

**Sharing by Mr David Rutherford, Managing Director, Special Olympics Asia Pacific  
At the Official Opening of the Tanglin International Centre cum Networking Evening  
on 2 July 2010**

Special Olympics is pleased to represent our fellow tenants at the Tanglin International Centre. On behalf of all of us who are or will benefit from the vision and investment of the Singapore Government in this centre I would like to thank the Minister, the Ministry and the EDB for having the vision to conceive this centre and for making the investment in it.

Singapore is an ideal regional base for organisations like ours. The assistance we receive from the EDB and the Singapore Government assists in relocating operations to Singapore. We are very grateful for all the assistance we have received from the Government and particularly from Jonathan Kua and his team at the EDB. However it is important to acknowledge that such assistance is the icing on an already excellent cake. Singapore stands in its own right as a great base for work in Asia.

Singapore is a great place to be based. Its location and amazing airport at Changi makes getting around Asia easy. Its multicultural society keeps one grounded with the many nations and cultures of Asia. Singapore's food options reflect this – you can even find Australian eating places amongst the myriad of choice. The IT infrastructure and transit systems keep the costs of doing business down and enable rapid responses to regional needs. Many of the corporates we work with have regional offices or staff based in Singapore. If you have family Singapore is a great place for everyone to live.

But there is more. I believe that some of the best innovations in how companies, citizens, donor governments, national governments, private investors and NGO's will work together to make the world a better place will be developed here. Learning from the development of capital markets and business will be applied to investment in the not for profit sector. Return on investment will become return on involvement. The intelligence that has created one of the world's great small nations is turning its mind to the not for profit sector in

the region. I am certainly looking forward to working on finding innovative, new and collaborative ways to achieve our mission.

So what is the TIC allowing to happen? I will use Special Olympics as an example. Special Olympics exists to create what **Maria Shriver calls, the “we”**—to insure that even as we celebrate our diversity, we build our unity. We want to end the era of us versus them.

**Together we will be the “we” in the world.**

Look around. Everywhere you look, people are hungry to make the world a better place.

Every study says the same thing: we’re all looking for something bigger. We’re all looking for a way to make the world just a little bit better. If each one of us acts even in a small way to make the world a better place it will be.

At Special Olympics we use sport to transform people with intellectual disability into athletes, coaches, managers, leaders and Board Members. At the same time we transform those who watch, compete or work with the athletes. We do it locally one athlete, one

person at a time. In the last decade we have grown from virtually no presence in Asia to having 1.7 million athletes and over 20,000 events a year in Asia. We have over 3.4 million athletes and run over 40,000 events a year most at a community level. Asia will grow faster and bigger than any other part of the Special Olympics. Already China and India have pushed the USA to third in total athlete numbers. Indonesia will probably be the next nation to do that. By 2015 we expect there to be over 3 million athletes in Asia alone and over 25,000 events a year in Asia alone. Our base in Singapore will support that growth, train our leaders, raise money and resources and improve our current programs and develop new ones. The TIC will make all of that work much easier.

Once again on behalf of all my fellow tenants and the people we all serve in the region thank you to the Singapore Government for the foresight it has shown here.