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**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR BRUCE POH, CHAIRMAN/
WORLD SKILLS SINGAPORE COUNCIL, AT THE OPENING
CEREMONY OF THE WORLD SKILLS SINGAPORE 2014
COMPETITION HELD ON THURSDAY 10 JULY 2014 AT 10
AM AT THE TAY ENG SOON CONVENTION CENTRE, ITE**

Mr Teo Chee Hean, Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating
Minister for National Security and Minister for Home Affairs

Mr Bob Tan, Chairman/ITE

Members of the ITE and Polytechnic Board of Governors

Polytechnic Principals

Colleagues from Polytechnics and ITE

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Introduction

- 1 Good morning. On behalf of the WorldSkills Singapore Council, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you, to the Opening Ceremony of WorldSkills Singapore 2014. It is our honour to have Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean officiate at today's event.

WorldSkills – A “World Cup” for Skills

- 2 ITE represents Singapore as the Official Member at WorldSkills International. Thus ITE, in conjunction with the Polytechnics, organises the WorldSkills Singapore Competition once in every two years, as well as coordinates Singapore’s participation at the biennial international WorldSkills Competitions.

- 3 As we look forward to the World Cup Finals in Brazil this coming Sunday, I will draw upon some analogies between WorldSkills and the World Cup.

- 4 The WorldSkills Singapore Competition aims to promote the image and standard of technical skills. It provides opportunities for youths to excel in their skills and to compete for the honour of representing Singapore at the International WorldSkills Competitions – a little like World Cup Qualifying Rounds to select who reaches the Tournament in Brazil. But at the Finals, we will not have Round Robin and Knockout games. All our champions will compete with champions from the other 72 countries at the same time!

- 5 The competition beginning today will be the 11th series of the WorldSkills Singapore Competition. Our winners will

also be heading to Brazil. The 43rd WorldSkills Competition will be held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, next year. This is where the game this morning, between Argentina and Holland was held!

- 6 Just like the World Cup, the International WorldSkills Competition provides an extremely competitive global platform for skills champions from different countries to come together to earn the right to be called a World Champion, albeit in skills.

Skills Champions

- 7 Our Singaporean youths, with the hopes of our nation behind them, have done well in previous competitions.
- 8 At the 42nd WorldSkills Competition in Germany in 2013, Team Singapore won **3 Gold** and **2 Silver Medals**, and **9 Medallions for Excellence**. In terms of Medal tally, Team Singapore ranked 7th and outperformed counterparts from advanced economies or with strong foundation in skills education, such as Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, UK and USA.
- 9 Singapore's total medal tally from our participation in nine international WorldSkills Competitions stands at **23 Gold**,

7 Silver and 8 Bronze Medals, together with 49 Medallions for Excellence. Since our debut in the competition in 1995, our youths have also brought home the prestigious Albert Vidal Award **twice**, once in 2005, and then again, in 2009. The Albert Vidal award is the highest award at the WorldSkills Competition and is given to the single highest scoring competitor from among the hundreds of competitors from around the world.

- 10 We are very proud of Team Singapore's accomplishments and look forward to working with a new team of competitors who will fly the Singapore flag high in Brazil in 2015.

WorldSkills Singapore 2014 – 'I Create'

- 11 The theme for this year's competition is '**I Create**'. We want to position competitors as resourceful creators in their areas of expertise – creating works, designs and systems that make a difference to the lives of people.
- 12 It also seeks to project the sense of originality and pride that comes through the creation of something new. The theme reinforces the message of imagination, inspiration, and inventiveness with skills.

Conclusion

- 13 As Chairman of the WorldSkills Singapore Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Principal Sponsors, the **Tote Board** and the **Workforce Development Agency of Singapore**, for your strong support and contributions to skills development in Singapore.
- 14 I would also like to extend my deepest appreciation to all our Sponsors, Supporters and partners, from industry and education institutions, for your generous sponsorships and steadfast commitment to helping us with the planning and organising of this competition.
- 15 We invite all of you to take a tour of ITE College Central and visit the various competition sites. At the same time, for those of you who have not seen this new campus yet, do walk around and see how ITE uses authentic learning in our training. You can also have a go at the many booths designed to give visitors a taste of the fun and value of skills.
- 16 I am sure you will be excited at the array of talents shown by our competitors and students.

17 Thank you.