

Date Published: 05 Oct 2001

Mr Peter Glaessel

Head, the Bayer Country Group (South East Asia)

Mr James Soh

Executive Director, National Youth Achievement Award Council

Professor Leo Tan

Vice-Chairman, Singapore Environment Council

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1 I am happy to join you here this morning at the launch of the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy programme.

2 First, I would like to congratulate the five students who will be honoured as Young Environmental Envoys under this programme. Secondly, I wish to congratulate Bayer on its initiative in bringing the Programme to Singapore.

3 Bayer is a familiar player in the chemical industry in Singapore. The chemical industry will remain a key pillar of Singapore's economy. Last year, the industry alone contributed to some 20% of our national manufacturing output. Singapore aspires to be a worldclass chemical hub. We can therefore expect the chemical sector to grow even further in the years ahead.

4 In this context, I am glad to see that apart from contributing to our economic growth, members of the chemical industry are also actively working towards greater corporate responsibility and self-regulation within the sector. Some of the most noticeable efforts could be found in the areas of health, safety and the environment.

5 This morning, I am indeed heartened to see Bayer, a lead player in the chemical industry, taking a step further in its bid to help promote environmental awareness in Singapore. Your decision to enter into a partnership with the National Youth Achievement Award Council and the Singapore Environment Council, which are renowned players in the local environmental scene, is a good and sensible one. I am sure that all of you would find this partnership between the private sector and non-governmental organisations a rewarding experience.

6 I am told that the aim of the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Programme is to encourage youths to appreciate more the environment they live in. Under the programme, our youths will get to experience the environmental culture and practices prevailing in the

German society and industry. They will also be meeting other young envoys, including students from Thailand and the Philippines. They will get to exchange ideas and develop common vision on the environment through a forum.

7 This is a very meaningful programme that will certainly broaden the perspectives of young people on the environment.

8 Singapore is a small country with little natural endowment. While we may be doing fine today in terms of keeping our air, water and land clean, our real challenge lies in our very ability to sustain this good quality environment in the years and generations ahead. What we have managed to achieve today can only be adequately sustained tomorrow, if our young can remain agile and resourceful in coping with environmental challenges of the future.

9 So to the five young Singaporeans who are to be honoured here today, I hope that you will visit Germany with an open mind, and return with a good sense of how to promote the environmental cause, and how to sustain a good living environment.

10 Germany is well ahead of Singapore in the areas of waste and resource management, and in addressing environmental pollution challenges. There is much that we can learn from our German friends. So, do take this opportunity to prepare yourselves well for the many interesting environmental challenges back home. I hope that this additional personal exposure would help you to translate your passion for the environment into real and sustainable action in life.

11 Finally, may I once again congratulate the five Young Environmental Envoys. I also wish Bayer, the National Youth Achievement Award Council, and the Singapore Environment Council every success in implementing the Young Environmental Envoy Programme in Singapore.

12 Thank you.

National Archives of Singapore