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Subject: (EMBARGOED) Speech by RAdm Teo Chee Hean, 12 Jan 00, 2 PM

Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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**SPEECH BY RADM TEO CHEE HEAN, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
AND SECOND MINISTER FOR DEFENCE, AT THE MARKING OF 77
PRINSEP STREET (BIRTHPLACE OF THE BOYS' BRIGADE IN
SINGAPORE) AS A HISTORIC SITE ON WEDNESDAY 12 JANUARY
2000 AT 2 PM**

National Archives of Singapore

Mr Lim Siam Kim
Chief Executive Officer, National Heritage Board

Mr S P Chua
Hon. President, The Boys' Brigade in Singapore

Members of The Boys' Brigade
Ladies & Gentlemen

Good afternoon

1. I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to The Boys' Brigade on the marking of your birth place as a historic site by the Historic Sites Unit of the National Heritage Board.

2. The Boys' Brigade was founded in 1883. It was first established in Singapore in 1930. Since then, the Boys' Brigade has provided young people here with constructive avenues to expend their youthful energies. The marking of its birthplace in Singapore as a historic site will serve to heighten the public's awareness of its historic significance, and promote a deeper understanding of its history and heritage. Members of the Boys Brigade should feel proud that their organisation has its roots in a site worthy of record in the nation's annals.

3. The Boys' Brigade started with Christian roots, with emphasis placed on imparting Christian teachings and building Christian manliness in its members. Its object of promoting habits of discipline, self-respect, obedience, and reverence among boys is consonant with building a strong and caring society. These values find resonance among many segments of society, and hence the Boys' Brigade has enjoyed support from schools, parents and the community all these years.

4. Just as bricks and mortar provided a firm foundation for this historic Presbyterian Church which housed the Boys' Brigade, the teachings of the Boys' Brigade provided a firm foundation for the character development of its many members over the last 70 years in Singapore. Experience acquired from their days as brigade members would have left an indelible mark and provided impetus for growth and excellence in life. I am pleased to note that The Boys' Brigade is active in a total of 80 schools today. Like the other uniformed groups, the Boys Brigade complements the good work of schools in teaching our young people to be responsible and loyal citizens who are morally upright and mentally tough. The many volunteers who help to run the activities of the Boys Brigade are a good example of Active Citizenship. I would like to commend them for their commitment and dedication over the years.

5. In conclusion, I would like to wish all officers and members of The Boys' Brigade a most happy 70th Anniversary. May this historic site act as a sure and steadfast anchor that provides motivation and guidance for the Boys in Blue. And may The Boys' Brigade march forward to many more years of meaningful work in developing boys into men; men whom parents are proud to call sons, and the nation is proud to call citizens.

6. Thank you.

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