

ANNEX C- Welcoming Address by Commissioner, SCDF

**WELCOMING ADDRESS BY COMMISSIONER JAMES TAN,
COMMISSIONER SCDF AT THE 4TH ASIAN CRISIS MANAGEMENT
CONFERENCE AT ORCHARD HOTEL ON THURSDAY, 12 OCT 2006 AT
0900 HRS**

Senior Minister of State for Law and Home Affairs,
Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee,
Counselor to the Governor of Tokyo,
Mr Toshiyuki Shikata,
Distinguished delegates from member cities,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Good morning.

Preamble

It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest welcome and appreciation to everyone for being here today. In particular, I wish to thank our Minister for kindly gracing this occasion, and for delivering his keynote address to us later.

Asian Network of Major Cities in the 21st Century (ANMC21)

2. In Feb 2002, the Singapore Civil Defence Force became Singapore's Contact Point to facilitate the exchange of information on crisis management in the Asian Network of Major Cities in the 21st Century (ANMC21). At the 2nd Plenary Meeting of the ANMC21 held in Delhi in Nov 2003, Singapore agreed to participate in a project proposal by Tokyo entitled "Network for Crisis Management" which was accepted for implementation. This was the humble beginnings of Singapore's involvement in this joint project.

Joint Project on Network for Crisis Management

3. Since then, Singapore has been actively contributing to the joint project through the exchange of information via the hotlines and surveys and taking part in all the previous annual conferences held in Tokyo in 2003, in Taipei the following year

and in Seoul last year. It was in the last conference in Seoul that I had presented Singapore's proposal to host the 4th Asian Crisis Management Conference in 2006.

4. Today, we are very heartened by the good response from member cities of Bangkok, Hanoi, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, Taipei, Tokyo and Yangon in attending the 4th Asian Crisis Management Conference.

5. Ladies and gentlemen, the Singapore Civil Defence Force is the national fire and rescue authority responsible for the handling and management of major civil emergencies in Singapore. During such emergencies, we work very closely with our Joint Planning Staff (JPS) to manage and mitigate the disaster. The JPS comprises members of the other local authorities responsible for defence, security, transportation, utilities, community, environment and so on. I am pleased to welcome some of them who are here with us in this conference.

Collaboration In Crisis Management

6. Today all of us are operating in a different threat frontier. Apart from fire-fighting and rescue emergencies, many of us also need to take additional roles to counter the scourge of terrorism. In the midst of today's new threat environment and rapidly changing world, it is imperative for crisis managers like us to constantly keep abreast of the latest development and be flexible and nimble to respond to changes around us. One effective means of attaining this is for us to learn from one another.

7. In terms of mutual learning, I believe we have much to offer to each other. The fire and emergency rescue services and crisis managers in Asia have varied and rich experiences. We operate in a tropical climate and within diverse human environments ranging from densely built-up urban areas to rural and mountainous terrains. Our diverse expertise and experiences mean that there is always a fire and emergency service or crisis manager in Asia who has the know-how and experience to share. And the Asian Crisis Management Conference is an ideal platform for this very purpose.

8. I am sure the networking established over the next few days and the rich exchange of ideas and information amongst the emergency authorities and crisis

managers of member cities will go a long way in strengthening our collective capacity and resilience to meet the new global challenges.

Conclusion

9. Ladies and gentlemen, on this note let me once again express my appreciation and honour in having you in Singapore and I sincerely hope that your active participation in the 2-days conference will be a fruitful one for all of us. Thank you.