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**SPEECH BY MDM HALIMAH YACOB, PRESIDENT AT THE
EXEMPLARY MOTHER AWARD 2017 HELD ON SATURDAY, 30
SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 3PM, AT FAIRMONT BALLROOM RAFFLES
CITY CONVENTION CENTRE**

Prof (Adjunct) Dr Mohd Hasbi Abu Bakar, President of Jamiyah Singapore,

Mdm Claire Chiang, Chairperson of the Panel of Judges for Jamiyah's Exemplary Mother Award,

Diplomats from various foreign diplomatic missions,
The finalists for the Award,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here celebrating the contributions of mothers. I am delighted to know that the Exemplary Mother Award is celebrating its 25th year.

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Let me begin by thanking Jamiyah Singapore for being so steadfast in keeping up with the Exemplary Mother Award.

Mothers play many important roles. They provide caregiving to their children, nurturing them from young. They are role models to their children, imbuing in them important values and life skills. Many of them also have to juggle their work amidst their duties in taking care of the

household. I am therefore very glad that Singapore has put in place structures and programmes to support women in community. Many employers now have many work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible work arrangements. These initiatives have helped more women join the work force and contribute to Singapore's economy. As reported in the latest workforce survey released by the Ministry of Manpower in January 2017, the labour force participation rate for women stood at 60.4 per cent in 2016, an increase of more than 5 percentage points since a decade ago.

The Government has also started several initiatives such as SkillsFuture, Professional Conversion Programme, to assist women to return to the workforce after taking time off from their careers. Companies today are encouraged to offer more flexible work arrangements to help parents achieve work-life balance. Keeping the family strong is an important aspect of the Government's thrust towards a stronger society.

Women are also taking on leadership roles in both the corporate and community organisations. As a woman, this trend is heartening to me. Women bring a different perspective and important skills to any organisation. I am certain that the diversity in corporate and community

leadership is mutually beneficial to both the organisation and the individual.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me conclude by congratulating the exemplary mothers receiving today's awards.

I would also like to congratulate the finalists for the award. Each of you are a role model in your own right – demonstrating excellence in their community and at work. I wish you well in your future endeavours.

I wish everyone a lovely afternoon ahead.

Thank you.

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