

**WELCOME REMARKS BY MR LIM HOCK SAN, CHAIRMAN,  
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING AT THE SINGAPORE  
PROBLEM GAMBLING CONFERENCE 2009, MONDAY, 17 AUGUST  
2009, 9.00AM, ORCHARD HOTEL**

Good morning

Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon, Minister of State for Community  
Development, Youth and Sports

Prof Wong Kim Eng, Clinical Director, National Addictions  
Management Service

Mr Lee Kim Siang, Chairman, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society

Distinguished Guests and Friends

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you to the second  
Singapore Problem Gambling Conference 2009, organised  
by the National Council on Problem Gambling, together with

the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS) under the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), as well as Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society. I would like to thank Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon for gracing this Conference as our Guest of Honour, and sharing her thoughts in the opening address. I would also like to thank our respected speakers and honorable guests from the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Macau, Myanmar, Laos and Thailand for taking the time to be with us.

2 We are here to gain a deeper understanding of how to address problem gambling, but with an emphasis on how to prevent such a problem from afflicting our youths. The MCYS Gambling Prevalence Surveys in 2005 and 2008 have shown that those that develop gambling problems as adults actually began gambling at a young age. Hence, there is a need to focus on youths – to learn more about what motivates them to gamble, and what are the prevention measures we can use to deter youth gambling.

3 Even as we build up deep expertise and broaden our perspectives in tackling problem gambling, we have to note

that there will be additional complexities associated with youth gambling. For one, apart from gambling at traditional “brick and mortar” outlets, today’s IT-savvy youth can also gamble online, via SMS, MMS, and so forth. The young are also more vulnerable to media and new media influences, including movies and media images that glamourise gambling, especially casino gambling.

4 The diversity of participants in this year’s conference is most heartening. Teachers, counsellors and educators are well-represented in this audience. Your presence and your co-operation is crucial to address this issue, as it would enable us to work in a more concerted and creative manner to prevent gambling addiction from becoming a problem afflicting our youth.

5 We also have with us at this Conference, representatives and speakers from the Singapore Pools, Singapore Turf Club, Marina Bay Sands and Resorts World Sentosa. My Council hopes the Conference will provide a platform for serious and open dialogue on responsible gambling with all of you.

6 At this point, I would like to commend my fellow Council Members for their dedication and commitment to addressing problem gambling issues in Singapore.

7 I hope that all of you will find the Conference and workshops insightful, and will come away with constructive and concrete ideas on what we each can do to better address problem gambling. We are certainly grateful to have you here with us, and we hope you have a meaningful and fruitful Conference.

Thank you.