



**SPEECH BY MR GOH YONG SIANG, BOARD DIRECTOR, TEMASEK FOUNDATION AT THE OPENING OF THE “2015 ASIAN COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP FORUM” ON 27 JULY 2015 IN BANGKOK, THAILAND**

Dr. Somsak Chunharas, Deputy Minister for Public Health, Thailand,

Dr. Suriya Khongkathep, Inspector General of Health, Ministry of Public Health Thailand,

Dr. Panpimol Wipulakorn, Deputy Director General, Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand,

Mr. Lee Chong Hock, Deputy Chief of Mission and Minister-Counsellor, Singapore Embassy in Thailand,

Associate Professor Chua Hong Choon, Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Mental Health, Singapore,

Dr Taweessin Visanuyothin and Dr Lee Cheng, Co-Chairpersons of the 2015 Asian Community Mental Health Leadership Forum,

Leaders and representatives from our partner organisations:

- Galya Rajanagarindra Institute of Thailand,
- Rumah Sakit Dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo of Indonesia, and
- West China Hospital from Sichuan, China,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to all of you.

It is an honour to join all of you this morning at the opening of the 2015 Asian Community Mental Health Leadership Forum. Temasek Foundation is pleased to be the lead sponsor of the Forum, and I am glad to see our key partners and so many other distinguished speakers participating this year.

2 Asia is home to about 4.5 billion people<sup>1</sup>. As the world's biggest continent, it is also a region vulnerable to natural disasters. Sadly, we hear more news these days of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons, floods, and droughts, occurring not just with increased frequency, but also with greater intensity.

3 Because we have no control of nature's forces, we must be prepared. We must learn from lessons from the past, plan for the future, and better prepare ourselves to respond to disasters.

4 Over the past three and a half years, the Institute of Mental Health in Singapore has been leading a training initiative together with regional mental health experts in China, Indonesia, and Thailand. Some 240 participants and more than 600 of their peers from Galya Rajanagarindra Institute, Rumah Sakit Dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo, and West China Hospital, have since benefited from the exchange of experience, knowledge, and ideas to build the mental well-being and resilience of their communities, in the event of a disaster. All these three organisations are well-respected in their areas of expertise in mental health training, and play a leadership role in supporting other hospitals and crisis centres in their communities.

5 While there are many common elements in their responses, each institution has also customised the training that are unique to the needs of their respective communities. These past three years have indeed been very fruitful, with many publications and videos produced to capture institutional knowledge that can be shared. In the long run, these will be useful to many countries and communities.

6 Today's forum is a culmination of the past few years of training. Over the next three days, I am confident that the rich exchange of knowledge will continue among so many distinguished speakers and experts. It is precisely this spirit of cross-learning and sharing that Temasek Foundation hopes to inspire through our programmes.

7 In May 2007, Temasek, a Singapore investment company, set up Temasek Foundation to support the human and social development of communities in Asia. Since then, the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia#Geography\\_and\\_climate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia#Geography_and_climate)

foundation has committed about **113 million US dollars**<sup>2</sup> towards **281 programmes** across Asia. These cover programmes in health care, education, urban management, public administration, disaster-response capability, and programmes that promote positive networks of cooperation. All these programmes embody the idea of sharing and learning together as neighbours and friends in Asia. We believe that an Asia that grows together will be a more connected and prosperous Asia.

8 To conclude, I would like to extend my appreciation to:

- the Thai Ministry of Health for your support towards this programme;
- the Galya Rajanagarindra Institute for kindly hosting the forum – thank you for your warm hospitality;
- the Institute of Mental Health, Singapore for co-organising this forum, and for bringing together the delegates together again to share and learn from one another; and
- our partners, Rumah Sakit Dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo, and West China Hospital for your hard work throughout the programme.

I wish all the delegates here a meaningful learning experience over the next few days. Take the opportunity to network and make friends, and hopefully, stay in touch and work together on other initiatives beyond the forum to better serve the needs of the community.

9 Thank you.

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<sup>2</sup> Total TF Funding to date – S\$155.7 million. Based on 1SGD = 0.73USD (20 July 2015)