SINGAPORE’S COUNTRY STATEMENT ON DAY 1 AGENDA 2

Review or progress and challenges in accelerating the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific

Thank you Chair.

2 Singapore has one of the highest life expectancies in the world.

3 An ageing population can pose challenges to the healthcare system which has to face the impact of rising disease burden and frailty that comes with old age. While this is partly due to an older population, much of it is also due to unhealthy lifestyles and habits. Longevity should not simply be translated into longer years of disability. Instead, it should be seen as an opportunity and gift to be celebrated. If we can translate longevity into longer years of health, continued learning, active engagement and contribution to the society, then we can “turn silver into gold”.

4 That is why in 2015, Singapore launched the Action Plan for Successful Ageing – to focus our population on maximising the opportunities from longevity. The Action Plan is our national blueprint for Singaporeans to age gracefully and confidently. It is a multi-sectoral effort to implement initiatives across domains such as health, social welfare, employment, and infrastructure, supported by technology and innovation.

5 Since its launch, we have made significant progress in many areas. For example, we have provided seniors with opportunities to learn and volunteer so
they can contribute to society regardless of age. We raised the re-employment age so that our seniors can continue working if they wish. We also rolled out the National Seniors’ Health Programme to empower seniors to take charge of their health in areas such as nutrition and exercise.

6. Notwithstanding, our plans must continue to evolve to meet the needs and aspirations of current and future generations of seniors. This year, we will be refreshing the Action Plan to enhance Care, Contribution, and Connectedness (collectively called the 3 ‘C’s) for our current and future seniors, through a whole-of-society effort.

7. First, we are shaping our community-based support systems to care for our seniors. By adopting a life course approach and focusing on preventive health, we promote healthy ageing through national programmes across different life stages and settings. We are also weaving together social and health services in local communities around our seniors to proactively care for their needs and pre-empt social isolation and decline. Additionally, the Caregiver Support Action Plan launched in 2019, support caregivers of seniors, in areas such as caregiving respite services, workplace support, care navigation, financial support, and caregiver empowerment & training.

8. Second, we are supporting our seniors to contribute their knowledge and experience to society as they wish. This includes facilitating employers to adopt age-friendly work practices and expanding opportunities available for senior volunteerism.

9. Third, we need to enable seniors to age-in-place and build strong social connections. In this respect, we have launched the Community Care
Apartments, which is an assisted living model that provides seniors with more housing options for independent living, with care available if needed and spaces to foster interaction. To enable our seniors to stay connected to their loved ones as well as the broader community, we are also enhancing the digital readiness of seniors through improving access, literacy, and participation.

10 As part of our efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Singapore is committed to promoting a good quality of life for our seniors and we look forward to learning from everyone in this meeting.

11 Thank you.

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