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SPEECH BY MR SIDEK SANIFF, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, AT WASTE
RECYCLING DESIGN COMPETITION IN CONJUNCTION WITH CLEAN & GREEN WEEK 1999 HELD ON

FRI, 12 NOV 99 AT 3 PM IN THE ATRIUM, Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC

Good Afternoon, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen,

1 Clean and Green Week is here again, and this always signals a time for us to reaffirm our commitment to keeping Singapore clean and green. With this in mind, Ngee Ann Polytechnic has organised a waste recycling design competition for all secondary schools.

2 The spotlight of this year's competition is on Waste Minimisation because it remains an issue of crucial importance especially in land-scarce Singapore. We have to conserve whatever landfill capacity we have. It would be ideal if we did not produce waste at all, but this would be impossible in the current context of our consumer society. The next best thing to do is to keep the amount of waste we throw everyday to a minimum.

3 This is what Ngee Ann Polytechnic is encouraging with its competition on composting devices that turn garden waste into useful compost. Seventeen secondary schools took up this challenge, submitting 24 projects in total.

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These projects have taken more than a month to design, and it is indeed encouraging to see our young minds brimming with such enthusiasm for an environmental cause. However, I hope these projects will not simply remain as blue-prints, but will be transformed into working models. Therefore, I am most happy to encourage students to build these models for Clean & Green Week 2000. This will ensure that the innovative ideas presented today are not forgotten after the competition is over.

4 I would like to commend the polytechnic for providing our young with this opportunity to put their creativity to good use, and I am proud that this is one of several environmental activities that the polytechnic has organised over the years. In 1995 BP Singapore Pte Ltd came together with Ngee Ann Polytechnic to organise the Green Creativity Competition in support of the environment during the annual Clean & Green Week Campaign. This partnership took the environmental programme to secondary schools in 1996 when it first attracted participation from 15 secondary schools. In the following year, the Green Creativity Competition evolved to become the Environmental Challenge, which was also launched during Clean & Green Week at the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve.

5 I would like to commend the participating schools for giving their support to such programmes to promote environmental awareness amongst their students. I would also like to commend the staff and students of Ngee Ann for their steadfast support of the environment over the years. The Polytechnic, one of its staff and 2 students have since 1996 been awarded 4 Green Leaf Awards. Three other students were awarded the HSBC-NYAA Youth Environmental Awards in 1997 and 1999. For this exemplary behaviour, the polytechnic has my support and encouragement to carry on its efforts in promoting environmental awareness amongst our young.

6 BP Singapore Pte Ltd and the National Youth Council are two well-known environmentally friendly organisations. BP's partnership with Ngee Ann Polytechnic has spanned over the past 5 years. The National Youth Council has been Ngee Ann's partner for many activities involving youths and this is its second sponsorship for the polytechnic's environmental events. My compliments go to these two organisations for their unstinting support of our youths and the environment.

7 Finally, let me congratulate all the participants of this year's competition on a job well done and I wish you success in realising your designs into working models for the next competition. I look forward to seeing you at the next competition in the new millennium.

8 Thank you.