

- 8 OCT 1992

Release No.: 05/OCT  
07-1/92/10/05

92-AM-13

**SPEECH BY DR AHMAD MATTAR, MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT,  
AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC CONFERENCE AND  
ASEAN-UNEP WORKSHOP ON "THE PHASING OUT OF OZONE DEPLETING  
SUBSTANCES" HELD AT THE ROYAL PAVILION BALLROOM,  
THE REGENT SINGAPORE ON MONDAY, 5 OCTOBER 1992 AT 9.00 AM**

Let me first extend a warm welcome to all participants to this Asia-Pacific Conference and the ASEAN-UNEP Workshop on "The Phasing Out of Ozone Depleting Substances". I hope that you will find the deliberations over the next few days fruitful and productive.

The Montreal Protocol only took effect in 1989. The achievements since then have been unprecedented. The Protocol has not only harnessed global co-operation in protecting the ozone layer, but has also greatly enhanced public awareness on environmental issues. The success of the Protocol and the strong public awareness created have nudged the scientific and industrial community out of their inertia. Over the past three years, significant strides have been made in the push towards chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) substitutes and ozone-safe technologies. Today, the possibility of a significant reduction in consumption of ozone depleting substances is tangibly within reach of most countries.

Next month, parties to the Montreal Protocol will meet in Copenhagen to consider advancing the schedule to phase out the use of CFCs. We note that concern over the adequacy of current controls under the Montreal Protocol have led several of the developed countries to call for the advance of the phasing out of the use of CFCs and Halons to 1996. A number of these same countries and major chemical suppliers have also pledged to stop producing these chemicals by the same year. The faster pace of phasing out will undoubtedly have an impact on CFC consuming industries especially those which had planned according to the original schedule.

Singapore was one of the first few countries to accede

to both the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol. We knew then that CFCs were widely used in our local industries and that a reduction in the consumption of CFCs would have an adverse impact on our industries. Our accession was, however, not a mere symbolic gesture. It was immediately followed by a series of measures to curb and reduce the consumption of CFCs.

We were quick to introduce measures to cut down the use of CFCs and Halons whenever ozone-safe substitutes and technologies become available. We have banned the import and manufacture of non-pharmaceutical aerosols and polystyrene products containing controlled CFCs. We will stop the import of new air-conditioning and industrial refrigeration equipment using CFC 11 and CFC 12 from 1 January 1993. The import and sale of new fire extinguishers using controlled Halons will also be stopped from 1 January 1995.

My Ministry is currently studying the feasibility of prohibiting newly imported vehicles from being fitted with air-conditioners using ozone depleting CFCs. In fact, some new cars imported into Singapore are already equipped with ozone-friendly air-conditioning equipment. Apart from protecting the ozone layer, such a measure is also sensible, as it would eventually save our motorists the cost of retrofitting when CFCs become unavailable.

I am pleased to say that Singapore is today well ahead of the schedule specified under the Montreal Protocol to reduce CFC consumption. The 1991 level of CFC consumption in Singapore has been reduced by 64 per cent of the 1986 level.

Singapore is fully committed to the global effort to protect the ozone layer. So long as practical solutions are available, we will not hesitate to do more for the good of the global environment.

While it is important to accelerate the process of phasing out the use of ozone depleting substances, due attention

must be given to the difficulties developing countries face in phasing out the use of CFCs. Our own experience shows that this cannot be done without the availability of alternative technologies and chemicals.

In addition to reducing the consumption of ozone depleting substances, Singapore is also ready to share our experience in switching to ozone-friendly technologies and chemicals. We will continue to work closely with industries and international organisations such as United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in efforts to initiate activities such as this Conference and Workshop for the benefit of countries in the region.

The initiative to organise this Asia-Pacific Conference is both timely and relevant. We have gathered here today a diverse group of experts and government officials from North America, Europe, Asia, as well as Australia and New Zealand. The Conference will provide participants with the opportunity to find out the latest developments as well as the measures available to address the problem. The ASEAN-UNEP Workshop will also allow ASEAN government officials to learn from each other their experiences in phasing out ozone depleting substances.

UNEP has been instrumental in the global effort to protect the ozone layer. In the Asia-Pacific region, UNEP has always been supportive of regional activities aimed at initiating actions in this area. On behalf of my Ministry, I would like to express my appreciation to UNEP for being a co-organiser of this important conference and for its generous support for the ASEAN Workshop.

Finally, I would also like to thank the experts and speakers for sparing their time and effort to take part in the Conference. Many of you have acquired a wealth of experience and knowledge in the area of ozone-friendly technology. I have no doubt that, with your contributions, the Conference will be a success.

On this note, it is now my pleasure to declare open the Asia-Pacific Conference and ASEAN-UNEP Workshop on the Phasing Out of Ozone Depleting Substances.

oooooooooooooooooooo

Cc: INFORMATION5 (8812:GVT224)  
From: INFORMATION5 (8812:GVT224)  
Subject: [Seminar on Phasing Out of Ozone Depleting Substances]  
Posted: Tue 6-October-92 18:34 SING  
Delivered: Tue 6-October-92 18:34 SING (58 lines)  
Msg ID: IPM-8812-921006-167197470

## SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT PRESS RELEASES

### DISTRIBUTION LIST

1	Mr Yatiman Bin Yusof, Parliamentary Secretary (Foreign Affairs)	GVT 047
2	Mr Lim Boon Heng, Senior Minister of State (MTI)	GVT 090
3	Dr Yeo Ning Hong, Minister for Defence	GVT 200
4	Mr Ch'ng Jit Koon, Senior Minister of State (Community Development)	GVT 234
5	Dr Ahmad Mattar, Minister for Environment	GVT 080
6	BG George Yeo, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs	GVT 049
7	Mr Harun A Ghani, Political Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs	GVT 710
8	Library Officer, Auditor-General Office	GVT 370
9	Library. Ministry of Education	GVT 036
10	Mr Lee Chiong Giam, Chief Executive Director (PA)	GVT 615
10a	Mr Soon Low Boon, Library (PA)	
11	Library, Parliament House	GVT 251
12	National Archives	GVT 237
13	Mr Aziz Champion, Ministry of Law (PS's copy)	GVT 125
14	Budget Division, Ministry of Finance	GVT 052
15	Mrs Elaine Swinn-Tan, Head, Public Relations, MOL	GVT 168
16	Economics Dept, MAS	GVT 721
17	PSD, Ministry of Finance	GVT 111
18	The General Manager, Board of Commissioners of Currency	GVT 611
19	Library, Ministry of Community Development	GVT 235

20	Commissioner for Lands, Land Office, Ministry of Law	GVT 463
21	Library, Jurong Town Corporation	GVT 390
22	Public Relations Dept, Ministry of Home Affairs	GVT 137
23	Resource Centre, Ministry of Trade & Industry	GVT 091
24	Public Relations Dept, VITB	GVT 480
25	Registry Supervisor, Ministry of National Development	GVT 240
26	The Chairman, Singapore Institute of Standards and Industrial Research	GVT 325
27	Librarian, NTUC Research Unit	GVT 351
27a	PA to Mr Ong Teng Cheong, Deputy Prime Minister	
28	Mindef Library	GVT 207
29	Director, Community Relations Dept, Ministry of Community Development (Kindly make copies and distribute to all the secretariats)	GVT 470
30	Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence	GVT 560
31	Dr Lee Boon Yang, Minister for Labour & Second Minister for Defence	GVT 205
32	Dr Tay Eng Soon, Senior Minister of State for Education	GVT 030
33	Mr Wong Kan Seng, Minister for Foreign Affairs	GVT 044
33a	Mr Peter Ho, DS (SEA) Min. of Foreign Affairs	GVT 044
34	Dr Richard Hu, Minister for Finance	GVT 017
35	Mr Yeo Cheow Tong, Minister for Health & Minister for Community Development	GVT 172 GVT 230
36	Mr Sidek Bin Saniff, Minister of State for Education	GVT 680
37	Mr J. A. Nathan, Globalink, TDB	GVT 817