

WELCOME ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT TONY TAN KENG YAM AT THE TEA  
RECEPTION FOR TEAM SINGAPORE ATHLETES AND OFFICIALS OF THE RIO 2016  
OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ON SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2016, 3.30PM  
AT ISTANA

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Ms Grace Fu  
Minister for Culture, Community and Youth

Mr Tan Chuan-Jin  
Minister for Social and Family Development

Members of the Singapore National Olympic Council and Singapore National Paralympic Council

Team Singapore athletes, Care-givers, Coaches and Officials

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon

I am happy to host today's reception for our Team Singapore contingent. Congratulations to all of you for the outstanding performance at the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games!

In Rio, we witnessed several monumental achievements – a first ever Gold medal from Joseph Schooling at the Olympics; two Gold medals from Yip Pin Xiu and a Bronze medal from Theresa Goh at the Paralympics. This was the most successful Olympic and Paralympic Games in the history of Team Singapore. You have certainly done Singapore proud on the world's biggest sporting stage.

Beyond these achievements, I also want to commend everyone for your strong effort. Qualifying for the Olympics or Paralympics is itself an extraordinary achievement. It takes years of hard work, commitment and perseverance to train, and ultimately, compete against the best athletes in the world. I had the opportunity to meet and interact with some of you during your training sessions earlier this year. What I sensed then was your tremendous determination to do your best, and do Singapore proud in Rio. It is this strength of character in each and every one of you which embodies the spirit of the Games, and continues to inspire all of us.

In front of thousands of live spectators and many more watching on television, you held your own against other world-class athletes, even in unfamiliar and challenging conditions. You were halfway around the world, but you kept your spirits high. Your fighting spirit and passion brought the nation together as we cheered you on as One Team Singapore.

Every one of you is an inspiration, a beacon of light, to all Singaporeans. You have placed Singapore on the world map by taking the stage at the biggest sporting event. You have overcome all odds, and shown us that anything is possible if one is willing to try. You also showed us that every individual, regardless of ability, can reach for the stars if we put our hearts and minds to it.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all the family members, care-givers, coaches, as well as officials from SNOG and SNPC. Your unwavering support and dedication have enabled our athletes to remain focused in training and competing in the best possible environments as well as conditions. Your hard work behind the scenes has been critical to the success of Team Singapore.

To the team at the Singapore Sports Institute, the training, medicinal, psychological and rehabilitative support that you have provided for our athletes at home, and in Rio, have been instrumental in their performance. We are seeing the results of months of preparation and hard work. I am confident that with such a support structure in place, Team Singapore will continue to reach new heights.

Let me extend my heartiest congratulations once again to the Team Singapore contingent. Well done. I hope you will continue to fly the Singapore flag high in all that you do.

Thank you, and have a wonderful afternoon.

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