

SPEECH BY MR NG JIA WEI,
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AT SPH FOUNDATION - SOLAR INNOVATIONS 2006

A very Good Afternoon to our Guest of Honour, Mr Heng Chee How, Minister of State for Health, Mr Joseph Conceicao, Director, Singapore Press Holdings Foundation, Distinguished Guests, Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to extend a very warm welcome to you to the Singapore Press Holdings Foundation Solar Innovations 2006 prize presentation ceremony and exhibition.

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of you today for taking precious time out to grace this event, which includes the first of its kind varsity collaboration between SMU Verts and Earthlink NTU – the Envirofest 2006.

2006 will be the fifth year running of the Solar Innovations Series which started right back in the year 2000 and is proudly initiated and organised by Earthlink NTU, an environmental club in the Nanyang Technological University. We are delighted to share that the series of competition has progressively gained recognition from the respective Ministries over the years and increasing trends in terms of participation rates.

Industrialisation and technological advancement in the last century has seen a significant increase in environmental problems all around the world. Just to name a few, there have been longer periods of droughts, global warming has reached an alarming level, natural resources have been depreciating at an incomprehensible rate.

In view of these global issues surrounding us, much has been said about “Sustainable Development”. As the theme of Envirofest 2006 suggests, “Towards a Sustainable Singapore” yet how many of us truly understand this? The guiding principle of sustainable development is actually defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Many governments around the world are prioritising on sustainable development and being a small nation, Singapore has all its reasons to be self-sustainable.

Ladies and Gentlemen, do spend a few moments to reflect as I do believe it is high time for all of us to be more proactive towards this issue for the sake of our future generations.

Today is the Exhibition Day of Solar Innovations 2006. As presented from its name itself, the competition prompts participants to consider the environmental concerns facing the world today, and to think of sustainable solutions to these

problems. In the process, we aim to inculcate a culture of environmentalism in the participants, a change in mindset, as they become more aware of the needs of our environment while at the same time realise that even as individuals, they can make a difference. As Mother Theresa once said, "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop." A lot of people have the mentality that one little effort will not cause a significant difference. However, I hope they'll realise in due time that if every one of us puts in that little bit of effort, they will be accumulated to a significant amount.

Today, we also celebrate a great collaboration with the Singapore Press Holdings Foundation. As part of our efforts to reach out to the community, we have always been fortunate to have been able to forge and nurture sustainable partnerships with like-minded organisations who share our vision.

On this note, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the SPH Foundation for their generosity and support for Earthlink NTU's environmental and outreach programmes.

Last but not least, on behalf of Earthlink NTU, allow me to take this wonderful opportunity to show my sincere appreciation towards all our Honorary Sponsors, Partners and Participating Organisations; without their support, today's event would not have been possible. I would also like to thank our Guest of Honour, Mr Heng Chee How, for taking time off his busy schedule to be with us on this beautiful Sunday afternoon.

Thank you very much.