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**SPEECH BY MR K SHANMUGAM, MINISTER FOR LAW AND SECOND MINISTER
FOR HOME AFFAIRS, AT SEMBAWANG SHIPYARD'S GREEN WAVE
ENVIRONMENTAL CARE PROJECT FOR SCHOOLS AWARD PRESENTATION
CEREMONY, ON 29 JANUARY 2010, 9.05 AM, AT MARINA MANDARIN
SINGAPORE**

Mr Tang Kin Fei, Group President & CEO, Sembcorp Industries,
Mr Wong Weng Sun, President & CEO, Sembcorp Marine,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Boys and girls,

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Good morning. It is my pleasure to be here this morning at the award presentation ceremony of Sembawang Shipyard's Green Wave Environmental Care Competition.
- 2 Like many cities around the world, Singapore faces challenges in protecting its environment. It is an effort that requires everyone's participation – not just on a one-off basis, but a regular commitment. It is therefore essential to imbue this mindset of protecting our environment in Singaporeans, starting from our young.
- 3 I am glad to note that more corporate organisations are taking a pro-active role in educating our younger generation on the importance of environmental care and protection. In this light, I commend Sembawang Shipyard for its public-spiritedness in organising this annual competition, which I understand, is now one of the key platforms for our students to develop and share their ideas on this important topic.
- 4 I also thank Sembawang Shipyard's alliance partners, Shell and BP Shipping, for taking a stake in this meaningful programme by co-sponsoring the top awards for the Tertiary and JC/ITE levels respectively.
- 5 I would also like to acknowledge the support of various government agencies in assessing the students' projects, such as the Ministry of Education, National

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Environment Agency, Singapore Environment Council, National Parks, Singapore Science Centre, Public Utilities Board and Housing Development Board, as well as tertiary institutions like NUS, NTU, NIE and the Polytechnics. I am sure the students have benefited from your expertise and guidance.

IMPORTANCE OF GREEN WAVE ENVIRONMENT COMPETITION

- 6 The Green Wave Environment Competition is a useful platform for getting young Singaporeans involved in what are now global efforts to protect our environment. Through this competition, students will gain an appreciation of the environmental challenges that Singapore and other countries in the world face. More importantly, I hope their participation will set them on a journey of lifelong concern for the environment.
- 7 This competition seeks to motivate students to experiment with ideas and technologies to develop new ways to protect the environment. It challenges students to identify real life problems, work in teams and think out-of-the-box to come up with innovative solutions to current real world problems. This ties in well with how our schools seek to nurture young Singaporeans to look beyond their textbooks and employ their creative energies to foster a better society.
- 8 The Green Wave Environment Competition also fits well with Singapore's long-term plan for sustainable development. We have always had to work within the constraints of being a city state with no natural resources and a high population density. Over the years we have developed expertise in areas such as urban planning, water and waste management and green technologies. However, we will have to invest more in sustainable development in the coming years to provide Singaporeans with a high quality living environment yet maintaining good economic growth.
- 9 To achieve both these objectives, we need to optimise the use of key resources such as energy, land and water. We need to ensure that our use of energy is efficient so that we can reduce our susceptibility to global energy shocks. We have to put every parcel of land to good use to maximise our limited size. And while we have worked hard to

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become self-sufficient for water over the years, we should never take this precious resource for granted.

- 10 Indeed, to have our youths start applying their minds to these issues augurs well for our resource-constrained future.

PARTICIPATION IN GREEN WAVE ENVIRONMENT COMPETITION

- 11 It is heartening to see the increasing level of participation from the schools and their students over the years, from 117 project entries when the competition first started in 2003, to 292 entries in 2009. Over 1,000 students participated in last year's competition.
- 12 The judges' favourable feedback on the standards and quality of this year's project entries is also encouraging.
- 13 In putting together their projects, the students have made considerable effort to push their limits of imagination. Yet, they have kept themselves rooted to the ground in terms of the applicability of their ideas to the real world.
- 14 The team from Temasek Polytechnic best exemplified this with their project to use recycled plastics in building materials, which won the top prize at the Tertiary level. I understand this is only the second time that the top award for the Tertiary level has been given since the start of the competition seven years ago. You and I will have the chance to hear more about their project after this.
- 15 Hougang Primary School, which won the first prize for the Primary level, also put forth a simple yet effective idea called "Podcasting at X-Cell Zone". The project team pre-recorded descriptions of various points of interest in the school's Eco Garden and made them available on i-Pods. This increased the interactivity of the Garden and enabled the school's students to learn in greater detail and at their own pace about the plants and animals in the Garden.

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CONCLUSION

- 16 I am heartened to see our students challenging assumptions and looking for new ways to solve real environmental problems. Their enthusiasm in developing and sharing their creative green ideas bodes well for the long-term development of Singapore. It is our hope that more schools can encourage their students to take part in such competitions.
- 17 Finally, I would like to congratulate all the award winners and participants. Keep up the good work as I am sure that your ideas and efforts, whether big or small, will make a difference to our environment.
- 18 Thank you.
