

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY DR JOHN KEUNG, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY, AT THE BCA-REDAS BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY PROSPECTS SEMINAR 2017 ON FRIDAY 6 JANUARY 2017 10.00AM, AT ORCHARD HOTEL LEVEL 3 ORCHARD BALLROOM**

Mr Desmond Lee

Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development

Mr Lee Fook Sun

Chairman, Building and Construction Authority

Mr Chia Ngiang Hong

1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Real Estate Developers' Association of Singapore

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

**Introduction**

1. Good morning, and a happy new year to everyone!

Welcome to the BCA-REDAS Built Environment and Property Prospects Seminar. I'm sure all of you are eager to find out about this year's construction and property prospects.

2. But first, let me briefly provide a stocktake of our sector's achievements so far, and elaborate on what more we can do to sustain progress in our built environment sector.

### **Achievements in the built environment sector**

3. In the past few years, we have made good progress in future-proofing our built environment. This includes greening our buildings, improving the accessibility and user-friendliness of our environment and raising construction productivity to reduce our reliance on foreign manpower.

4. To date, there are close to 3,000 green buildings in Singapore, translating to one-third of Singapore's total built area. To help us achieve further breakthroughs in greening our buildings, we opened the BCA SkyLab last year. It is the world's first high-rise rotatable laboratory, with state-of-the-art facilities for the testing and development of innovative, energy-efficient building technologies.

5. Besides green buildings, almost all of our public sector buildings and close to 60% of our private sector commercial and institutional buildings are equipped with at least basic accessibility features. This is an important step in developing Singapore into a City for all Ages and supporting our fast-ageing population. In fact, our Accessibility Master Plan was recently lauded by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs as a best practice in accessible and inclusive urban development in its 2016 Report.

6. We have also seen encouraging results in our productivity drive. Annual site productivity improved from 0.3% in 2010 to 2% in 2015. Taking into account the preliminary estimate for 2016 at about 2%, we have made a cumulative improvement of close to 10% in site productivity improvement between 2010 and 2016. However, we need to do more to meet our target of a cumulative 20-30% productivity improvement by 2020.

7. With all these significant achievements, our work has also started to attract some attention internationally. For instance, industry associations and firms overseas such as the New Zealand Institute of Building have expressed interest in learning about Singapore's efforts to boost construction productivity, particularly in our push for Design for Manufacturing and Assembly (DfMA) and the use of Building Information Modelling (BIM).

8. Our green building initiatives have also continued to gain recognition abroad. Last year, Mr Tai Lee Siang, Honorary Advisor on the board of the Singapore Green Building Council, was appointed as Chair of the World Green Building Council. Many of our local green building practitioners in the industry and in BCA have also been appointed as green building and sustainable development advisors to various associations and councils overseas. These affirmations and international recognition will stand the industry in good stead for business opportunities in the region.

## **Looking ahead: strengthening industry partnership**

9. Looking ahead, we believe firmly that a strong partnership with the industry and our public stakeholders is crucial in driving innovation, changing the way we build, building capabilities in the sector and meeting the future needs of our society.

10. For instance, collaboration among the private, public and people sectors will be increasingly important in pushing our green building agenda. We will continue to actively engage building tenants to drive a behavioural shift in their energy consumption and spur building owners to improve energy efficiency by making building energy performance data publicly available. We have also paved the way for more self-initiated outreach programmes by schools in greening their buildings through partnerships with the Singapore Green Building Council and other corporate organisations.

11. At the same time, the BCA SkyLab will enable the industry to work hand-in-hand with researchers in developing and testing new green building solutions in an integrated manner at different building orientations reflecting real world conditions. The green building technologies, once successfully test-bedded and adopted by the industry, will bring us closer to achieving our long term aspiration of having positive energy low-rise buildings, zero energy medium-rise buildings and super-low energy high-rise buildings in Singapore.

## **Conclusion**

12. In conclusion, we must work closely together and press on with our efforts to create a sustainable environment and an inclusive society, while staying relevant in a changing economy.

13. Finally, I would like to thank REDAS for continuing to co-organise this annual seminar with us. I wish everyone a successful and meaningful year ahead! Thank you.