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**SPEECH BY MR MOHAMAD MAIDIN BIN PACKER MOHD,
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MEMBER OF
PARLIAMENT FOR MARINE PARADE GRC AT THE OFFICIAL
OPENING OF THE UPGRADED KAMPONG UBI COMMUNITY
CENTRE ON SUNDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2000 AT 12.00 NOON**

Mr Sim Ye Poh, BBM
Chairman of Kampong Ubi Building Fund Committee
and Community Centre Management Committee (CCMC)

Mr George Goh, BBM
Chairman of Kampong Ubi Citizens' Consultative Committee (CCC)

Grassroots Leaders and Friends

I am happy to see so many of you here today to witness the official opening of the upgraded Kampong Ubi Community Centre (CC).

2 Community centres and clubs are important social institutions in

Singapore. They are focal points for interactions and community bonding among the residents of all races and walks of life.

3 Kampong Ubi CC was first built in 1982. In 1995, our grassroots leaders decided to upgrade it into a modern CC to serve the residents better. The total upgrading cost including the co-user part was about \$7.3 million. Of this, a substantial sum \$2 million was raised by the grassroots leaders for the CC and \$1 million by the co-users.

4 This magnificent CC would not have been possible without many years of hard work and careful planning by our grassroots leaders. On this auspicious occasion of the official opening of the upgraded CC, may I commend them, especially the Chairmen and members of Kampong Ubi CCC and CCMC for their commitment and achievement. I must also say a big thank you to all our well-wishers and residents for their generous donations and support toward the construction of this CC.

5 In 1995, the People's Association (PA) decided to implement a 'CC Co-location Programme' where new and upgraded CCs are encouraged to co-locate with compatible users. The objective is to maximise the use of valuable land and sharing common facilities.

6 Today, we can see the significant benefit of this co-location policy. Three Malay National Organisations, namely Singapore Silat Federation (PERSISI), Singapore Hadrah and Kompang Association (PEHAKS) and Singapore Dikir Barat Federation are now the co-users in our upgraded CC. Together with our CC Malay activities and Malay Arts Museum, their presence and contributions will enhance Kampong Ubi CC as a centre of excellence for Malay activities. In July this year, for example, with the support of the People's Association, the Singapore Dikir Barat Federation had worked with our CC to organise a National Dikir Barat Competition. This event attracted a total of 35 contesting teams with more than 1,000 audience.

7 I encourage the three Malay organisations to work with our CC Management Committee and Malay Activity Executive Committee for more joint projects. Together, we can reach out to more residents and pull more clients to this CC.

8 However, let me add one quick word, that is, this CC, on the other hand, must not be mistaken by the members of public as a CC for Malay activities only.

Like other CCs, Kampong Ubi CC must serve Singaporeans of all races. Besides Malay activities, the CC must have a full complement of programmes to reach out to all our residents.

9 I am happy that the Management Committee of Kampong Ubi CC has launched a wide range of programmes to reach out to the residents of all races. These include IT learning, folk dancing, karaoke, choral singing, taekwondo classes and many others. In the pipeline, a well-equipped fitness centre will also be set up.

10 One programme worth mentioning is the Children's Talent Training Centre, jointly set up by the CCMC and Suria (TV12). This is the first of such centres established in community centres and clubs. The centre will train young people including children for stage performances. Its aim is to nurture many budding actors, actresses, comperes, singers and other performance artistes. The centre will start functioning from today.

11 Like any other organisations, community centres or clubs must change and innovate with time. I urge all the grassroots leaders in Kampong Ubi to think and act boldly in programming. We must be daring to challenge the past practices and think out of the box. Only then can we ensure the CC remains relevant in serving the people.

12 The upgraded CC is a symbol of the new community spirit in Kampong Ubi. I hope our residents will take pride in it and will come forward to use the CC facilities, or even to offer their service as active citizens to breathe life into this CC.

13 It is now my pleasure to declare the upgraded Kampong Ubi CC open.
