

OPENING REMARKS BY MR QUEK SEE TIAT, CHAIRMAN OF THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY AT THE LAUNCH OF BCA UNIVERSAL DESIGN EXHIBITION HELD ON FRIDAY, 25 JULY 2014 AT 3.30PM, CHANGI CITY POINT

Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman,
Minister of State for Defence and National Development

Ladies and gentlemen

1. A very good afternoon. Thank you for joining us at Changi City Point for the launch of the Universal Design Exhibition. This is the third such exhibition that the Building and Construction Authority held since last year.

2. The Universal Design Exhibition is part of BCA's on-going efforts to create greater public awareness on the concept of Universal Design or UD in short, which aims to make our built environment as user friendly as possible to everyone. The Exhibition attracted close to 18,000 visitors last year.

3. Having an accessible and friendly built environment is a very important aspect of an inclusive society as it enables people of different ages and abilities to enjoy living in familiar surroundings with their loved ones. It allows everyone to participate in social and community activities. This will help enhance the quality of life and create a stronger sense of community amongst Singaporeans.

4. We hope that greater public awareness of UD will encourage more building owners to incorporate these features – family-friendly facilities and barrier-free access for people of different mobility needs. BCA has planned for the next exhibition to be held at Suntec City in November. We hope to spread the message to more people and achieve a visitorship of more than 35,000 by the end of 2014.

Starting Young

5. BCA has been engaging different groups of stakeholders through various outreach and educational programmes to showcase the benefits and importance of UD. We strongly believe that the appreciation for UD must start from young. Hence, we are reaching out to a younger group of audience this year.

6. In March this year, we invited children aged 6 to 9 to participate in "*My UD World*" Inter-Primary School Art Competition. Students were invited to depict what an inclusive built environment meant to them through creative expression. I am happy to share that we received close to 4,000 entries from more than 20 primary schools. The response shows that our teachers appreciate the importance of an inclusive built environment and I applaud their commitment towards educating our next generation in support of an inclusive society.

7. I would like to congratulate our young, talented winners. We have displayed the students' drawings at this exhibition and hope that all of you will take a look and appreciate the drawings as much as we have.

8. Another segment that we are reaching out to is the teenagers and young adults. Again, we believe that our youths are able and ready to offer an innovative and different perspective on the importance of UD in our built environment, this time through the medium of film. I would like to take this opportunity to launch the BCA UD Short Film

Competition. We are inviting youths between the ages of 16 and 25 to produce short films on UD, based on the theme “*Singapore - a home for everyone*”.

9. UD is about care, community and being considerate of the mobility needs of everyone. We will be waiting eagerly to discover the stories that our youths can tell us through this Competition. We will announce the winners and also showcase the winning entries at our next UD Exhibition in November during our inaugural Singapore Universal Design Week.

Conclusion

10. These competitions are part of our outreach programmes with different stakeholders to showcase the importance of an inclusive built environment and benefits of UD. Through such outreach activities, we hope to inspire and urge everyone to embrace UD in the way we live, work and play. Together, we will be able to achieve our vision for an inclusive Singapore.

11. Before I conclude, I would like to thank our partners in making this exhibition a success. They are Everbright, HiiGa [*pronounced as “High-ga”*], Rigel [*pronounced as “Regal”*] and 3M. Their corporate sponsorship in this exhibition reflects their strong support for an inclusive and friendly built environment.

12. I would also like to thank our Guest-of-Honour, Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Minister of State for Defence and National Development, for gracing this occasion and giving a strong push for the InClUDed Movement in Singapore.

13. I wish everyone an enjoyable experience at the exhibition. Thank you.