

SPEECH BY PRESIDENT, HARVEST CARE CENTRE, REV. BERNARD FOO AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF ROMP 15 ON 15 AUGUST 2015, AT CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES BRANCH (MOE), EVANS ROAD

Minister of State Mr Sam Tan

Young sportsmen and sportswomen

Corporate sponsors, media friends, and all volunteers

1 Good afternoon and welcome to ROMP 15. It's good to see so many young faces here today. ROMP is a grassroots community event that aims to help youths realise their sporting aspirations and empower them to realise their goals. We just concluded our SEA Games two months ago and wasn't it wonderful to see our best athletes compete at the regional stage and bring so much pride and glory to Singapore? I am sure many of you here have also caught the spirit of the Games and been very inspired. Well, the beauty of ROMP is that anyone, even amateur sportsmen, can take part in this national-level competition.

2 Some people consider grassroots sports to be at a lower level, or call them 'amateur sports', but I beg to differ. I think that sport can be an incredible motivator and enabler. It can help young people develop life skills and can revitalise disadvantaged communities such as those with disabilities or come from at-risk families. This is why we want to drive the growth of youth sports programmes from the grassroots up.

3 In the last 30 years, governments around the world have been focusing on improving their youth sport policies, because they recognize that these initiatives can improve community health and community involvement. We're very grateful that our Singapore government believes in the power of sport to transform lives,

and partners grassroots organisations like ours in sports programmes that affect the lives of underprivileged and at-risk youths. We are also very encouraged by the supportive volunteers and kind corporate sponsorships. It's our great pleasure and honour to have with Mr Sam Tan from the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth with us today. Thank you sir for availing your time.

4 I have always been very concerned about the youths of this generation. I have a great desire to see the potential of our youths fully realized. And one way youths can expand their potential is by serving and giving back to community. We have about 200 volunteers here today helping to make the event possible. Thank you for your hard and selfless work. More than enabling youths to be more outward-looking, volunteerism also helps develop leadership and organizational skills. Actually, since our first ROMP in 2008, many of our participants have actually returned to join W.A.D! Club as volunteers. If you're willing, ROMP 15 need not be your last involvement with W.A.D! Club.

5 There are many opportunities to volunteer with W.A.D! Club. You can be a mentor, facilitator, part of event planning committees or as a ground volunteer. W.A.D! Club conducts sports clinics, facilitating sessions, leadership and team-building expeditions, local service learning trips, overseas service trips and large-scale events such as ROMP. You can even join us on the organizing committee of ROMP 16. Through your giving to meet the various needs of the community, I assure you that you will receive even more.

6 Without further ado now, I would now like to welcome Mr Sam Tan forward. Mr Tan, please.