MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

SBF's Third LATAM Conference Commemorates the MERCOSUR–Singapore Free Trade Agreement, Unlocking Opportunities for Businesses Exploring the Latin America Market

Thursday, 24 September 2026 [Singapore]

The Singapore Business Federation (SBF) organised the third LATAM Conference themed "Nuevos Caminos for a Changed World", bringing together 145 business leaders, government representatives and industry stakeholders from Singapore and Latin America. Graced by Minister of State for Manpower and Trade and Industry, Mr Foo Cexiang, this year's conference highlighted growing business opportunities in Latin America against a backdrop of evolving global trade policies and shifting supply chains and provided Singapore companies with practical insights on carving new pathways into LATAM.

2. Latin America is one of the emerging markets with the potential as a gateway for Singapore's long-term economic growth. While some Singapore's larger enterprises have strategic presence and interests in the region, awareness and interest in Latin America remains limited among SMEs given the geographic distance and resources needed to scale. The Conference offered perspectives on how businesses can broaden their international footprint and explore new partnerships.

3. A key highlight of the conference was the commemoration of the MERCOSUR–Singapore Free Trade Agreement (MCSFTA), which entered into force for Singapore, Paraguay, Uruguay and Brazil earlier this year. It is expected to come into effect for Argentina later in November, and when fully ratified will be the first for the LATAM economic bloc with a South-East Asian country. The agreement provides preferential market access and creates opportunities for Singapore businesses to diversify their markets, strengthen supply chains and explore new markets. Conference attendees heard from representatives from MERCOSUR, alongside a briefing on the MCSFTA, to understand how to leverage the Free Trade Agreement to lower the cost of doing business in the four distinct markets in Latin America.

4. **Mr Mark Lee, Chairman, SBF**, said, "Latin America is a region Singapore companies should not overlook. In an increasingly uncertain world, businesses need to be alert to opportunities to diversify both their markets and sources of supply, while taking a considered and long-term approach. Trade agreements such as the MERCOSUR–Singapore Free Trade Agreement and PASFTA provide a stronger foundation, but companies will still need good market knowledge, the right partners and a clear value proposition. Through the LATAM Conference and GlobalConnect@SBF, SBF will help businesses understand the region, identify where they can compete and turn viable opportunities into sustainable outcomes. Stronger links between Southeast Asia and Latin America can give our companies more options and greater resilience in a changing world."

5. The main plenary session titled "Connecting Two Regions, Unlocking New Opportunities" featured Mr Lionel Chatelet, Chief Commercial Officer, Pacific International Lines; Mr Luis Coronado,

Tax Partner, EY and President, Singapore-Mexico Chamber of Commerce; Mr Philippe May, Honorary Consul of St Vincent and the Grenadines to Singapore, Founder & CEO, EC Holdings and Member of the MERCOSUR-ASEAN Chamber of Commerce; and Mr Javier Sacristan, Head of Strategy, Industries & Xborder (SIX) Asia, BBVA. The panellists examined pan-LATAM developments and strengthening the trade and investment flows between the two regions, at the international, governmental and business levels. Participants also attended concurrent breakout tracks covering key markets and topics like the Mexico market and SME market-entry strategies.

6. With the conclusion of the third edition of the LATAM Conference, SBF reaffirms its commitment to supporting Singapore businesses in exploring emerging markets in Latin America. Through its GlobalConnect@SBF programme, SBF will continue to work with government agencies, trade associations and business partners to facilitate companies' efforts in learning, landing and localising in Latin America.

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About Singapore Business Federation (新加坡工商联合总会)

Singapore Business Federation (SBF) is the apex business chamber with over 34,000 members across diverse industries. With a vision to advance Singapore towards a globally competitive and sustainable economy, SBF mobilises the business community to be future-ready and magnify transformation opportunities through policy advocacy, partnership platforms and capability programmes.

For more information, please visit: www.sbf.org.sg