

**EMBARGOED TILL DELIVERY**  
**PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**SPEECH BY PAP SECRETARY-GENERAL LEE HSIEN LOONG  
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Comrades

Brothers and Sisters from the NTUC

Fellow Singaporeans

1. The last time we had a major Party gathering was a year ago, when we had the Party 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, followed by the Conference and Convention here, in the Expo. It has been a very busy year since then.
2. It has been an SG50 year, it's the year in which Mr Lee Kuan Yew, our founding Secretary-General passed away.
3. It's a year when we held GE 2015 and it's a memorable year for the Party because the GE went well. We won 83 out of 89 constituencies. We took back Punggol East and overall we got 69.9% of the vote.
4. It's good result for the PAP; but most important of all, it is a tremendous plus for Singapore
  - a. Because it assured Singaporeans of at least another decade of predictability, political stability, and good governance
  - b. And it enables Singapore to complete a crucial transition in our nation's history
    - i. The transition from the generations who participated in 1965 or who at least experienced 1965 to a completely post-1965 generation of Singaporeans and leaders
    - ii. It is a transition which we must succeed in, because it will show that Singapore will not just be exceptional once –off for one generation and then turn ordinary and fade away

iii. But that we have institutionalised a system of governance, a society with the values, and the resolution so that Singapore can continue; can endure

iv. And we will show that having achieved so much, we look forward to doing more even together

5. What will be able to do with this outcome?

a. First, we can carry out a smooth leadership transition

i. With this election and the 2011 election, I have been able to assemble and gather together a new team to reinforce the team

ii. And there is now time for this new team to gel and to take over the reins, well before the election after next

b. Secondly, we will be able to transform our economy and society, and transition to a new phase of our development

i. Our growth will be more challenging, but we will nurture lifelong learning and productivity

ii. We will use technology to create new opportunities and markets for ourselves

iii. So that our lives can continue to improve and our children will have brighter futures

c. Thirdly, with this solid victory, we can deal with Singapore's external challenges as one united people

i. We look forward with confidence, but we can also see that are dark clouds on the horizon. There are problems in our neighbourhood

(1) Other countries face various difficulties

(2) Our bilateral relations with them may become challenging because of this

ii. And so if you are asking me over whether the next decade can I be sure that there will be no storms, I said “no, you cannot be sure.” In fact, you can be pretty confident that if you look at the next decade, some time, along the way, there will be some kind of rough weather

iii. And we need to be able to deal with these external rough weather without being weakened or distracted by internal divisions

iv. And because we are united, we can handle them as one people, one nation, one Singapore

6. So this has been a crucial year and a crucial election. Today, I would like to share with you and discuss with you

a. Why elections turned out the way they did

b. What lessons the results hold for PAP and for Singapore and what we should do about it

c. For a formal post mortem, we are still working at that. Comrade Heng Swee Keat is leading that and is still talking to the branches and analysing the results. But today, I will share with you my preliminary thoughts on what all these means

7. I will put down the election results to the three things

a. Firstly, the MPs and activists worked very hard on the ground and served residents well

i. Not just during the campaign, but long before that, throughout the last four and a half years and even before the previous election

b. Secondly, the PAP Government made policy changes and plans for the future that served Singaporeans well, that were starting to work and showing results that people appreciate

c. Thirdly, because this was SG50 year, Singaporeans gained a stronger sense of identity and of nationhood. And that made all the difference to Singapore

## Hard Work Counts

8. Let me start with MPs and your teams.
  - a. Your hard work made a very big difference to residents
  - b. Lim Swee Say in Bedok
    - i. Personally conducted more than 100 dialogues with his residents on PGP and MediShield Life
    - ii. He went block by block, weekend by weekend, engaging residents
    - iii. he has now become our Chief Salesman for PGP and MediShield Life!
  - c. Maliki in Siglap
    - i. Systematically covered his ground and aimed to reach every resident, whether in the private estate or HDB flats. He made sure it was covered. How did he know?
    - ii. He set up a computer database. Every resident he spoke to, he took notes, followed up on their specific needs, and identified who have not been reached. He made a special effort to go back second time, third time to make sure he covered it thoroughly and connected with the residents. Not easy in a constituency like Siglap.
  - d. Lee Bee Wah in Nee Soon South
    - i. Famously hands on and famously “on the ball”
    - ii. Organised all kinds of programmes to make Nee Soon South Clean and Green
      - (1) Monthly litter picking activities with her residents
      - (2) Campaigns to get things for the residents from different government departments, made sure that needs are seen to and made sure people can get things done

- e. Christopher De Souza in Ulu Pandan, one of our youngest MPs and he has built up a young and energetic team. He has got young people in his team.
    - i. Mobilised dozens of teenage volunteers to tutor school children having difficulty because of their difficult family circumstances and worked with the kids and made a difference in their lives
  - f. These are but a few examples
9. Every one of you, MPs and the teams, worked very hard
- a. You made sure the party listened to Singaporeans, of all walks of life and understood their needs
  - b. You explained to residents what the PAP Government was doing for them, why we were doing things a certain way
  - c. And in the process, you bonded with your residents
  - d. And you gave meaning to our election slogan “With You, For You, For Singapore”
10. I would especially mention not just the MPs but the activists who support our MPs on the ground.
- a. Without the full team working beside the MP, the MP cannot do so much. The teams work twice as hard as the MPs
    - i. You have to prepare beforehand and plan
    - ii. Deal with the feedback, handle the suggestions and follow up
    - iii. And before it is over, plan for the next one
  - b. And willingly, on your own time, in the evenings and on weekends
  - c. That’s why after the elections, for this Party Awards, we decided to have Special Letters of Appreciation, to thank and recognise the comrades who made exceptional contributions to our GE campaign. And of course to encourage them to come back and work with us again the next time, and many

more to emulate their example and do their best for the Party. I would like to thank and congratulate all who received the Special Letters of Appreciation.

11. It is not just working hard, but often working under tough conditions. Some MPs and teams had tougher fights than others

- a. But you showed your steel
- b. And put the needs of their residents before your own
- c. Look at Potong Pasir, Sitoh Yih Pin
  - i. He lost twice the third time I said "Where do you want to go?" He said, "I am staying in Potong Pasir."
  - ii. He fought, he beat Lina Chiam by 114 votes. I told him, "Next time better don't give us so many palpitations."
  - iii. He did not take it easy, he continued to fight hard and this time we were quite reassured. We had 65% of the votes
  - iv. Well done!
- d. Tin Pei Ling, Macpherson
  - i. She had a rough time in GE 2011. On the ground she held her own but on the internet, there was a lot of flak. It is not easy for a young lady fighting the election for the first time
  - ii. But she has a stout heart and concentrated on serving her residents
  - iii. And this time, defending Macpherson as an SMC and as a new mother. They say in Chinese: 胜任有余 (No trouble at all)
- e. Aljunied GRC, Hougang and Punggol East SMC PAP teams - Victor, Guat Kwang, Murali, Eng Liang, Shamsul, Hong Chuang and Charles
  - i. They had the toughest mission but they kept at it with the right attitude

ii. They showed that the PAP has fight, that no opposition constituency can consider itself “safe”

(1) As indeed the Punggol East team showed

(2) So did the Aljunied and Hougang teams – they did not win, but they came very, very close and they gave them quite a scare

12. What do I conclude from these?

a. First, that hard work counts, as Lim Boon Heng always used to tell us - the MP and your team makes all the difference

b. Whatever the government policies, whatever the national mood, whether it is good or bad, the MP doing the groundwork, the MP connecting with residents, makes a very big difference

i. Not just in terms of the practical results, making the outcomes to work on the ground

ii. But emotionally, so that people can feel that you care for them, that you are on their side, that you want to improve their lives by working with them

13. Therefore, the lesson we draw is a very simple one: never let up on devoting ourselves to our residents

a. Not just knocking on doors and going through the motions

b. But thinking hard how we can we make the most difference for our residents?

c. How can we organise our residents to help one another, to solve problems together

14. We've got to be prepared to fight for our convictions

a. We listen closely, we take feedback

b. But we must believe in what we are doing

- c. Have the courage to persuade Singaporeans to support us
  - d. We have to take the fight to our opponents, even when the going is tough
  - e. Ultimately, Singaporeans back fighters
  - f. And that's why they have backed the PAP for more than 60 years
  - g. We listen, we have to be humble, but at the same time, we must have fight in us
  - h. If you are just a 好好先生, yes to everything and but you have no ideas of your own, and don't stand up for what you believe in, you will not win votes
  - i. You must stand up for what you believe in and persuade people this is the right way, go forward
15. At the same time, MPs and candidates must always remember to be sincere and to serve humbly, especially after a clear victory like this election
- a. Never forget that we are serving Singaporeans
  - b. Never behave as if you are the masters
  - c. Never turn up late for events, or take people for granted
  - d. Voters will not tolerate arrogant and complacent behaviour, whether it's the PAP or the opposition parties. They expect you to serve, to do your duty and they will respect you for that. But remember, you are serving them, not masters of your population
  - e. Older MPs know this well
  - f. The new MPs have to learn this quickly, if you haven't learnt it already
  - g. The judgement of the people is an awesome thing: Do not be found wanting

## Policy Agenda



16. So the first reason is, MPs and activist have been working hard. The first conclusion is MPs and activists please continue working hard, and work harder

17. The second reason for our strong mandate is because the PAP Government's policies and our plans for the future, for the people's future, have served Singapore well

18. We have made progress on things that people care about that concern Singaporeans – housing, healthcare, transport, immigration

19. We have also developed policies to show our gratitude to the Pioneer Generation

- a. It was a big thing, this is our 59<sup>th</sup> year
- b. We made the Pioneer Generation Package
- c. And we were very happy to be able to thank 450,000 pioneer Singaporeans
- d. Singaporeans understood the spirit of this, the purpose of this
- e. And it is not just assuring people of medical care, which you can do in many different ways
- f. But about the values which Singaporeans stand for
  - i. That we are grateful to our elders
  - ii. That we respect them, we remember their sacrifices
- g. And through this gesture of the PG package, we have bound the generations and we have bound Singaporeans closer together

20. At the same time, we have been prepared long-term plans for the future

- a. We have embarked on SkillsFuture
- b. Developed master plans for Aging, Healthcare, Sustainable Living, Smart Nation, Transport

c. We are transforming many parts of Singapore – Paya Lebar, the Southern Waterfront City, Jurong Lake District – so that this will always be a beautiful and endearing home

d. And I think we are now much more conscious that a home isn't just buildings, isn't just bricks and mortar. But it is memories, heritage, culture, the arts, environment

i. So we made Botanic Gardens a UNESCO World Heritage site. Not for UNESCO, but really for Singaporeans. To enjoy, to share

ii. We have built the National Gallery of Singapore. Something to be proud of. A place to show the art works our people have created over the years. Our own artists as well as some South-east Asian artists around us.

iii. We are keeping the Rail Corridor, preserving Pulau Ubin, creating Coney Island Park. All beautiful nature places for Singaporeans to enjoy, to keep this a clean, green sustainable beautiful island

21. Right now, we are working on the programme for the coming term of Government

a. In our election manifesto we have already put out the main ideas.

b. We are building on what we did in the last term, we are going further

c. Some of our agenda from our last term are still not completed yet, work-in-progress, which we will see through

i. And so, in the public transport system, I think Khaw Boon Wan will be kept busy

ii. For healthcare, Gan Kim Yong is working on MediShield Life, building new hospitals and polyclinics

iii. For population, I think Josephine Teo will be employed for a long time because we are not going to have enough babies in Singapore for quite some time to come.

d. But we are also looking beyond issues we were dealing with in the last term, beyond SG50, as we work towards our next long-term milestone, SG100

i. And that is why Heng Swee Keat is chairing the Committee on our Future Economy, to develop plans to restructure our economy; to make sure that we continue to have good jobs and opportunities

ii. That's why Grace Fu and Chan Chun Sing are leading discussions on SGFuture. Building on Our Singapore Conversations, which completed two years ago

22. So it is good that this morning, we had our three panels presenting on three important issues for the future, and we had a good engagement with the participants. Fielding questions, discussing these significant subjects

a. The future of Lifelong Learning

i. That's really what SkillsFuture is about and it is key to keeping us a Nation of Opportunity

ii. To create opportunities for our people to learn, to upgrade, to be employed and to contribute at all stages of life

iii. And the suggestions from the Panel to have learning inter-generations, old and young together, to get seniors more engaged and importantly, monitoring younger ones. These are useful ideas for our SkillsFuture programme

b. Future of Caring is also important

i. Because our population is ageing

ii. You saw that chart just now, it said that for every one person above 55, there are only five people who are of working age. That means five working persons must support one person over 55. And it is going to become two persons, supporting one above 55 by 2020. Which means, first we all have to work harder, but secondly, I think those above 65 should have the chance to continue working if they can. And we should encourage that

iii. And that's why the panel suggested, helping seniors to continue to work, to age in place and to professionalise care-giving, so we can look after the seniors with a more human touch and more efficiently.

iv. A good suggestion which we will be following up on

v. I should also mention, that Denise Phua mentioned this very briefly, that when you mention caring it is not just old folks. Today we only discussed old folks, but I would also like to mention the other group which we have to care about.

(1) The needy and also the persons with disabilities

(2) I mention persons with disabilities particularly because it has been on my mind.

(3) I just visited the Enabling Village earlier this week which is at Lengkok Baru near Tiong Bahru. If you have a chance you should go and see it. It is beautifully done, a place which would serve persons with disabilities. Where they can come, they can get job matching. Where the employers come and can get briefings and courses on how they can take care of persons with disabilities on their staff. Where they provide training for persons with disabilities.

(4) There is a very interesting Fairprice outlet there. Good range of things to buy, but also kitted out so that they can train the staff who are disabled or who have to handle disabled customers.

(5) So you have got the trolleys, which are supermarket trolleys which are adapted, lighter for the people who are disabled which can be fitted into wheelchairs. The counters are also adapted so you can check out more quickly, more conveniently. It is a very nice effort by many groups. SGEabled, the parents and the employers, the VWOs. Groups of PWDs themselves coming together to do something

(6) And this is also the week where we are having the ASEAN Para Games. We are hosting the Games and our Paralympians are

doing well. Our table tennis players are doing well. Jason Chee just won a gold medal yesterday. Our swimmers are also doing well. So when we say enable the future, caring, we are caring for all citizens in our midst and they are also helping to care for themselves.

vi. And that is what we are looking for because we are Singaporeans; we are family; we all will have a place in our home

c. Thirdly this morning we talked about Sustainable Living and Community Engagement

i. Both critical things. Sustainable living, keeping this green to keep high quality life in a city environment

ii. And as the panel suggested, going for a car-lite society, improving our public transport, making sure we can travel around Singapore easily. And so it is going to get easier because after Christmas we are opening Downtown Line 2 and all our residents along the Downtown Line 2 corridor, especially Bukit Panjang and Bukit Timah I think they have been waiting for this for a long time

iii. Community engagement was the last item on the forum this morning, and it is basic to the way we solve problems – working together, bringing people together, not just relying on the government to do everything for us.

iv. So the second reason we have done well this time, is that we had the policies which met people's concerns with programmes and plans which takes Singapore forward.

v. And we need that again. Some work continuing, which is not completed but we will see through.

vi. New work starting, taking us further steps into the future.

### **National Identity**

23. The third reason for our good election results is because our strength of identity, our national identity, strengthened amongst Singaporeans.

24. It has been a special year, 2015.
  - a. It is SG50, our Jubilee Year
  - b. It is also the year which saw the passing of MR Lee Kuan Yew
  - c. And Mr Lee's passing reminded us of how we got here
    - i. Through the tenacity and the sacrifice of our pioneers
    - ii. They dreamt big, made bold decisions, they never flinched and they carried the nation with them and they achieved great things
25. We were reminded that we had to work together in order to get here
  - a. And it is this sense of purpose, unity and achievement that we felt as a nation, and we celebrated on our SG50 National Day
26. In a way, these were one-off events in our history
  - a. SG50 only happens once.
  - b. Mr Lee Kuan Yew is no more; and we are now in a post-LKY era
27. But this emotional year has left a deep mark on all of us, individually, and as a society
  - a. Whether you are a pioneer who lived through these 50 years of nation building, and experienced and remembered 9 of August 1965
  - b. Or whether if you are a young student who only knew about this journey from books and videos but experienced March 2015
  - c. We all shared the national moment of grief when Mr Lee passed away, and we all shared the moment of rejoicing when we sang Majulah Singapura and recited the pledge on National Day
  - d. So for all of us here, because of 2015, we have a new consciousness; we were changed; and we will, as long as we live, we will remember this

28. We celebrated our successes and remembered our setbacks together as one nation and one people

- a. And we realised that we had worked together – the Government and the people – to build a special society
- b. What will strengthen us further is not having all our problems solved by Government
- c. But to have Singaporeans doing things together, for one another. Having gone through SG50 and having lived through this year, I think we have the right spirit, the right feelings and the right memories to carry us forward, and to do this together

29. That's why when we were preparing to celebrate SG 50, we created an SG50 Celebration Fund. We encouraged people to organise ground-up activities, to celebrate the occasion with their fellow Singaporeans in meaningful ways

- a. And many people did
- b. I asked what projects the fund went towards, and all kinds of interesting things. People made documentary films, they made movies, they made plays, they held art exhibitions, they put out publications, that captured the stories of our people and our hopes and dreams
- c. We also had fun things. Cook-outs, block parties, barbeques and picnics, for different people to come together to share meals with one another
- d. We did projects for the needy, to help the vulnerable, to help our fellow Singaporeans. Projects like Wheels@Ubin, which brought 100 wheelchair users to Pulau Ubin to see a place, which otherwise they would not have much chance to do so.
- e. So the spirit is get involved, get your hands dirty, get things done, together

30. SG50 will be soon be over, but the spirit has to live on, and we got to keep on doing this for one another

- a. And that's why as the climax of SG50, we organised The Future of Us exhibition
  - i. To inspire Singaporeans to have meaningful conversations about our future
  - ii. To build on what we have experienced together and to get us working towards this shared future
- b. The SGFuture conversations are jump-off points. We call them conversations, but actually they should be conversations leading to actions. The initiatives and projects that people will roll up their sleeves and take part in and that can make a difference in our lives.

31. This is the kind of society we want to build in Singapore. What S. Rajaratnam used to call, 'A Democracy of Deeds'

- a. Because by working together, we will be a more united society
- b. And we will be able to get our politics to work in the interest of all of us
- c. If the society is divided, the politics will be divisive, we will go into a downward spiral and things will get worse
- d. But if society is cohesive, if we work together, we feel together then we can have our politics bring us closer together, constructively.
- e. Then the PAP can continue to be a national party representing many, many Singaporeans of all walks of life.
- f. And working for the interest of all Singaporeans
- g. So that is the most important lesson from this General Election
- h. First, Party MPs and members work hard
- i. Two, as a government, get our policies right. Make a difference to people's life



- j. Three, as a nation feel that sense of identity, togetherness, pride and sense that we are getting this done together

### **Earning the Right to Lead**

32. Then despite the next General Election, GE2021. Every generation will have to do it again. Every election we have to fight again

- a. GE 2015 is a good base
- b. But GE 2021 will be a new battle
- c. And voters will judge the PAP afresh the next time. Not only by what we have done before, but what we will be doing this term, and what we can continue to do for them
  - i. They will ask whether our promises merit their trust
  - ii. Whether our actions strengthen their convictions
  - iii. Whether our policies and plans will continue to take Singapore forward

33. So let's start now, in order that, come the next General Election, whether it is 2021 or maybe earlier, the PAP will be ready and will say

- a. What we promised, we delivered
- b. What we stand for, we continue to uphold
- c. Work with the PAP, so that Singapore's future will remain bright for many, many more years to come

Thank you very much