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Subject: (EMBARGOED) Speech by PM Goh Chok Tong at the Wreath Laying Ceremony in Argentina, 2 June 99

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER GOH CHOK TONG, AT THE WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AT PLAZA SAN MARTIN, ARGENTINA, ON WEDNESDAY, 2 JUNE 1999

Your Excellency Foreign Minister Jose Guido di Tella

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for your warm welcome. On behalf of the people of Singapore, I would like to extend to all of you our best wishes.

This morning, I am honoured to be able to offer a wreath to Argentina's liberator and national hero, General Jose de San Martin. His efforts more than 180 years ago gave birth to an independent Argentina which now stands tall in your

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region and in the world.

In contrast, Singapore is only a young nation of 34 years. Singapore and Argentina are separated by a vast geographical distance. Yet, our two peoples have been brought closer by international commerce and trade. Singapore is one of the biggest container ports and trading nations in the world. Argentina is a major exporter of food products to markets all around the globe. Our two countries are very active in the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

His Excellency President Carlos Menem visited Singapore in February 1997. That was the first by an Argentine President. I am pleased to be able to reciprocate his visit today, which is the first by a Singapore Prime Minister.

It is my wish that my visit to Argentina would herald a new chapter in the history of relations between our two countries. I look forward to more people-to-people contacts and interactions between Singapore and Argentina. Thank you.

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