

OPENING REMARKS BY MR BRUCE POH, EXECUTIVE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, WORLDSKILLS SINGAPORE COUNCIL, AT THE SENDING-OFF CEREMONY FOR TEAM SINGAPORE AT WORLDSKILLS COMPETITION 2017, HELD ON FRIDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2017, 2.30 PM AT EXECUTIVE SALON 1, ITE HEADQUARTERS

Dr Janil Puthucheary, Senior Minister of State for Communications and Information, and Education

WorldSkills Singapore Council Members

Colleagues from the Polytechnics and ITE

Team Singapore Competitors

Experts and Coaches

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Introduction

- 1 Good afternoon. On behalf of the WorldSkills Singapore Council, thank you for attending the sending-off Ceremony for Team Singapore. The team will soon be heading off to compete at the 44th WorldSkills Competition at Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. This is the biggest international vocational and technical skills competition held biennially.

WorldSkills as a SkillsFuture programme

- 2 Over the years, we have seen the WorldSkills Competition grow both in stature as well as in size. This year, we are expecting more than 1,200 competitors from 66 countries competing in over 50 skill areas. More companies are also stepping forward as sponsors and partners for the event. This reflects the growing importance that governments and industries around the world place on skills development and skills promotion.

- 3 Similarly, Singapore is focusing on developing deep and relevant skills. In this regard, competitions which are recognised by WorldSkills International will be placed under the umbrella of SkillsFuture Singapore. These include the international WorldSkills Competition, the regional ASEAN Skills competition and the national WorldSkills Singapore competition. The move will further enhance WorldSkills Singapore's standing as the national skills competition, and create the synergy between the competition and Singapore's strategic economic needs.

Team Singapore – Our Top Skilled Youths

- 4 Next month, twenty-one of Singapore's best and brightest youths will represent the nation to compete against top talents from around the world, for the honour of being Global Skills Champions in their respective skill areas.

- 5 This team was assembled after a gruelling three-day national competition held in July last year and comprises our top talents from across the five Polytechnics and ITE. They will be competing in 19 different skills, ranging from Aircraft Maintenance to Beauty Therapy.

- 6 When I visited the competitors at the recent Peak Performance Training camp, many shared that they have trained hard over the past months – five days a week, for almost 9 hours a day. What was particularly heartening to me was that many of our competitors were quick to acknowledge the strong support they had received from their Experts and Coaches, who likewise had to make many personal sacrifices preparing them for the competition. I would therefore also like to take this opportunity to thank our competitors, Experts and Coaches for all the hard work put in to keep the Singapore flag flying high!

Conclusion

- 7 To Team Singapore competitors, you have pushed yourself to new heights. You have honed your skills and learned the values of hardwork, determination and resilience. I hope that when you go to Abu Dhabi, it would be more than just winning medals, but go on a journey of self-discovery and self-development, and inject that valuable experience to your future careers.

- 8 Whatever the competition outcome may be, we are all extremely proud of your efforts and achievements.

- 9 We wish Team Singapore all the best in Abu Dhabi and we hope you will also have a memorable experience at the competition!

Thank you.