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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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SPEECH BY RADM TEO CHEE HEAN, MINISTER FOR

EDUCATION AND SECOND MINISTER FOR DEFENCE AND THE

PRESIDENT, SNOG AT THE 20th SEA GAMES APPRECIATION AND AWARDS PRESENTATION DINNER ON
TUESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 1999 AT 8.00 PM AT THE TOWER BALLROOM, SHANGRI-LA HOTEL

Mr Mah Bow Tan, Minister for National Development,

Mr Abdul Lah Tarmugi, Minister for Community Development,

Mr Ng Ser Miang, Chairman, Singapore Sports Council,

Mr Han Tsi Fung, The Chief Executive, Singapore Pools Pte Ltd,

Mr Tobias Hanbury, the General Manager, F&N Coca-Cola Singapore Pte Ltd

Ladies and Gentlemen

1 At the Flag Presentation Ceremony when sending off our Singapore Contingent to the 20th SEA Games on 30 July, I had said that we would be happy if our contingent could win nearly the same number of gold medals as we won at Jakarta when there were 30 sports in competition.

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2 Tonight, we are here to recognise all those Singapore athletes who brought us joy through achieving 23 Gold medals at the 20th SEA Games in Brunei Darussalam. There were 10 Games Records, 8 National Records and 18 Personal Bests. The achievements were from all age groups, from teenagers to a 54 year old Singapore Sportsperson from all backgrounds, every one proud to represent our country, Singapore. Our Taekwondo Gold by Sinnathurai, the Bowls Gold by Rosemary Tessensohn, the Table Tennis Golds by Li Ji a Wei, Jing Jun Hong, Zhang Tai Yong and Duan Yong Jun and others in the table tennis team, the Silat Golds by Sheik Alauddin, Abdul Kadir and Mohd Zul fakar amply demonstrate the determination and commitment of our representatives. Together we have achieved.

3 Then there was the 18th consecutive Gold medal by The Waterpolo Team which will go into the records as the unbeaten waterpolo nation of the millenium in the history of water polo in SEA Games. We salute the Water Polo Team and its management within SASA for the tenacity with which Singapore Waterpolo has displayed its prowess through nearly four decades.

4 It is often difficult to single out the achievements of one athlete compared to others. But, Joscelin Yeo has certainly been brilliantly outstanding for her six individual Golds. Our heartiest congratulations to Joscelin. If there were a Most Valuable Player award for these SEA Games, it would be Joscelin Yeo. No other individual athlete won six individual events in Brunei Darussalam. She also brought greater joy by winning her first two Golds on the eve of our National Day – 8th August, and two more on National Day followed by yet another two on 13 August.

5 We should not overlook James Wong who successfully defended his title of the Best Discus thrower with a Games Record of 59.5m. He also won the first Gold for Singapore on the eve of our National Day. It was a good opener. Thank you, James.

6 We salute the foresight of The Singapore Table Tennis Association for preparing winning teams in Table Tennis. Their management took bold steps in recruiting foreign talent grooming them years ahead of their moment of sweet success in Brunei Darussalam. They won six out of seven Golds in contention.

7 Our three Silat champions too did Singapore proud when they won in keenly contested bouts.

8 While I may have singled out some, there are the other Gold medal winners who richly deserve also our praise and appreciation for their achievements.

9 Last but not least, I would like to observe that many of our younger participants have given their best not just by winning Golds, but Silvers and Bronzes. Several had improved on their personal best efforts. Our team sports of Hockey and Football also did well. They fielded young teams and gave creditable performances against strong opponents. All in all, I was happy with the overall performance of the Singapore contingent.

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10 This would not have been possible without the magnanimous support of Singapore Pools Pte Ltd, who had wholly funded the Singapore Contingent. We also thank Messrs Sunrise & Co for the sponsorship of attire for the contingent. For the MAP Awards tonight we would like to thank the Singapore Pools Pte Ltd and F&N Coca-Cola for their donations totalling \$ 230,000 as awards to all our Gold Medallists.

11 The success of our Singapore athletes at the 20th SEA Games would also not have been possible without proper planning. I would like to commend the Singapore Sports Council for putting in place the SPEX 2000 programme. Under this programme, the National Sports Associations, particularly the core and merit sports, have been granted much financial assistance to develop effective youth development programmes, allow athletes overseas training preparations, as well as provide scientific support to achieve peak performance by their athletes.

12 I also would like to express SNOC's appreciation to the Singapore Sports Council and its divisions for SPEX 2000, Medical Team and Marketing and Commercial staff for supporting the contingent in so many ways. I could feel the sense of cheerful commitment and willing services rendered to the contingent, upon my visit to the Singapore Tower in the Games Village. Well done and thank you, SSC.

13 Finally, my message to all NSAs is to do their best in preparing for the new millennium and the 21st SEA Games to be held in Kuala Lumpur in 2001.

14 May I conclude by asking all of you to stand up to honour all Gold medallists of the 20th SEA Games.

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