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Subject: (EMBARGOED) Speech by Mr Lim Swee Say, 16 June 2000, 4 pm

Singapore Government

MEDIA RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY MR LIM SWEE SAY, MOS FOR COMMUNICATIONS
& INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TRADE & INDUSTRY AND
MP for TANJONG PAGAR GRC AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF
THE ST ANDREW'S CENTRE ON 16 JUNE 2000 AT 4 PM
AT 250 TANJONG PAGAR ROAD**

I am privileged to join you today to mark yet another chapter in the
history of St Andrew's Mission Hospital.

2 St Andrew's Mission Hospital started as a small clinic in Bencoolen Street in 1913. Over the years, it had provided subsidised medical care and welfare services to members of the community regardless of race, language or religion. It has played a constructive role in helping to bring together Singaporeans of different background in the course of our nation building.

3 Nation building is a journey with no end. Even though we have come a long way, there is still much more we aspire to achieve. Our shared vision in Singapore 21 is to make Singapore our best home in the 21st century.

4 It will not come easy. There are many new opportunities for us to pursue in the era of Knowledge Based Economy and Information Society. There are also new challenges for us to overcome: ageing population, structural unemployment, widening income gap, digital divide and so on.

5 We need to continue to strengthen community bonding and build a stronger State-Society relationship. As individuals, each of us can come forward as active citizen. As a community, we can all work closer together as one Civil Society, drawing strength from one and other.

6. After all, Singapore 21 is not just about doing well economically, but also about becoming more gracious and more caring. For such a "Civil Society" to flourish here, a giving mindset and stronger sense of volunteerism are necessary.

National Archives of Singapore

7 Bill Bradley, a former US Senator said: "The ethos of the marketplace is one of making money. The ethos of government is passing laws and telling others what is right for them to do. But the ethos of a civil society is to do something for someone else without expectation of return". Helping the less fortunate, apart from being a great social virtue, is a key ingredient of a civil society, a gracious community and a cohesive nation.

8 It is heartening to see the growing number of civic organisations in

Singapore. Community based activities not only provide the opportunity for individuals and organisations to interact, but also help develop a sense of common purpose and pride for the good of community and society. This will nurture a stronger sense of shared destiny in the community, and enhance the sense of identity, belonging, and rootedness among Singaporeans.

9 By 2030, the elderly will form 20% of our population. We will see an increase in social and medical needs. I am pleased that SAMH is planning to build a community hospital next to Changi General Hospital. This will mean greater convenience and better accessibility for patients needing recuperative care after the acute phase of medical treatment. It will also make it the first purpose-built community hospital to be built next to an acute-care hospital, providing seamless healthcare for Singaporeans.

10 The renaming of this building to St Andrew's Centre is indeed apt given your wide spectrum of community activities and contributions, from subsidised medical care, to children's outpatient clinic, educational training and resource centre for counseling. I commend your contributions towards making Singapore a more caring and compassionate, gracious and cohesive society. I hope that more civic organisations will follow in your footsteps, and help make Singapore a better home for all Singaporeans.

11 It is now my great pleasure to declare the St Andrew's Centre officially open. Thank you.