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**OPENING REMARKS BY DR YAACOB IBRAHIM, MINISTER FOR THE
ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES, SINGAPORE AT THE ASIA-
PACIFIC WATER MINISTERS FORUM ON 28 JUNE 2010, MONDAY, 2.30PM**

(estimated delivery time: 3 minutes)

Good Afternoon

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to address you at the opening of the inaugural Asia-Pacific Water Ministers' Forum.

At the Asia-Pacific Regional Session of the 5th World Water Forum on March 20th 2009, Mr Yoshiro Mori, President of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum, introduced the "Ministers for Water Security" Initiative as a platform to facilitate dialogue among leaders in governments, the private sector and civil society so as to raise awareness on policies, innovative solutions and the need for investment to help to increase water security in the Asia Pacific region.

In support of the “Ministers for Water Security Initiative”, Singapore is hosting this inaugural Asia-Pacific Water Ministers’ Forum.

By co-locating the Asia Pacific Water Ministers’ Forum with the Singapore International Water Week, we are able to draw attention towards the water issues in this region, and at the same time underscore the important role played by Asia Pacific nations on the global water agenda.

In line with the Ministers for Water Security Initiative, the theme “Water Security – Good Governance and Sustainable Solutions” has been adopted for today’s forum.

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The water challenges faced by countries in the Asia-Pacific region have less to do with an absolute shortage of water than with the uneven distribution of water resources, the lack of access and the inefficient usage of this limited resource.

Many of these problems can be addressed through good governance, adequate investment in sustainable solutions and better management practices.

While the context of each country's challenges is unique, bringing together people with different perspectives, experiences and areas of expertise will help us take a more comprehensive look at the issues and discover innovative ways to address them.

Today, we are indeed very honoured to have with us the President of the Republic of Maldives, H.E. Mohamed Nasheed and close to 20 Ministers and speakers from about 15 countries, regions and international organisations to share with us with their insights.

With such a high-level participation, I am confident that the next few hours will bring forth fruitful discussions and that this forum will be seen as a strong call from all sides for sustained cooperation to achieve water security.

Once again, on behalf of the organisers, I would like to thank you for participating in this inaugural Asia-Pacific Water Ministers' Forum.

It is now my pleasure to hand the session over to the Chairman of today's Forum, Professor Tommy Koh, please.

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