

ANNEX

INTERVENTION BY MR GAN KIM YONG, MINISTER FOR HEALTH, SINGAPORE AT THE 73RD WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY, 18 MAY 2020

Excellencies,

Mdm President,

Director-General Dr Tedros,

Distinguished guests and colleagues,

1. COVID-19 is the greatest challenge our generation faces. It has infected almost 5 million people world-wide. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have been infected and their family members. We would also like to express our gratitude towards the healthcare workers who have been taking care of our patients.

2. Each Member State faces different challenges and adopts a different strategy to fight the pandemic, but all with the same goal of keeping their people safe. In Singapore, we introduced a set of measures, called the 'Circuit Breaker' measures since 7 April to suppress community transmission. These measures have shown promising results. The daily number of new community cases average about 3 in the past week, our lowest since mid-March. On the other hand, we are proactively managing the COVID-19 cases in our migrant worker dormitories and the situation has stabilised. Overall, our case fatality rate remains one of the lowest in the world at 0.08%.

3. As COVID-19 will be with us for some time, perhaps until an effective vaccine is available, we must adjust the way we work and live as we move forward. Singapore, like many countries, are now planning to roll back some of the stringent measures we introduced earlier. We need to preserve people's livelihoods while at the same time, continue to protect their lives and wellbeing. Therefore, we must adopt a cautious approach as we gradually open up and progressively rolled back the measures.

4. I hope we can learn from each other and cooperate with one another as we fight the pandemic. This is a challenge that no single country can succeed on its own. The COVID-19 Response resolution sends a strong signal to the world that global solidarity is needed to win this war against the virus. Singapore is a co-sponsor of this important resolution.

5. Even as we focus on the immediate challenges of COVID-19, we must not lose sight of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that ensure that we "leave no one behind". We must continue to support the public health efforts and address these health priorities identified in the SDGs, alongside our COVID-19 response plans. Singapore fully agrees with the Director-General on this.

6. Now is the time for unity and cooperation. Singapore greatly appreciates the leadership and expertise of the WHO under Dr Tedros and reaffirms our solidarity with

the WHO, fellow member states, and the global community in this fight against COVID-19, and in paving the way forward as we begin to plan for recovery from the pandemic.

Thank you.