

CLOSING REMARKS BY MR BRUCE POH, CHAIRMAN/WORLDSKILLS SINGAPORE COUNCIL, AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE WORLDSKILLS SINGAPORE 2008 COMPETITION HELD ON THU 23 OCTOBER 2008 AT 1000 HOURS AT ITE COLLEGE EAST

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports

Mr Bob Tan, Chairman/ITE and Members of the ITE Board of Governors

Members of Parliament

Mr Peter Chen, former Senior Minister of State for Education and Patron of ITE Alumni Association

Colleagues of ITE and the Polytechnics

Parents, Competitors

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Introduction

Good morning. We are grateful to have Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, grace this Closing Ceremony of the WorldSkills Singapore Competition 2008.

2 This ceremony marks the successful conclusion of another national skills competition. Jointly organised by ITE and the five Polytechnics, WorldSkills Singapore aims to promote skills excellence in Singapore.

The WorldSkills Singapore Competition 2008

3 Since the Competition began in 1994, WorldSkills Singapore has attracted strong interest and support from education institutions and industry. This year, we had 318 participants from ITE, the Polytechnics, and companies. Of these, 166 went on to compete in 17 skill areas in the Finals.

4 We also had strong support from organisations, companies and individuals. Seventy-three organisations and companies came on board as Sponsors of the event. Many committed professionals also contributed time and effort, and worked tirelessly behind the scene as members of the Technical Working Groups and Judges. To them, I want to say, “thank you.”

Challenge for WorldSkills Singapore Winners

5 The Winners of this year’s competition will represent Singapore at the 40th WorldSkills Competition, which will held in Calgary, Canada, in September next year. At the WorldSkills Competition in Shizuoka, Japan, last year, the Singapore team did very well. We won three Gold Medals, one Bronze, and six Medallions of Excellence. It was our best performance since our debut in 1995. It earned Singapore the 5th position in the Gold medal tally; and raised the profile of Singapore significantly among member countries of the WorldSkills International community.

6 In Information Technology-related skills, particularly in IT PC & Network Support, we have won the Gold medal in the last four consecutive Competitions. Many countries, I understand, will be going all out to beat us in this area at the Competition in Calgary next year.

7 As I walked around to view the Competition last week, I could sense the excitement and tension in the air. I saw the determination in the faces of our competitors, and the resolve to do well. Their Lecturers and mentors were equally intense and anxious. To all finalists, I want to say this: the competition may be tough, but what you have learned is invaluable. It will stay with you for life. Be it the mental strength to go the extra mile, the determination to excel, or the versatility to adapt - these are skills and values, which will stand you in good stead for the challenges ahead.

8 To all the winners who will represent Singapore, you are Skills Idols to young people who will be embarking on a skills-related education or career. You represent “excellence” in skills and in spirit. I congratulate you and wish you the best as you endeavor to fly the Singapore flag high, as your predecessors had done in past competitions.

Acknowledgements

9 Many organisations and people have contributed to the success of this competition. On behalf of the WorldSkills Singapore Council, I would like to thank:

- Principal Sponsors, Main Sponsors, Co-sponsors and Supporters;
- Members of the Organising Committee and Members of Working Committees - they have worked very hard to ensure the success of the Competition;
- Experts, judges and officials – whom I know have spent nights and days before and during the Competition;
- School Principals who made special arrangements for their students to view the competition;
- Student performers from ITE, Singapore Polytechnic and our *Skillion* mascots; and
- Many others who have, in one way or another, contributed to the success of the event.

Thank you.