

**SPEECH BY CE (NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL), MR DAVID CHUA  
AT THE 2022 WORLD YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FORUM - FOR A  
SHARED FUTURE: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
WITH YOUTH AND FOR YOUTH,  
ON 21 JULY 2022**

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**Introduction**

1 I would like to thank the All-China Youth Federation (ACYF) for inviting me to attend the World Youth Development Forum as a distinguished guest. Our strong bilateral relationship between the National Youth Council Singapore and ACYF has allowed for continuous interactions between youths on both side, such as through the recent virtual youth development webinar on building a digital future together. I am happy to know that ACYF has organised this forum to advocate for youth development and engage youths from all around the world.

2 The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted many countries and youths, with the rise of various complex challenges. At the same time, youths have shown their fortitude and tenacity to persevere and thrive despite the pandemic, while driving national and global movements towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**SDG 1: No Poverty**

3 Youths in Singapore have been extremely inspiring and driven in their efforts to support low-income and vulnerable families, such as siblings Zulayqha and Zulhaqem Zulkifli, who founded Project Hills at the onset of the pandemic. Project Hills is a ground-up initiative offering various forms of support to families living in public rental housing estates, with youths forming the majority of their volunteers. Over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, the siblings together with a growing pool of more than 100 volunteers partnered with various organisations to distribute hot

meals to the residents and provide cleaning services to families in need. With their passion for helping their communities, youths have been able to create new opportunities for social impact, even amidst difficult times.

### **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being**

4 Mental well-being has emerged as a growing concern among youth during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is heartening to see youths taking an interest and advocating for mental health and well-being, through organisations like Calm Collective Asia. Co-founded by Sabrina Ooi and Alyssa Reinoso in April 2020 as a community response to Singapore's circuit breaker period, they aim to normalise mental health conversations in Asia. It is encouraging that the growing focus on mental well-being has been met with a wave of support and action from youths.

### **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

5 With their technological expertise as digital natives, youths have also been crucial in developing the digital economy in Singapore. One example is Felix Tan, who founded Skilio as a digital alternative to traditional paper qualifications. Using the AI powered digital soft skills portfolio and skills-based hiring platform, youths are better able to track and showcase their development. Amidst the current digital revolution, youths have not only utilised technology to reimagine traditional business practices, but also enable their fellow peers to benefit from these changes.

### **SDG 13: Climate Action**

6 Singapore's green sector has bloomed significantly in recent years, driven by passionate youths with the desire to make a difference in climate action. An example of youth leadership is Cassandra Yip, who founded Earth School Singapore, our first non-profit school for environmental education in February 2021, amidst the height of the pandemic. She aims to create sustainable impact for environmental conservation by educating and inspiring youths and is currently working with 5 schools to roll out interactive environmental education programmes. Using social media, they have engaged over 900 people on various environmental issues.

7 These inspiring youths have a common key essence that I would like to highlight – youths have and are able to pursue their dreams and make a positive impact in their communities, even in the face of challenges brought about by the pandemic. Youths are significant and essential to the pursuit and achievement of growth and development in their communities. Therefore, I want to encourage the youths of today to be courageous and go forth. You can play a part in various aspects of this journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, because the world is your oyster, and we as the older generation of leaders will do our best to equip you with the resources and space to fulfil your dreams. I hope that you will use this forum to grow your networks and leverage these networks to make your impact to address the SDGs that you are passionate about.

8 Finally, I would like to thank the All-China Youth Federation for this opportunity to speak at this forum and wish them success for this event. We look forward to deepening our collaboration with ACYF.

9 I wish all of you an enriching forum.