

Embargo until 3 March 2018, 11am

Check against delivery

**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT HALIMAH YACOB AT SINGAPORE
WORLD WATER DAY CELEBRATIONS 2018 ON SATURDAY, 3
MARCH 2018, 8.45AM, AT MARINA BARRAGE**

Mr Masagos Zulkifli,
Minister for the Environment and Water Resources

Dr Amy Khor,
Senior Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentleman,

Good morning and thank you for the warm welcome. I am very happy to join you at the Marina Barrage today to mark the launch of Singapore World Water Day.

World Water Day is designated by the United Nations (UN) and observed globally on 22 March each year to remind us of the importance of water. This event carries a greater significance for us this year as Singapore has designated 2018 as our Year of Climate Action. Our climate action supports the UN's 2030 Development Agenda. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 calls for urgent climate action to combat climate change and its impacts, and SDG 6 seeks to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation. By taking action on water sustainability in the context of climate change, we are addressing both the SDGs. Singapore is also partnering with countries around the world to build capacity to fight climate change and help them achieve the SDGs.

As a small island state, Singapore is vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We are experiencing increasingly variable weather, ranging from extended dry spells, to more frequent and intense rainfall.

Climate change brings new challenges to our water security. We need to develop resilient sources of water supply, and manage our water demand. Our people need to conserve water to enhance the sustainability of our water supply. As producing water for consumption is energy intensive, we can save energy if we use less water. This burns less fossil fuel and reduces our carbon emissions. It will contribute to the fight against climate change.

Water consciousness is embedded in our DNA. We are all familiar with the Singapore Water Story and our struggles to overcome our water constraints. Singapore has invested heavily to address our water vulnerability. We cleaned up rivers and

catchment areas, built new reservoirs, expanded catchment areas as well as boosted the capacities of our NEWater and desalination facilities.

Today, we have a diversified water supply through our Four National Taps. However, building the infrastructure to supply water is only part of the solution to ensuring water security. Achieving a sustainable level of water consumption and managing our water demand complete the solution. We can all be part of this solution as it requires action and commitment from every one of us.

I am heartened that PUB has adopted a holistic approach in rallying the community together to conserve water.

On the non-domestic front, PUB has been working with corporations and businesses to make water conservation part of their operations and processes. Recently, it has developed water-efficiency benchmarks for the building and construction sector. Businesses are also promoting water conservation in their own ways. For example, Deliveroo, Foodpanda, and Redmart will be offering water saving tips to their users throughout this month.

Many partners from all sectors are promoting water conservation. These include the education institutions. I understand that several of them are conducting water rationing exercises to remind students of the value of water and our vulnerability if we do not have a sustainable water supply.

Water used for showering, in kitchens, for flushing, and laundry continue to be areas of higher water usage. Water usage in these areas account for about three quarters of total household water usage. Many may not be aware but taking small steps to minimise water usage for these activities can make a significant contribution in our overall conservation efforts.

There are many simple steps we can take to save water. Many of you would have noticed the giant home stations set up at Marina Barrage today. I hope you will join me in visiting these stations to learn how you can adopt water saving practices at home.

Saving water starts with you and me. Water is a precious resource. Water conservation efforts is something we need to embark on daily. Let us commit to saving water by making every drop count.

Just as drops of water come together to form a mighty ocean, our positive collective climate actions can make an impact in our fight against climate change.

I wish you all a fulfilling Singapore World Water Day.