related agencies to harness technology, knowledge and information for effective strategic planning.

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