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**SPEECH BY MR MOHAMAD MAIDIN BIN PACKER MOHD,
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MP FOR
MARINE PARADE GRC, AT THE ADOPTION OF ALJUNIED PARK BY
CANOSSA CONVENT PRIMARY SCHOOL AND KAMPONG UBI CCC
HAPPY GARDENS AREA SUB-COMMITTEE, ON MONDAY, 6 NOV 2000
AT 5.30 PM**

Good evening one and all,

I am glad to join all of you on this lovely evening to mark the adoption of Aljunied Park by Canossa Convent Primary School and Kampong Ubi Citizens' Consultative Committee Happy Gardens Area Sub-committee.

2 The Adopt-A-Park Scheme was launched in February 1997 by the National Parks Board with three aims. These were:

- a. to inculcate a sense of "ownership" for public parks, and hence encourage the development of a gracious community;
- b. to instill greater awareness amongst the community of the importance of nature and greenery; and
- c. to bring about greater community bonding through the organisation of partnerships and activities as part of the Adopt -A-Park Scheme.

3 I am heartened to know that the Adopt-A-Park Scheme has enabled young and old alike to working together in a meaningful way to make our surroundings a better place to live in. To date, 33 parks and 5 nature areas have been adopted by 105 organisations, which include 68 schools, 4 junior colleges, 2 tertiary institutions, 16 community organisations, 3 uniformed groups, 2 hospitals and 10 childcare centres.

4 The adoption of parks and nature areas by schools is just one aspect of the Community Involvement Programme (CIP) which my Ministry launched in 1996 to give students the opportunity to learn, share, care and serve the community they live in. By forging a greater sense of belonging and responsibility towards their living environment, we hope to foster in our young a greater sense of personal involvement in our nation's life.

5 Standing here in this landscaped area, I would like to thank Canossa Convent Primary School and the residents of Happy Gardens for their hard work and effort in coming together to create this work of beauty for the benefit and enjoyment of our community. I would also like to express my thanks to the National Parks Board for their guidance, and for giving the opportunity for ordinary Singaporeans to experience the joys of gardening so as to increase their awareness and appreciation of greenery and nature in our garden city. Gardening is also a healthy and relaxing activity that provides a welcome change of pace to our busy lifestyles.

6 I hope to see more members of our community joining in this civic programme to care for and maintain Aljunied park. Let our hands become one with the soil as we plant and tend to the trees and plants, and build Singapore, our best home for ourselves and our loved ones.

7 Thank you and I wish you a pleasant evening.