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SPEECH BY MR LIU THAI KER,
CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL,
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE
SINGAPORE MILLENNIUM LOGO AND WEBSITE,
SUNTEC CITY FOUNTAIN OF WEALTH,
20 MAR 99, 7.30 P.M.

President Ong Teng Cheong
Excel lenci es
Di stinguish ed guests
Ladi es and Gentl emen

1. In less than 300 days, we will be welcoming the dawn of a new millennium. Many countries around the world are also planning grand activities to welcome the millennium on Jan 1, 2000 – on Mount Fuji in Japan, on the Great Wall of China, at the Pyramids of Egypt, and at the billion-dollar Millennium Dome in London, to name a few. And Singapore will be very much a part of that worldwide celebration. Whatever the cultural, religious, traditional or scientific context, the new millennium is, above all, a time for us to remember and honour our past whilst rejoicing in the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

National Archives of Singapore

2. The launch of the Singapore Millennium Logo this evening heralds the beginning of an 18-month long celebration in Singapore. The logo to be unveiled by President Ong Teng Cheong will serve as a visual unifier for the whole range of nation-wide millennium celebrations. Tonight will also see the launch of the Singapore Millennium website at <www.m2000.com.sg>. It will be the main gateway for Singaporeans and the world to know more about the millennium celebrations here. They can send their wishes for Singapore in the new millennium and participate in the various contests and activities.

3. It will be an exciting time for all Singaporeans, as we come together to be entertained and inspired. An exciting and vibrant range of some of the best that this country has to offer in the world of entertainment, culture, music, the arts and exhibitions has been planned in the lead up to that important moment when we will gather to toast a new cycle of 1,000 years. The Ministry of Information and the Arts is coordinating the nation-wide millennium activities to make the occasion truly the Celebrations Of A Lifetime for all Singaporeans and visitors.

4. In just two months' time, we will kick off with the Singapore Arts Festival 1999, featuring an eclectic mix of the best performances from all over the world. There will also be several commemorative markers to lend shape to our nation's own biography of how we cross an important threshold in history. These include a sculpture at the Singapore Art Museum, and commemorative millennium clocks to symbolically mark the passage of time.

 5. The Board of Commissioners of Currency will issue a new portrait series of currency notes, featuring our first President, the late Encik Yusof Ishak. There will also be several heritage projects that aim to mark and preserve important and valuable facets of the Singapore national identity, history and culture, including a time capsule at the Singapore History Museum, and the launch of several books. Some projects will seek to inspire our youths with a positive vision of our nation and their future, and will incorporate the use of exciting new computer technologies and ideas.

 6. On 31st Dec 1999, Singapore will welcome the new millennium with more than five countdown parties all over the island. Something for Everyone will be the theme of our celebrations.

 7. Over and above the partying and the rejoicing, however, the dawn of a new millennium is also a time to reflect on where we are at this point in our history and where we hope to be in the future. Looking ahead, there will certainly be many challenges confronting us. But I am confident that the enduring strengths of our society – our shared heritage and our collective vision of a successful Singapore taking its strength from all the diverse strands of our society – will ensure that we will build a better future for all of us.

 8. Any activity of this magnitude can succeed only with the active co-operation and support of all Singaporeans, businesses, industries and every other sector of society. So, come forward and join us to make this a truly memorable celebration. Long after the fireworks and the rejoicing, the legacy of these celebrations will present the opportunity for us all to reaffirm our common identity as Singaporeans, and our determination to build a happy and prosperous future for our children. Thank you.
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