

EMBARGOED TILL AFTER DELIVERY

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**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR HO SING  
CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE  
COMMUNITY CHEST CHRISTMAS ON A GREAT STREET  
LIGHT-UP CEREMONY 2017  
11 NOVEMBER 2017, SATURDAY, 7.30PM  
ION<sup>2</sup>, ION ORCHARD**

Mdm Halimah Yacob

President of the Republic of Singapore and Patron-in-Chief of the  
National Council of Social Service (NCSS)

Mr Desmond Lee

Minister for Social and Family Development, and Patron of NCSS

His Excellency Kenji Shinoda, Ambassador of Japan to Singapore

Mr Melvin Yong, MP of Tanjong Pagar GRC

Ms Jennie Chua, Advisor, Community Chest

Mr Phillip Tan, Chairman, Community Chest

Mr Kojin Nakakita, Chairman, Hitachi Asia Ltd.

Mr Jamie Teo, Vice-Chairman, Orchard Road Business Association

Distinguished guests, friends of Community Chest

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. It is the time of the year again, when we usher in the season's festivities. In just a while, our Guest-of-Honour, President Halimah Yacob, and Special Guest Minister Lee, will be launching the festive lights to kick-start the merry season, and I would like to thank Mdm President and Minister Lee for gracing this occasion.

2. Thank you to our co-organiser, Orchard Road Business Association, for giving us this valuable platform every year to raise much needed funds to benefit about 80 social service organisations supported by Community Chest, and the Singapore Tourism Board for supporting this event. I also want to thank our long-standing partner and main sponsor, Hitachi Group of Companies, for supporting Community Chest in meeting the needs of the community.
  
3. I would also like to make a special mention of our other corporate partners – PropNex Realty, SMRT Corporation Limited, StarHub Ltd, Evangel Family Church, NTUC FairPrice Foundation Limited, Daikin Air-conditioning (Singapore) Pte Ltd, CapitaLand Hope Foundation the philanthropic arm of CapitaLand; partners who helped to make the event possible, ION Orchard, Pokka International Pte. Ltd., How's Catering, Singapore Red Cross and the Boys' Brigade in Singapore, our two emcees tonight Ms Wong Li Lin and Mr Aqram, and all who have helped in one and many ways for this event. Thank you.
  
4. While we celebrate the festivities with close friends and family, we should also extend the spirit of caring and sharing to those in our community. The People, Private and Public sectors can do more to support persons with disabilities and help them to integrate into the community as we build a caring and inclusive Singapore. Community Chest is already supporting social service organisations that provide the necessary training to prepare persons with disabilities for employment. Together with the support from the private sector, persons with disabilities can be provided with employment opportunities to enable them to contribute at the workplace and realise their full potential.

5. I am glad to have with us tonight, some employers who have embraced progressive inclusive practices at their workplaces, including outlets or chains situated along the Orchard Road belt. They are, NTUC FairPrice, Pan Pacific Hotel Group, Grand Park Orchard, Mandarin Orchard Singapore, Swensen's and Uniqlo Singapore. I would like to commend these organisations for taking the lead in fostering inclusion in the workplace and empowering persons with disabilities through sustainable employment.
6. Many of the service users who are employed at these workplaces had graduated from special education schools supported by Community Chest. One of them is Mr Lai Bo Cheng who is currently employed as a Driveway Ambassador at Mandarin Orchard Singapore. Bo Cheng graduated from Metta School, and first started as a trainee doorman with Mandarin Orchard in a Work Experience programme. He shined when given the opportunity 7 years ago and today he is an outstanding employee who received numerous awards for his good performance and excellent service. He is also a proud mentor to other trainees with special needs.
7. Bo Cheng is proof that if the community comes together to promote the participation of persons with disabilities and create opportunities for them to be a meaningful part of society, they too can shine.
8. At this point, I would like to introduce our passionate performers for tonight – Singapore's largest inclusive orchestra, The Purple Symphony. The orchestra comprises 90 members, with and without disabilities. The Purple Symphony is a true embodiment of what it

means to be inclusive, with members of all backgrounds united because of their love for music. Not forgetting Mr Mikey Robinson and Mr Bertrand Lee for their talented performance segment.

9. Lastly, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to fellow organising committee members, Mr Mark Shaw, Mr Chris Chong, Mr Peter Wee, Mr Michael Tay, Mr Steven Goh and Ms Lilian Goh. They have worked tirelessly to rally support for this event.

10. Thank you and enjoy the evening.