

**SPEECH BY MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MR MAH BOW TAN
AT THE CLOSING PLENARY AND DINNER OF THE WORLD CITIES SUMMIT
ON WED, 30 JUN 2010 AT 7.30PM AT THE PAN PACIFIC HOTEL**

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

We have just concluded a very insightful plenary session on our desired vision for future cities – cities that are built to last, cities that people really want to live, work and play in, cities that cater to changing demographics, cities that are vibrant and dynamic, and cities that engage their communities and give them a sense of pride, identity, and rootedness. We need more of such opportunities for cities to learn from one another, for experts to exchange ideas, and for government, industry and international organizations to find common solutions to the challenges of rapid urbanisation.

Strong Support for WCS 2010

2. Singapore can play a role in fostering such dialogue and partnerships. Indeed, I am very much encouraged by the strong support for this year's WCS. More than 1,000 distinguished leaders, thought leaders, senior officials and industry leaders from around the world attended the World Cities Summit, including about 50 ministers, mayors and governors.

3. The experiences shared at this Summit by cities like Bilbao, Delhi, Chongqing, Phoenix, Melbourne, Singapore and many others demonstrate that local action at the city-level, combined with dynamic leadership, can make a difference. Let me now summarise the main themes that surfaced in the course of discussions during the last few days.

Key Themes Discussed

4. These themes include:

- Strong Leadership and good governance
- Long-term visioning and planning for sustainability
- Active engagement and inclusiveness
- Resource mobilization [through Public-Private-Partnerships]

5. Leaders play a crucial role in building and transforming cities. We have seen how leaders such as Dr Inaki Azkuna (Mayor of Bilbao), Jamie Lerner (former mayor of Curitiba and former governor of Parana State, Brazil) and Sheila Dikshit (Chief Minister of Delhi, India) have made a difference to their cities. With political courage, they have pushed through urban reforms despite opposition and resource constraints.

6. Many participants highlighted the need to bridge the gulf between vision and implementation. To do so, we need to have an integrated approach involving all key stakeholders to ensure proper alignment of interests. We also need to find the money to make things happen. Hence, innovative solutions, from leveraging on international financing to PPP (Public-Private-Partnership) projects. We heard successful examples from Bahrain where the private sector has taken the lead to build infrastructure, Delhi's Bhagidari community involvement project, and Melbourne's successful leverage of private funding for building retrofits.

WCS Mayors' Forum and Ministerial Dialogue

7. I am happy to note that the inaugural WCS Mayors' Forum was a success. Many governors and mayors generously shared their unique experiences in overcoming formidable challenges to re-invent their cities to become eco-friendly and liveable.

Lagos transformed itself into Africa's Model Megacity under the visionary leadership of Governor Fashola, Frieberg's ambitious but commendable climate protection goal to reduce all CO₂-emissions by 40% by 2030, as well as Malmo's embrace of green technologies and practices.

8. This year, we also introduced a Ministerial Dialogue that brought together political leaders and urban thinkers from around the world to discuss the fundamental requirements for a liveable and vibrant city. Like the mayors, there was strong support for action at local levels, community engagement and the need to create public spaces in cities to support diversity.

9. There is strong support from city leaders for such conversations to continue at smaller gatherings. I support this. I suggest we establish a learning network for cities after WCS 2010, leading up to the next WCS 2012. I am happy to inform you that the World Bank, ADB and UN Habitat are supportive of this Learning Network.

Suggestions On Way Forward

10. Besides promoting a learning network, Singapore is also happy to serve as a living lab for companies to test-bed innovative solutions for a highly dense and compact urban environment. We welcome those interested to work with us to make these projects a success.

11. Singapore will continue to contribute to the global effort on sustainable development by sharing our experiences and those of others. We are developing a cluster of institutions in Singapore that can distil and document the experiences of cities around the world. With the World Bank, Singapore has established an Urban Knowledge Hub that will organize conferences such as the recent World Bank-Singapore Infrastructure Finance Summit. The Centre for Liveable Cities has developed an Executive Training Programme for city leaders and their officials. This training programme, which uses the case

studies approach, will be opened to foreign participation next year. Our Institutions of Higher Learning such as the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University have also embarked on programmes for mayors from around the world.

12. This year, we launched the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize and awarded the inaugural prize to Bilbao City Hall. Bilbao City Hall's success in radical urban transformation is a good case study that provides inspiration and motivation for other cities undergoing urban transformation.

Conclusion

13. We will document the discussions and proceedings of the Summit for sharing and circulation worldwide. But what is more important is to sustain this dialogue on cities. The Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) will take the lead in this effort with the support of government agencies and their industry partners.

14. As the WCS takes places every two years, in the interim years, the CLC will be working with our key strategic partners and interested cities to organize joint events to promote continuous learning, networking and international collaborations. The CLC will be continue to hold the WCS Mayors' Forum annually, and also invite world renowned mayors to speak at the CLC's World Mayors' Lecture Series.

15. At this point, I will like to thank our Speakers, Sponsors¹, Strategic Partners² and Supporting Organisations³ that helped make this conference a success. This Summit allowed establishment of deeper linkages and partnerships that will take discussions on liveability and sustainable development issues beyond this Summit. I hope to see many more cities, leaders and experts come forward to share with us, their knowledge and innovative urban solutions.

16. I would also like to invite all delegates to join us again at the 3rd World Cities Summit in 2012, to share with us more ideas and perspectives to foster liveable, vibrant and distinctive cities.

17. To our overseas guests, I wish you a safe journey home. Thank you.

1. *Sponsors – Far East Organisation, Siemens, Veolia, IBM, KPMG, Royal Philips Electronics, Cycle & Carriage, Fujitsu*

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