

SPEECH BY MR LEE YI SHYAN, MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND MANPOWER, AT THE OPENING OF LI-NING'S FLAGSHIP STORE, 21 JULY 2009

Mr Zhang Zhi Yong, CEO, Li-Ning Company Limited

Ladies and gentlemen

Introduction

1. Good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to be here today to officiate at the opening of Li-Ning's badminton flagship store. We are honoured that Li-Ning has made a presence in Singapore. It recently set up its Southeast Asia regional office here, to carry out its global branding and marketing activities.

Singapore – a springboard for Chinese companies

2. Singapore is indeed a good base for Chinese companies looking to expand globally. Over the last five years plus, the number of Chinese companies in Singapore has increased by more than two folds, from 1,300 to 3,000 in March 2009.
3. Recently, Chinese companies have leveraged on Singapore to further their global expansion plans. For instance, Focus Media established their global headquarters and Mark Fairwhale opened its flagship store here.

Offering a strong value proposition for Chinese sports companies

4. The value of the sports industry in Singapore crossed the one billion dollar mark in 2007. We are on track to reach our target of \$2 billion GDP contribution by 2015. The Singapore government's commitment to grow Singapore's sports industry is anchored by the strategic partnership between the Economic Development Board and Singapore Sports Council.
5. We adopt a holistic approach to develop the sports industry. We encourage companies to host major sporting events here, such as the Formula 1, Aviva Open and the Asian Youth Games to complement marketing initiatives. In addition, we offer them locational and unparalleled access to the growing market for sports and lifestyle products and services in the region. We are happy that Li-Ning has chosen Singapore for the same reasons. Li-Ning's

confidence in Singapore as base for its first foreign venture is truly a testament to our strength as a platform for internationalisation.

Opportunities available in the retail and services industries

6. We are now standing in the newest shopping mall in Singapore. It houses exclusive boutiques of world renowned brands and fine F&B establishments. ION Orchard will be a magnet for both local and overseas consumers. Together with other new shopping malls such as Tampines One, Iluma and Orchard Central, it will add approximately 350,000 square metres to the Singapore retail scene.

7. With the transformation of the retail landscape and creation of new retail formats, we anticipate a host of exciting job opportunities in the retail and services industries. For example, tenants of ION Orchard alone will offer 3,000 new jobs ranging from shop assistant, customer service, to managerial positions. An additional 3,000 new jobs in the retail industry are expected to be created between 2010 and 2011.

8. At the Government level, Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) and Employability Institute (e2i) have committed to provide a range of capability schemes in the retail and services industries. They are targeted to help both existing workers upgrade their skills and new entrants learn necessary skills for a successful career switch. Both of the agencies are strategic partners of ION Orchard and will help to recruit, prepare and tailor training for jobseekers.

Li-Ning and Singapore's Commitment to Sports Development

9. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Li-Ning for their sponsorship of the Singapore Badminton Association's players and tournaments for 2009. We welcome Li Ning's vision to play a larger role in sponsoring local sports development. Your participation in and commitment to sports development would provide the kind of support necessary to bring out the best in our sportsmen and sportswomen. We can further boost mass participation in the game and strengthen our national athletes' training programmes in preparation for this year's SEA Games and other future major tournaments.

Conclusion

10. On this note, let me congratulate Li-Ning on the opening of its first badminton flagship store and Southeast Asia regional office in Singapore.

Thank you!