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Subject: [AMENDED] Speech by President S R Nathan, 22 Mar 00, 11 am

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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[AMENDED]

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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT S R NATHAN AT THE LAUNCH OF THE
SINGAPORE-LATIN AMERICAN EVEREST EXPEDITION 2001 ON
WEDNESDAY 22 MARCH 2000 AT 11 AM AT THE ISTANA**

Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to join all of you today to officially launch the Singapore-Latin American Everest Expedition 2001.

2 On 25th of May 1998, members of the 1st Singapore Mount Everest Expedition succeeded in climbing Everest. Having succeeded in climbing the highest mountain in the world, questions will be asked, "Why mount a second attempt? What is there left to accomplish? And why is this worthy of our support and encouragement?"

3 Climbing mountains, like every other activity of sporting excellence,

challenges its participants to constantly improve on his or her best performance. For mountaineers, there are no stopwatches or measuring tapes to beat. Instead, mountaineers have to pit themselves in climbing ever-harder routes. This is how higher sporting achievement in mountain-climbing is measured. For the coming Everest Expedition 2001, the climbers will be attempting the harder northern route, through Tibet.

4 This attempt by the Everest 2001 team to scale Mount Everest by the north ridge is more than just a bold and challenging move. By testing the limits of human endurance and enterprise, the climb is a symbol of the spirit of adventure, boldness and perseverance. It is reflected in the words of a famous American expedition leader, Charles Houston, who said:

"When men climb on a great mountain together, the rope between them is more than a mere physical aid to the ascent; it is a symbol of the spirit of the enterprise. It is a symbol of men banded together in a common effort of will and strength..."

5 It would be amiss for me not to mention that David Lim, the expedition leader for Everest 2001, will have a climbing role on this expedition. David, after recovering from his serious bout with a rare neurological disorder in 1998, is now a partially disabled person. Yet, what is remarkable is that he does not believe in allowing such a set-back to deter him from his passion - climbing mountains again. I hope this effort of David Lim will give encouragement to others, similarly afflicted with disability, to overcome their handicap and strive for excellence in their chosen sphere of endeavour.

6 **I am also pleased that our Singapore mountaineers will be joined by experienced climbers from the Latin American countries. When Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong launched the East Asia-Latin America Forum, it was intended to expand sporting, cultural and economic links with nations in Latin America. This plan to combine Singapore and Latin American climbers is the first of its kind and symbolic of the partnership we are seeking to build with Latin American countries and their peoples.**

7 Expeditions such as these carry a cost and I am pleased that corporate sponsors here have already begun committing their support for this expedition. I am also thankful for the interest and support given by the embassies of Argentina and Brazil to this expedition.

8 It is my hope that this Everest 2001 climb will, through the comradeship forged in the high mountains, bring us and the peoples of Latin America even closer together.

9 Finally, I ask all present to join me in applauding members of the Singapore-Latin American Everest Expedition 2001 for their determination to overcome the difficulties and hazards of their chosen route for this climb. I wish each of them a successful climb.

10 It gives me great pleasure now to officially launch the Singapore-Latin American Everest Expedition 2001.

National Archives of Singapore