

**SPEECH BY MR TEE TUA BA, SINGAPORE RED CROSS CHAIRMAN
AT SINGAPORE RED CROSS AWARDS 2016 CEREMONY
ON 6 OCTOBER 2016 AT RED CROSS HOUSE**

His Excellency, President Tony Tan Keng Yam

Award Recipients

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning. Welcome to the 4th Singapore Red Cross Awards Ceremony.

I would like to thank President Tony Tan, Patron of the Singapore Red Cross, for taking time to join us on this special day.

As a Society, we strive for excellence - both in our service, as well as our governance and management. Three years ago, Singapore Red Cross was honoured to be one of the few to be awarded the Charity Governance Award. In September this year, the Singapore Red Cross was awarded the inaugural Charity Transparency Award by the Charity Council. We are happy to have received the award, not only because it shines the spotlight on the Singapore Red Cross, but more importantly, it is a clear signal that Singapore Red Cross embrace seriously the need for good governance and transparency. We are fully

aware that we are custodians of funds donated by the public and must ensure that it is properly spent.

The Award is a result of the good work of many esteemed volunteers who serve on our various committees, providing guidance and leadership.

Today, we honour 26 individuals and seven organisations and we recognise their invaluable contributions to further our mission. Collectively, they ensure Singapore Red Cross remains a strong National Society, effective in its mandate of serving the most vulnerable and saving lives.

Mr Axel Chan, Mr Han Eng Juan and Mr Raymond Tang will respectively receive the **Distinguished and Outstanding Service Awards** from the President. For many years, they have served dutifully across a broad spectrum of committees - governance, finance, advisory and management - to consolidate our position as the leading humanitarian organisation we are today.

We also thank the many **Friends of Red Cross**. Their goodwill and support help sustain our operations and amplify our causes. The recipients include individuals like Dato Pang Leong Siang and Ms Wong Siow Lai; dedicated groups of volunteers, as well as, corporates like Bloomberg; 3M Nexcare, and Macy's Merchandising. We are also glad to honour community partners like Bedok Community Emergency and Engagement, Raffles Institution, and Compassvale Secondary School.

I am also heartened that a record six youths will receive the **President's Red Cross Youth Award**. They include three uniformed cadets and three youth leaders. One of them, Mr Edwin Seah, has served through the ranks, including on our Council. This symbolises the diversity and potential of the Red Cross Youth - a 5,000-strong inclusive youth movement for youth with and without disability, of different nationalities and ethnicities. The Red Cross Youth is a powerful platform that nurtures compassionate humanitarian leaders for the future.

It is also noteworthy that this is the first Ceremony, at which we present the **Outstanding Employee Award**. Theam Poh, Serene, Staff Nurse Lee and Staff Nurse Thong - have exemplified the best in loyalty and dedication to the Red Cross.

To all the award recipients, I wish to extend my warm congratulations. And to all my fellow volunteers who serve across our local and international services - thank you for your service.

One Billion Coalition for Resilience

As we look ahead, we have much more work to do. Recently, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies adopted the vision of "One Billion Coalition for Resilience". It is a transformative initiative to scale up community and civic action to strengthen resilience. By 2025, the global Red

Cross Movement hopes that at least one billion people around the world would have taken steps towards strengthening resilience.

We in Singapore need to pay attention to the call to build resilient communities. We face a volatile global security situation with the ever-present threat of terrorism. We have an ageing population, where one in five persons will be above the age of 65 by 2030. The task of strengthening community resilience is more critical than before. Building on our collective efforts over the past decades, the Singapore Red Cross will champion the 1BC initiative, to enhance resilience here in Singapore, and beyond.

New Building, New Beginnings

To do so, we will ramp up our capacity in order to cope with future demands:

- train more people in first aid - physical and psychological;
- augment our blood donation advocacy programmes, and expand our pool of blood donors to 3% of the residential population;
- enhance our response to local and regional disasters, with a special focus on disaster risk reduction; and
- boost our humanitarian services, like TransportAid and Home Eldercare, to serve more elderly and persons with disabilities.

As we expand our services, we also need to expand our existing premises. I am pleased to announce that the Singapore Red Cross will build a new 8-storey building, while at the same time preserving the existing Red Cross House. This will enable us to expand our capacity, grow our humanitarian services and enhance our outreach to the vulnerable in our community. The new building will

enable us to launch new services, such as a day-activity centre in the city, an elder-care monitoring service, and new social enterprises, to boost our support for vulnerable groups in our community.

At the same time, we will transform the Red Cross House to a vibrant hub, comprising an Academy with many more classrooms; a heritage centre and social enterprises like a thrift store and a cafe for visitors. I encourage you to visit the lobby at Level 1 to see the building model, and to understand the plans which I have just shared.

These are exciting times, and I hope all of you will continue to partner with us, as we embark on a new chapter in our humanitarian outreach.

Thank you.