

NPTD's Addendum to the President's Address 2016

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (NATIONAL POPULATION AND TALENT DIVISION)

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Our goal is to ensure that Singapore remains a cohesive and resilient society with a sustainable population. We aim to make Singapore a great place for starting families and raising children, and where Singaporeans can have good jobs and enjoy a quality living environment.

Fair and Cohesive Society

Singapore is a multicultural society, where everyone who shares our ideals and is committed to Singapore has a place regardless of race, language or religion. To remain relevant we must continue to tap on a global blend of people and ideas to move Singapore ahead and in doing so, create more opportunities for Singaporeans. We will continue to welcome talent to augment our economic vitality while ensuring that Singaporeans get the necessary education and training to do well in the global economy. Singapore must be a place where everyone is treated fairly, and have equal opportunity to succeed based on merit and hard work, regardless of background. We will foster greater mutual understanding and appreciation between different people living in Singapore, through facilitating more social interactions and raising awareness of shared societal values and norms.

Great Place for Families

We will promote a pro-family environment where Singaporeans can fulfil their family and work aspirations. In the last two years, citizen marriages and births were among their highest levels in more than a decade. We will try to keep this up. We have strengthened support for marriage and parenthood, for example, through enhanced housing and childcare policies. Even as we improve these measures, we must recognise the need for broader societal support. As more mothers remain active in the workforce, there is room for fathers to play more active roles in bringing up children. Employers are also critical in ensuring good workplace support. We will partner peoplesector organisations which share our family focus to cultivate stronger social support for marriage and parenthood.

Singaporeans based overseas are part of our Singapore family. While we encourage Singaporeans to gain overseas experience, we will also engage them closely and facilitate their transition back home when they wish to return.

An Ageing Population, Slower Population Growth

Singapore has one of the most rapidly ageing populations in the world, with the number of seniors projected to double to 900,000 by 2030. While we encourage marriage and parenthood, we will need a carefully calibrated number of new citizens to keep our citizen population stable. We will

also need foreigners to complement our Singaporean workforce in areas where we are short. But we cannot grow our population indefinitely. We will strike a careful balance, so that Singaporeans do not feel crowded out, and we can meet the needs of our ageing citizen population and workforce. We have slowed the growth of our foreign workforce substantially, and as a result, our total population growth rate last year was the slowest in more than a decade.

Engagement and Consultation

Our population challenges are complex and multi-faceted. There are many needs to be fulfilled, and we will strive to strike the right balance. We will take an open and consultative approach in our population strategies to ensure that all views are heard. This is critical in achieving the balance we strive for. We will work hand-in-hand with Singaporeans to co-create our future together.