**IMPLEMENTATION OF A/HRC/28/L.22 IN SINGAPORE -**

**INPUT FOR UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDY**

There are many drug producing and drug trafficking centres in our region. Singapore could be a natural front for drugs to come in on a large scale because we are a key transportation, logistics and financial hub in South-east Asia, situated close to the major drug-producing Golden Triangle area.

*Singapore’s Comprehensive and Holistic Approach to Tackling Drugs*

Singapore is one of the few countries in the world where the drug menace had been fought reasonably successfully. We adopt a comprehensive, holistic and zero tolerance approach to tackle the drugs issue. We operate on the basis that there are competing rights such as the right to life and health of the victims, the right to health and quality of life of the affected families, and the rights of the drug trafficker. These competing rights must be considered holistically. In particular, we recognise that drug abuse causes damage not just to the drug abuser, but also to the abuser’s family and to the wider community. We therefore work closely with our partners in the community, schools, and with parents to ensure that the drug problem is dealt with effectively and holistically.

First, we target and stop drugs from entering our country through tough laws against drug trafficking and effective enforcement. In Singapore’s experience, the death penalty for drug traffickers has been, and continues to be an effective deterrent as part of our framework of laws, coupled with effective enforcement based on the rule of law. This has kept our streets virtually drug- and crime-free.

Second, we work closely with parents, schools and community partners to educate citizens on the dangers of drugs to prevent demand. Singapore’s Preventive Drug Education initiatives reach out to youths, parents and schools through a range of platforms including Facebook, mobile applications, traditional media and social events to target and prevent drug abuse among our youth.

This is an important plank of our strategy. Younger abusers are of particular concern because they do not realise that they are entering into a dangerous cycle of abuse which can be extremely difficult to break away from. Many of them end up destroying their lives and hurting their family and friends because they underestimate the harm of drugs and the lengths that they would go to feed their craving for the next high.

Third, we provide structured rehabilitation and supervision tailored to the needs of different age and risk profiles, so as to prevent relapse. We also invest heavily in aftercare programmes, supported by the family and community, to help former drug abusers reintegrate into society. But ultimately, the abuser has to take personal responsibility, and have the motivation to change and stay clear of drugs.

As a result of this comprehensive and holistic approach, the drug situation and HIV infection rates arising from drug needle usage in Singapore remains under control.

But the international and regional drug situation remains challenging, with high production, trafficking and consumption of heroin and methamphetamine. International drug syndicates are also targeting Southeast Asia to manufacture, receive and distribute drugs to the region. This is a worrying trend, as it makes drugs more readily accessible, especially to vulnerable groups like our youth.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to tackling the problem of drug abuse, as each country has its unique set of challenges. Some countries have addressed the challenges posed by drug abuse through their specific strategies. However, the clear, comprehensive and holistic zero-tolerance way that we have tackled the drugs issue has worked well in Singapore, allowing Singaporeans to thrive in a safe and secure country.

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