

**STATEMENT BY THE  
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE  
TO BHUTAN, HE KAREN TAN, AT THE  
11<sup>TH</sup> BHUTAN ROUND TABLE MEETING, THIMPHU,  
1-2 SEPTEMBER 2011**

Honorable Chairman

Co-Chairman

Excellencies

Distinguished participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

1 At the outset, let me join the previous speakers in thanking the royal government of Bhutan for the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality. My thanks also go to the distinguished speakers over the last two days for their informative and comprehensive presentations.

2 I would like to congratulate Bhutan for making significant strides towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as reported in the 11<sup>th</sup> RTM document "*Turning Vision into Reality: The Development Challenges Confronting Bhutan*", and underscored by the briefings yesterday. I am pleased to note that Bhutan is on track to achieve many of the MDG targets as well as long term national goals as set out in "Vision 2020". We applaud Bhutan in its quest for a holistic outcome of development that places people and their happiness truly at the heart of development.

3 Singapore believes that it is important for countries to share their development experiences and best practices. In particular, we believe that human resource capacity-building through education and training is one of the best ways to achieve sustainable development.

4 In this regard, Singapore has participated in the Bhutan Round Table Meetings since the 7<sup>th</sup> round in 2000. We have worked closely with Bhutanese authorities to understand Bhutan's needs and we have offered customised technical assistance packages, scholarships and study visits to train Bhutanese officials under the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP).

5            Since 1992 when we started the SCP, 660 Bhutanese officials have benefited from SCP training programmes in various fields such as finance, public administration, governance, information and communications technology, environmental management, urban development, civil aviation, economic development, trade promotion, education and healthcare. In the last three years alone (since the last RTM in 2008), 184 Bhutanese officials have been trained in Singapore.

6            In January this year, we organised a customised training programme for a group of Bhutanese Foreign Service Officers. This is an example of the kind of tailored capacity-building programmes we can offer to equip officials with practical skills and knowledge which add value to their work. More recently, a colleague of mine, a former journalist, was in Thimphu to conduct media training at the Ministry of Information and Communication.

7            Going forward, we will be happy to work closely with our Bhutanese counterparts to see how we can ensure that our assistance continues to meet Bhutan's development needs.

.....