



**SPEECH BY MRS YU-FOO YEE SHOON, MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND SPORTS, AT PRE-EVENT PRESS CONFERENCE FOR THE 14TH APEC WOMEN LEADERS NETWORK (WLN) MEETING, 15 JULY 2009, 10:30 AM AT MCYS COMMUNITY HALL**

2009 is a special year for us as a nation. Singapore is the proud host of the APEC Meetings and the 14th APEC Women Leaders Network (WLN) Meeting will be held on 4 and 5 August.

2 Women play important roles in business and economic development. Over the years and in many parts of the world, women have become successful entrepreneurs, professionals and captains of industry. Many have taken on leadership positions in society, in government and in international organisations. The WLN Meeting is a premier platform for such women leaders in the APEC region to network and share with each other their insights and experiences in the various sectors of their respective economy.

3 Since the first meeting held in Manila in 1996, the WLN meetings have also served as an effective platform for APEC women leaders to discuss issues of concern to them and to their participation in the local and global economy. WLN's recommendations are presented to the main APEC Ministerial Meetings for consideration and incorporation into their agenda.

4 The theme for this year's meeting is '*Women and Sustainable Development in APEC*'. This is in line with APEC 2009's theme of sustaining growth and connecting the region.

5 Beside WLN, Singapore will also be hosting the APEC Digital Economy Forum for Women (DEW) on 3 August. This year's theme, "*Sustaining the Successful Leadership Role of Women in ICTs*" reflects the importance of developing the ICT capability of women leaders to increase and enhance their role and participation in this area.

6 In terms of deliverables, I hope this year's Meeting will make recommendations in the following five areas:

a) For Sustainable Development - to recommend ways to integrate gender into sustainable policies within APEC.

b) For Women in Business - to recommend how APEC reforms for improving business environments can benefit women.

c) For Women in Knowledge Economy - to recommend ways to integrate gender into APEC Info-Communications Technology capacity-building projects.

d) For Women in Tripartism and Social Enterprise - to recommend best practices in tripartite and social enterprise models as holistic methods to address gender within APEC.

e) For Work-life Harmony - to recognise and promote the implementation of work-life models to support women in fulfilling their multiple roles.

7 MCYS is proud to be given this honour to organize the 14<sup>th</sup> APEC WLN Meeting after Peru. And we share this honour with many of our own women leaders whom I have invited to help organize the two meetings.

8 I have appointed Ms Chua Sock Koong to Chair the 14th APEC WLN Meeting and the Organising Committee. Sock Koong is the Group Chief Executive Officer of Singtel and in the last few months, she has been leading the committee to organize various aspects of the event, including managing the arrivals of VIPs, the meeting programme, the speakers, moderators, and even ensuring that the delegates will have great dining experiences at the various places including the zoo.