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**OPENING ADDRESS BY MS JENNIE CHUA,
CHAIRMAN, COMMUNITY CHEST,
FOR FUND-RAISING LAUNCH FY2010
12 MAY 2010, WEDNESDAY, 11 AM
AT RAINBOW CENTRE, MARGARET DRIVE SCHOOL**

**RADM (RET) Kwek Siew Jin,
President, National Council of Social Service**

**Mrs June Tham,
Executive Director of Rainbow Centre**

Friends from the media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

2 2009 was a particularly difficult year for many families who were affected by the economic crisis. We have increased the number of Family Service Centres we support from 19 in 2008 to 36 last year. Through these centres, Community Chest is pleased to note that the funds we raised were able to help 140,000 service users.

3 On this note, I am pleased to share that Community Chest has successfully met our fund-raising target of \$52.6 million for FY2009 which has been channeled to support 157 social service programmes. This would not have been possible without the strong support from all our corporate and individual donors, and Foundations.

Fund-raising in FY2010

4 This year, Community Chest will need to raise \$55.2 million. The funds raised will go towards supporting 161 social service programmes that are managed by 72 Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs), serving more than 320,000 people in need.

Increased needs and new social service programmes

5 One of the key areas with a projected significant rise in needs comes from the programmes for children with special needs. This is due to more demand for the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) and Special (SPED) Schools, with a 21%

increase in enrolment for EIPIC and 10% increase in enrolment of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in SPED Schools.

6 The Rainbow Centre, which is supported by Community Chest, runs the EIPIC and the SPED programme. Both programmes are available here at the Margaret Drive School. Last year, Rainbow Centre's EIPIC programme helped give about 165 infants and young children who have either Down syndrome, developmental delay, Autism Spectrum Disorder, cerebral palsy or multiple disabilities, a headstart in their development. EIPIC allows the children to develop their gross and fine motor skills and also their cognitive, communication, and self – help skills.

7 Family services continue to be an integral component which we support. The FSCs projected that about 18,000 more service users will be helped this year as more families are coming forward to seek help for multiple interpersonal problems. Social service programmes need to be strengthened to help families with challenges such as

increasing divorce rates, changing family structures and an increasing ageing population. To assist these families, social service programmes need additional resources and support to step up intervention efforts to support these families holistically.

8 We have also identified nine new programmes for this year. These include the new Family Service Centre at Bedok, an employment support programme and the appointment of three new Centres of Specialisation. The three new Centres will further enhance the capabilities of VWOs through the sharing of knowledge and specialised expertise across the social service sector. Further details on the allocation of funds raised by Community Chest will be shared later.

The Community Chest Strategy for FY 2010

9 Community Chest's role in the social service sector has grown steadily throughout the years. When we first started, we had 22,000 beneficiaries to support. Today, we serve more than 300,000 beneficiaries. Over the years, more social service needs were

surfaced due to social, demographic and economic changes. Increased publicity and outreach efforts have also enhanced the accessibility to services. In recent years, more pre-schoolers were diagnosed with developmental issues and there were increased awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorder, enabling earlier diagnosis of children. To meet new needs, new social service programmes were supported and more people were served. For instance, SPED and EIPIC were supported to provide more specialised and developmental programmes for children with disabilities so that they can maximise their potential.

10 Our fund-raising target this year marks an increase of close to 50% compared to our fund-raising target of \$37.3 million 10 years ago. We will need to continue to leverage on the long-standing trust and partnership which we have built with our valued donors to raise the needed funds.

The story of Beatrice Kweh

11 We have with us today, a Community Chest beneficiary, Beatrice Kweh, and I would like to share with you the story of this

seven-year-old girl. Beatrice was born with Down syndrome and had problems with basic skills such as putting on socks and communicating her needs. Her mother, Ms Shirley Poh, the sole breadwinner, sought help from the MINDS Towner Gardens School.

12 Beatrice was enrolled in its special education programme in 2008 and since then, she has shown improvement in her social and motor skills and is able to put on her own socks and is also able to express her feelings through sign language. The school also gave Shirley home teaching kits, which has helped to reinforce the skills that Beatrice learnt in school.

Donors continue to inspire beneficiaries

13 Beatrice's story continues to remind us that there are many who depend heavily on social services for their well-being. Many depend on the professional service that they receive be it therapy, social work or customised teaching to allow them to be a bit more independent. Donors through their contribution inspire the beneficiaries to

persevere and learn new skills or change their behaviours even in the face of difficulties. Because our donors have responded generously to support our programmes, Beatrice and many others have a chance of a brighter future and to lead better lives.

14 Let me take this opportunity to express my grateful thanks to all our corporate and individual donors, and Foundations for being with us throughout the journey and for helping our beneficiaries fulfil their dreams.

15 Thank You.