

SPEECH BY MR JEK YEUN THONG, MINISTER FOR CULTURE, AT THE RECEPTION AT ISTANA IN HONOUR OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE SHIP FOR SOUTH-EAST ASIAN YOUTH PROGRAMME ON THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER 1975 AT 7.30 P.M.

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government of Singapore, let me extend our warmest welcome to the participants of this year's South-East Asian Youth Ship Programme to Singapore. It is indeed an honour and our pleasure to launch the 2nd Programme in Singapore following the successful implementation of the 1st Programme last year. Singapore is very happy to be associated with this unique international youth exchange aimed at promoting the friendship and understanding of the youth of Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Although rapid advancements in mass communication and technology have brought about more opportunities for people of various countries to come into contact with one another, there is still need for people living in the same region to know themselves better.

With more and more international exchanges such as this Youth Ship Programme, people of the participating countries would begin to be more aware of themselves as those belonging to the same region sharing many common goals

and objectives. Such development will then reinforce ideas associated with regionalism and other common aspirations. As a result, we will be more conscious of the fact that we are living in an interdependent world; the success of one is to bring good to the others and the failure of one will also bring ill to the others.

This realisation of regional identity and co-operation must be further propagated by the youth of our countries, for upon them we have entrusted our future. The youth of the participating countries must strive to help in fulfilling our task of achieving greater cohesiveness and co-operation in spite of our diverse historical, cultural and social backgrounds.

The ideals of the Ship for South-East Asian Youth Programme of furthering goodwill and understanding will no doubt go a long way in realising this goal of ours. It is, therefore, my fervent hope that the participants of the Youth Ship, who are selected to represent the youth of our six countries, will make the best use of the opportunity made available to them through this Programme to fraternise among themselves for solidarity and friendship. I am also confident that the outstanding young men and women of the Ship for South-East Asian Youth 1975 will do their utmost to make this year's Programme another successful one.

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In conclusion, I wish all of you to enjoy your stay in the Republic and bring back to your respective homelands memories that will last you for a long time to come.

Thank you.

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