

Excerpt of Speech by Deputy Prime Minister, Teo Chee Hean, at Committee of Supply 2018

Strengthening our Institutions and Helping Our People Succeed

The PMO-Strategy Group is working closely with our agencies and other central agencies such as the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service Division to adopt a systems approach to planning and coordination. This includes areas such as scenario planning, budget, manpower, population, land, security, climate change and new opportunities in the Digital and Future Economy. We have formed the Smart Nation and Digital Government Group last May to accelerate our Smart Nation efforts.

Dr Fatimah Lateef and Mr Lee Yi Shyan cited demographic challenges, which stem from our low total fertility rate. Agencies have worked together to strengthen our support for marriage and parenthood in the key areas of housing, pre-school, and support in the workplace and the community. Minister Josephine Teo will give an update of our population priorities and strategies to ensure that we are well-prepared for the future later on during this Committee of Supply for PMO.

Climate change is also a whole-of-nation issue where all countries need to take action now to safeguard our collective future. Together with other countries, Singapore will do our part to reduce our emissions. To do so in a cost-effective manner, the carbon tax is a decisive move. Its merits were discussed extensively during the Budget debate. The transition period and support will also help our companies and consumers make the adjustments. Minister Masagos Zulkifli will provide more details in his speech on our implementation plans in the Committee of Supply for the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources.

Singapore needs to remain economically competitive, and be a smart, green and liveable city with opportunities for Singaporeans of all ages. As Mr Seah Kian Peng and Mr Lee Yi Shyan pointed out, technological progress and increasing digitisation are effecting rapid changes globally. Minister Vivian Balakrishnan will provide a progress update and outline new Smart Nation initiatives.

We will help our people and our companies make adjustments for the future, and continue to raise the capabilities of our public officers to deliver better public services. And this is what a Caring, Competent and Trusted Public Service has to do – and what many Members such as Dr Fatimah Lateef, Mr Seah Kian Peng, Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Mr Louis Ng, Mr Cedric Foo, Ms Chia Yong Yong and Dr Teo Ho Pin have suggested.

We will continue to strengthen our institutions to operate in a more integrated way. The recently passed Public Sector (Governance) Act strengthens our corporate governance and accountability.

For full speech, please go to: <https://www.psd.gov.sg/press-room/speeches/speech-by-deputy-prime-minister-teo-chee-hean--coordinating-minister-for-national-security-and-minister-in-charge-of-the-civil-service-at-committee-of-supply-2018>