

MEDIA RELEASE

**SPEECH BY MR TEE TUA BA, CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE RED CROSS
AT SINGAPORE RED CROSS AWARDS 2016 CEREMONY
AT RED CROSS HOME FOR THE DISABLED ON 25 JULY 2017**

His Excellency, President Tony Tan Keng Yam

Esteemed Award Recipients

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon. Thank you for joining us at the 5th Singapore Red Cross Awards Ceremony.

I wish to thank President Tony Tan, Patron of the Singapore Red Cross, for taking time to join us today. Without fail, President has joined us at every Awards Ceremony and key events like the International Bazaar and Gala Dinner we have organised since he took office six years ago. We are very grateful for your support and encouragement all these years. Thank you, Mr President.

Today, 26 dedicated individuals and eight corporate partners will receive Awards. We congratulate all of you, and we celebrate your spirit of philanthropy and volunteerism. Collectively, you have supported a broad range of community causes championed by the Singapore Red Cross locally and beyond our shores. These include the national blood programme, community first aid, food aid, transport aid, elder aid, home and day activity for persons with disability, and disaster response.

From programme-involvement to skills-based volunteerism; from strategic partnerships to in-kind contributions; from mentorship to advocacy and fundraising, our Award Recipients

represent the most outstanding and committed volunteers and partners in our midst. Our volunteers, like all of you, are the pillars of the Singapore Red Cross.

Braddell Heights Zone D Residents Committee, for instance, has been organising three blood drives every year, since 1980s. That's close to four decades of life-saving partnership with the National Blood Programme, which the SRC runs jointly with HSA. Our Council Member Dr Chan Soon Keng founded the Red Cross Youth-NTU Chapter in 1994, and served as its advisor for two decades. She catalysed the youth movement at NTU, and today, the Chapter has some 300 members dedicated to humanitarian causes and action! For more than a decade, devotees of Beeh Low See Buddhist Temple have provided monthly haircuts for the residents of the Disabled Home. They have gone the extra mile to sew gloves and restrainers to protect our residents, to ensure they do not accidentally hurt themselves. That says a lot about their love for our beneficiaries.

Diversity and Inclusion

The diversity of our volunteer corps and corporate partners attests to our inclusive culture, and is a reflection of the multi-faceted services we deliver to people-in-need every minute, every day and every month. I am proud to serve alongside 11,000 Singapore Red Cross volunteers to uplift lives and strengthen resilience in Singapore and abroad.

The Singapore Red Cross has served vulnerable communities for the past 68 years. Our success lies in a high-commitment volunteer culture. Passionate volunteers are our lifeblood, and they serve the full breadth of our Society. They serve on our Council, on various oversight, operational and advisory bodies, and they lead key programmes, events and project teams. They help us to raise funds, they serve alongside employees as “auxiliary staff”, and they initiate community projects. They deliver aid, they spend weekends giving first aid and befriending vulnerable persons, and they train communities to be more prepared for emergencies. Simply put, we cannot do without our volunteers, and volunteerism is strongly embedded in our culture.

Skills-based Volunteering & CSR

Skills-based volunteering is increasingly prevalent in Singapore. Correspondingly the number of volunteers who contribute specialised skills has doubled from two years ago. Many more people are volunteering their professional skills and personal passions - like Teo Wei Keong who volunteers as event photographer and Cassandra Rudge and Daphne Lim, who volunteer as masters of ceremony.

This trend is in line with more organisations partnering the SRC in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts that are aligned with their business interests. This year, a record eight organisations will receive the 'Friend of SRC' award. In addition, a record six youth leaders will receive the SRC President's Youth Award. They were selected from over 800 Red Cross Youth cadets and mentors based on wide-ranging criteria that include leadership qualities, global perspectives, excellence in academics and service to RCY. Prathivmohan, Abdul Hadi, Celest, Sherlyn, Sarah and Priyanka - well done, and we hope you will continue to serve humanity and do us proud!

In closing, I wish to say to all our volunteers and supporters, that we appreciate you for your tireless contribution of time, talent and resources to advance our shared humanitarian mission. The impact on the lives of the people we serve is immense and manifold. Each one of you have given much of yourselves and we hope you will go the extra mile to inspire your friends, family and colleagues to join us in serving humanity and saving lives. We have an abundance of volunteering opportunities, and I am certain the exhibition at the back of this hall will give you more great ideas of how to get your networks involved.

Thank you.