

**TRANSCRIPT OF REMARKS BY MR THARMAN SHANMUGARATNAM,  
SENIOR MINISTER AND COORDINATING MINISTER FOR SOCIAL POLICIES,  
SEEDS OF SUSTAINABLE PHILANTHROPY EVENT,  
27 APRIL 2023, 10.00AM,  
ALEXANDRA CANAL LINEAR PARK**

Our host Minister Masagos Zulkifli,  
Fellow Parliamentarian Ms Joan Pereira,  
Ms Anita Fam, President, National Council of Social Service (NCSS),  
Mr Chew Sutat, Chairman, Community Chest,  
Mr Phillip Tan, Advisor, Community Chest,  
Corporate partners, philanthropists, social service agencies and volunteers

1 Thanks for inviting me to join you.

**COMMUNITY CHEST: SUSTAINING A CULTURE OF GIVING FOR 40 YEARS**

2 This is a happy occasion, because we are first registering the fact that Community Chest has really built up something in Singapore over the past 40 years. It started relatively small, (but now) it supports a hundred social agencies each year, almost 100,000 people each year in fact. So it's really grown.

3 But it's not the numbers *per se*, but the culture. Community Chest has grown a culture of giving, supporting, and engaging in helping the vulnerable, and helping everyone have hope. Today's event, where we are planting 40 trees, is also about that planting the seeds of hope. So, thank you very much to everyone who has been involved with Community Chest for what you've done to scale up this culture of giving and engaging in Singapore.

**THE 4ST PARTNERSHIP FUND: PROMOTING INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION**

4 The other thing which we are launching today, very interesting, is the 4ST fund. The basic idea is a simple but powerful one, about partnerships.

- 5 The traditional approach that ComChest takes is to support individual social service agencies, individual initiatives, and it channels funds to them. What this 4ST Fund will do is to support partnerships – between the SSAs themselves, and partnerships between them and other ground-up initiatives, social enterprises, as well as the corporate sector and philanthropists. It's about building partnerships in the social sector, because something else happens in a partnership: we are able to multiply ideas, and ingenuity, energy, resources, and ultimately, we multiply impact – impact not just in numbers, but impact in quality and in the set of relationships that we are creating to strengthen our society. Through these partnerships, more ideas come together, more energy, more resources, more innovation and ultimately, more quality of engagement on the ground in what we're doing.
  
- 6 I really like this idea of you wanting to support, spawn and support partnerships in the social sector. We're starting off with a seed fund from Community Chest, \$2 million, but we intend to grow it – and although you say \$5 million is your next target, I think it can grow larger than that. It's really to support a new approach within Community Chest, (of) not just supporting individual initiatives but by supporting partnerships on the ground. And it's not just partnerships that add up different initiatives, but partnerships that multiply our impact.
  
- 7 I have a couple of examples on how such partnerships are already working. One of them is Beyond the Label Collective, which is supported by both NCSS and Touch Community Services. What Beyond the Label does is to help persons with mental health conditions, by bringing together a whole set of other partners – 26 like-minded partners – other SSAs, other NGOs like Singapore Children's Society, Singapore Association of Mental Health, bringing in Facebook from the corporate sector, and bringing in the public sector – IMH, AIC and others. So it's bringing together the public, private and social sectors, with Beyond the Label Collective being the convener. To multiply our impact, to do better for persons with mental health.
  
- 8 The second example that I have – and I'm sure there are many others – is the DaySpring SPIN initiative, which is an initiative by Highpoint Community Services Association (HCSA Community Services) to help single parents. Again, it's about a network of partners -- they're working with several NGOs: Daughters of Tomorrow, Generation Singapore,

Nanny Pro, and working with the universities. SMU will provide legal advice and help (the beneficiaries) understand the protection they have from violent partners for example. So again, it's about a collective of different parties coming together for a cause, helping a particular group of beneficiaries with greater impact in what we're doing. So, another good example of why this 4ST Fund is worth pushing.

## **A CALL FOR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY AND COLLECTIVE ACTION**

- 9 And remember, at the end of the day it's not only about the numbers and the quality of each engagement, but about the culture that we are growing in Singapore. A culture that is able to multiply what each of us is able to do, and multiply the seeds of hope that we are planting in our society.
- 10 I encourage the corporate sector to contribute to this. It shows how the whole idea of corporate purpose being synonymous with social good can be achieved. It's a way in which corporate purpose – not just CSR or just giving on the side of what the corporate is doing – can be built into the corporates' core activities – through your business activities themselves, through your ideas and some of your innovative capabilities, and through your employees.
- 11 I know NCSS and NVPC are now collaborating to help spur the development of corporate purpose – helping corporates develop frameworks to help them do this better. NVPC launched the Company for Good initiative in January, and NCSS is now developing the social side of that initiative, (there's also an environmental side and many other dimensions to it).
- 12 I want to thank everyone who's taking this forward. MSF, the agencies which are working together with you and other ministries, but most importantly those on the ground – the social service agencies, the ground-up initiatives, groups of volunteers and philanthropists, and the corporates. Thank you very much for what you're doing. You're planting the seeds of hope and there are a lot more seeds to be planted.