

**REMARKS BY MR ZAINUDIN NORDIN, MAYOR OF CENTRAL SINGAPORE DISTRICT AND CHAIRMAN OF ONEPEOPLE.SG  
AT THE FINALE OF THE CAMPTTEEN: YOUTH RACIAL HARMONY  
AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME 2008 ON TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2008,  
11:30AM TO 1:30PM, AT ONEPEOPLE.SG, AUDITORIUM**

Thank you for your warm welcome. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all fellow Board Members of OnePeople.sg, the Self-Help Groups, partners at the National Youth Council and the sponsors who have made this CampTeen a reality.

When OnePeople.sg first started off way back in 1996, there were the Self-Help Groups – the organisations that help the communities in Singapore – Yayasan Mendaki, Chinese Development Assistance Council, Singapore Indian Development Association, Eurasian Association and also the Association for Muslim Professionals. The Self-Help Groups are doing good work to help uplift their community. But Singapore is a multi-racial and multi-religious society; we cannot work differently and separately. As much as possible, we should work together. Hence, the self-help groups came together, to set up the organisation which was then called the Joint Social Service Centre (JSSC).

After many years of development, we realised that the overarching principal behind the success and stability of Singapore is the fact we are living harmoniously together. Over the years, we have understood the importance of racial harmony. That is why racial harmony has become our key focus and we realise that for us to be able to do that, we need to have a proper brand – we are one and united. Hence, OnePeople.Sg came into print. It was launched by the Prime Minister just slightly more than a year ago.

One of the things that we do is to focus on our young people. OnePeople.sg now spearheads the CampTeen as a Racial Harmony Ambassadors programme. We hope that one day, you will become our ambassadors because the work of

promoting and strengthening our social cohesion in Singapore is not just about the leaders and the government; it is also about the people, like yourself.

You are the future of Singapore. We need you to carry on this good work and we need you to be able to talk to your fellow friends in your school, your friends in your neighbourhood where you live so that you can, at the same time, build this asset that we have for the future generation. This CampTeen provides an opportunity for you to go beyond your school celebrations. At the same time, we can foster a deeper understanding and appreciation. I notice that all of you are working well with each other. I can see the teamwork. You are working closely with each other, understanding each other, talking to each other in your language.

You will be the ones to carry the special message for us. The idea of having the poetry competition with the orphanage is wonderful, because the orphanage in Singapore have children from different races. You can involve them and to get them to mix on a common platform, to create and promote the creativity amongst our young people in poetry. Not just video shows, acting, singing and dancing but to try something different. We must always look for new and interesting ways to engage our young. Poetry is a good example. Those of you who are good with languages can also write poetry about what you have gone through in the past three days. You may write about your deep inner thoughts. Do not feel shy just because you are among friends. You might be able to pen something to be included as the materials we have developed over the years. We would like to hear about your experiences in trying out different arts, food, and culture. These things come from you.

If you are willing to go forward with the projects, OnePeople.sg will be able to support you with resources, venue and funding. If you have ideas like having the poetry competition and having the three-day event to promote and enhance all these efforts in racial harmony, I would encourage you to carry on.

Now, I also see that you have made many friends during the camp. These are important connections that should be strongly encouraged. Creating a bond between friends who are from different races and religions, making them your true

and close friends from now until you enter the workforce. Friends whom you can grow old with.

I still have friends Indian, Chinese, French who are my friends from my school days until now. They are close friends whom I can call on the phone, who I can invite during special occasions — my children's birthday celebration, the festive seasons such as Hari Raya and all that because they are my close friends. They are close to me in my heart but it doesn't matter what background they come from. It is about relationships, it's about the friendship that you will need to build. So it is important for you to have that mentality.

Singaporeans will be of different backgrounds and different races. Moving forward, you will increasingly see the different mix of Singaporeans who originated from Poland, Africa, America, Australia, France and many other countries. I have friends from different countries who are now Singaporeans. That doesn't mean they're not true-blue Singaporeans. They believe in our values and our principles. Basically, they believe in our value system which defines Singapore to be a good place to live in and they want to start their family here. And we welcome them and move beyond just the four main races that we are used to.

Moving forward at OnePeople.sg, we are hoping for you to be our ambassadors. We are optimistic that you will practise what you have learnt at this short three-day camp. We hope with all that you have learnt through your experiences with your newfound friends, you will be able to transfer these simple messages to your school and the community. Our challenge is how do we implement the ideas? If you really have a genuine intention to make this into reality, we will make it happen for you. Together, we want you to champion this. We will make sure your proposed programme, projects and initiatives will take shape. We will see it to fruition and we will help you to find the resources.

Thus your journey will continue from here. Even though this will be the last day of your camp, don't feel sad, keep in touch with each other, take photographs, put up all these things that you have created - photographs of your friends on your blog, put it on your FaceBook; tell the whole world what you have done in the last

three days. Pen down your views on all the things that you have learnt so that the idea will materialise. Showcase all the things you have done.

And think through new ideas. I want you, all the CampTeen Alumni and the past and the future CampTeen in 2009 to be the most visible presence at the Youth Olympic Games to show the world what Singapore is all about. Yes, all the CampTeen alumni must come together and show the world during the Youth Olympic Games what Singapore is all about.

We will keep in touch with you; we will contact you to see how we can engage you in our programmes. Thank you again for taking time to be with us. Let us thank all our sponsors, the NYC and ToteBoard. Give them a round of applause. Thank all your camp facilitators who have spent the past three days with you. So continue on this journey and thank you very much.