

For Immediate Release

**TRANSCRIBED SPEECH BY MR JOSE RAYMOND, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL, AT THE PROJECT: ECO-OFFICE 10TH
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND PRESENTATION CEREMONY 2012,
THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY, CITY SQUARE MALL ATRIUM**

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources,
Mr Kwek Leng Joo, Managing Director of City Developments Limited,

Now before I start, I'd like to thank everyone for joining us today for this very important milestone in the Project. But, more importantly, I need to manage all your expectations because this is my maiden speech since I joined the Environment Council so please bear with me as I take you through the next couple of minutes. Thank you.

My very short address will actually touch on just three important areas. Vision, Leadership, and Passion. Because these three principles were actually what got this entire project started 10 years ago. It's been 10 years ago that Project: Eco-Office came into everyone's offices and it was at a time when it was not exactly fashionable to talk about the environment, and about conserving the environment. But it was about vision. And I'm sure many of you, if not all of you, will agree that that's how this country was actually built on – having a vision.

But with a vision, you actually need solid leadership. And that's why I look to you, recipients of the Eco-Office Certificate today, and know that it's because of what you drive in your offices on a daily basis, which drives the ethos down into your staff and every single employee in the organisation. It's the same ethos which drives CDL – Mr Kwek himself believes in conserving the environment and caring for the community. And that's why CDL has got an ethos which is almost impeccable, an ethos which actually means it's driven down to every level of the employees and the staff. And I would actually ask that for every

office, it's important for the leader to set the agenda, to set the principles going so that every employee believes in saving the environment and conserving the resources.

And I'd like to actually just share a couple of examples of what we found during our audits for 2011. We had the Singapore Examinations and Assessments Board and they have got a very cute programme going on in the office. Every single staff member is known as a green ambassador. And they've got a lot of pictures of their own staff placed right before where all the switches are, reminding them that it is important to save the environment, to switch off, to not waste paper. Now that's what the SEAB-lings, the SEAB – Singapore Examinations and Assessments Board, they're called SEAB-lings. And now the SEAB-lings actually take the initiative to drive that message with each other among the staff.

Another example, which I thought I'd need to share is of the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore. It's now known that because of their online assessment, they have been able to actually cut down on the use of paper to the amount of 26,000 reams annually. And that means that 96% of every one of us are actually putting our assessments online. 96% and 26,000 reams of paper saved annually. If you do the sums, you'll know that it's about \$120,000 saved annually in paper. Now that's a large amount of money to be saved in an organisation – any organisation. So bear in mind that it does make financial sense to cut down on usage.

Finally, I'll just end off by talking about passion. Passion is what drives a lot of us to do and to actually behave in a certain way. And in the last 10 years, we've had 104 offices which have been certified under the Project: Eco-Office scheme. This year, we have set ourselves a very clear target of matching the 104 offices in this entire year alone. That means what has taken us 10 years to do, we will do in one year – this year. 100 new offices will be Eco-Certified. And let me tell you why I know we'll be able to do it.

We have actually rebranded the way our collaterals look, to make it more fun, to make it more colourful, to get the message across in a very easy and yet fun way to all the staff in your offices.

And I know that it will make a difference because if not for wanting to do the Eco-Office certification, perhaps just getting your hands on these stickers and collaterals alone will probably make a difference in how we get our numbers. But that aside, I think there's an increased amount of awareness on climate change and how we are very affected by what's happening around the world today. And that I think, will drive people and drive companies to actually nudge each other, to look to our left and to our right, and remind ourselves that we all need to do our part to make that difference.

And finally, let me tell you how I know we will get that 100 new offices this year. When I step into my office every day, I see the passion in my team's eyes. I see the way in which they're going to knock on doors, make those calls, and they will get what we need. Because with vision, leadership and passion, we will get there.

Thank you very much.