

National Statement by Director/CPIB Mr Denis Tang at the 8th Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, 17 December 2019, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Good Morning President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Denis Tang, and I am the Director of the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, or CPIB in short. As the head of the Singapore delegation attending this 8th Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, I would first like to express our appreciation to our host, the United Arab Emirates, and the UNODC Secretariat, for your kind hospitality and tremendous efforts in successfully organising this important conference.

As Singapore's sole anti-corruption agency, the CPIB remains resolute and committed towards investigating and taking firm action against bribery offences across the public and private sectors in Singapore, as well as Singaporeans committing such acts overseas. With strong political will and an effective corruption control framework, the corruption situation in Singapore is firmly under control. However, we are mindful that we cannot be complacent to avoid the erosion of our zero tolerance approach against corruption.

Many countries today grapple with challenges of technological disruptions, economic challenges, and rapidly ageing population, and Singapore is no exception. Singapore recognises this and our Public Service has embarked on a Whole-of-Government Public Service Transformation to transform itself to adapt to these challenges. CPIB is part of this Public Service Transformation drive to be agile and to build know-how and capabilities in order to effectively respond to criminal modus operandi of greater sophistication and we have made good progress in terms of leveraging science and technology to prevent and combat corruption more comprehensively.

Over the past years, the CPIB has been embracing state-of-the-art technology and new methods of operation to transform the way we operate. We have created new departments and synergy to spearhead change and take a deeper dive into how science and technology can empower us in areas cutting across investigations, operations, research and prevention work. We have also developed partnerships with industry players and tertiary institutions to further develop capabilities relating to cutting-edge investigative support tools in areas such as credibility assessment, data analytics and artificial intelligence.

The CPIB also recognises that our people are central to this transformation effort, and it is imperative to broaden their mind-set to embrace digitalisation and innovative change; and upgrade them with new skill-sets needed for the future. To this end, we have reorganised our training arm to look into structured training for our officers, and to seek opportunities for our officers to learn from the best in areas such as corruption prevention and outreach, digital forensics, and forensic accounting. We are confident that these investments will reap dividends and act as a force multiplier in our efforts to prevent and proactively detect corruption offences.

Singapore is an international financial hub and given the transnational nature of corruption, we believe that international cooperation and partnerships are essential to tackle this scourge. I take this opportunity to reaffirm our strong commitment towards our collective global effort to fight corruption more effectively. Since 2017, the CPIB has seconded our officers to the International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre based in London, IACCC in short. We have supported the Centre's operations in providing intelligence development on requests received. Through intelligence products collectively put together from IACCC members and accelerated intelligence sharing, the IACCC can assist countries that have suffered grand corruption and bring the corruptors to justice. This is in line with the spirit of international cooperation espoused by the UNCAC.

The CPIB also places high importance in contributing towards training and capacity-building of fellow law enforcement practitioners, both in the Southeast Asian region and beyond. For instance, we conducted training workshops on the seizure of cryptocurrency and open source intelligence techniques earlier this year for anti-corruption agencies from Southeast Asian countries. Through the recently concluded Anti-Corruption Executive Programme developed and conducted by the CPIB, we also brought together 34 participants from 28 foreign and domestic agencies. The foreign participants come from agencies around the world such as the U.S. FBI, the U.K. SFO, Hong Kong's ICAC and Brunei's ACB, amongst others. This programme, which covered aspects such as emerging technologies in investigations, and intelligence operations scenario planning, was a useful avenue in facilitating cross-jurisdictional exchanges of ideas and experiences amongst participants.

Distinguished delegates, I will conclude by sharing the CPIB's anti-corruption vision for Singapore. This vision speaks of a vibrant and fair Singapore, where the ethos of meritocracy continues to flourish, and where there is social mobility and equity. CPIB hopes to work in a spirit of partnership with Singaporeans, to generate and implement policies under the Singapore Together Movement to build a society with more opportunities for all, and a more caring, gracious and cohesive community. To achieve this, we will push on in our transformation journey with zeal and dedication, and we welcome further exchanges and collaboration with the international community.

Thank you and we wish all States Parties a very fruitful Conference.