

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR DOUGLAS FOO, CHAIRMAN,
FRANCHISING & LICENSING ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) AT THE
OPENING CEREMONY OF FRANCHISING & LICENSING ASIA 2007, 20
SEPTEMBER 2007, SUNTEC SINGAPORE**

Mrs Lim Hwee Hua, Minister of State for Finance and Transport
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Mrs Lim Hwee Hua, for giving us the honour by gracing this special occasion. It is also heartening to see so many of you here, especially our friends who have flown thousands of miles to join us at this special occasion. A very warm welcome to everyone.

2. This is the second year we are bringing together investors and like-minded businesses and experts from across Asia and beyond to convene at this annual meet. This underlines the importance of franchising and licensing as key growth strategies for enterprises. Indeed, Franchising & Licensing Asia 2007, or FLAsia is a significant platform that will set the stage for everyone to network and source for business opportunities.

3. I am happy to announce that the 2007 FLAsia has registered an 11% increase in the number of participants, compared to last year. With over 200 participants from 21 countries all over the world, FLAsia showcases a wide range of franchises, licenses and business concepts, as well as a host of local and international brand names. We are pleased to host a total of five official group pavilions from Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the United States. We would also like to welcome our exhibitors from Korea, China, UK and Dubai who are joining us here for the first time.

4. The franchising industry has grown tremendously over the years, especially in Asia. There is vast potential in the large and relatively undeveloped franchise markets in the region, such as India, second tier city of China and Vietnam, just to name a few. FLA Singapore recently organized trade mission trips to Ho Chi Minh City, Chengdu and Xian. The delegates were impressed and excited over the huge opportunities present. In fact, deals worth more than US\$500,000 were sealed during the trips. I understand Dry Clean Express will be opening their first laundry shop by end of this year in Vietnam. My congratulations to Dry Clean Express.

5. Another initiative I would like to highlight is the FLA Award 2007. I would like to congratulate all the finalists for the award and welcome the international participants to Singapore. The winners will be announced tomorrow at the FLA Award Gala Dinner 2007.

6. The FLA (Singapore) is also taking a proactive role to develop core competencies in the fraternity. Together with Ngee Ann Polytechnic, we introduced a new Specialist Diploma in Franchising & Enterprise Management in October this year. An improvement over its predecessor, the new course features an online interactive program and a new section on Enterprise Management which would be most relevant in managing a franchise business. Response has been encouraging and details of the programme are available at the FLAsia booth.

7. While Franchising is a more familiar growth strategy widely adopted by businesses in Asia, Licensing is fast becoming a major growth sector as companies learn to capitalize on their Intellectual Property (IP).

8. Indeed, FLAsia2007 has become broader-based to encompass not just franchising, but also licensing, branding, patents, trademarks and other intellectual property rights. Looking beyond the consumer goods, business services, beauty and wellness, education, and food and beverage sectors, you will also capture interesting merchandising and entertainment/character licensing ideas at the show.

9. This licensing fraternity has been well supported by the increasing numbers of professional licensing agents in Singapore that specialize in brand licensing. This has provided the necessary foundation to attract many local and overseas companies to use Singapore as a base to seal licensing deals for the region.

10. Today, we will also witness the Signing of Franchise-related Agreements between 22 companies. These efforts attest to the value that this trade event brings to the growth of the fraternity.

11. The success of FLAsia could not have been achieved without the strong support from our partners and the government. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the support of Economic Development Board of Singapore, IE Singapore, Intellectual Property Office of Singapore, Singapore Tourism Board (STB), SPRING Singapore and the Media Development Authority Singapore (MDA).

12. A big thank you also goes to our event Organizer, Bizlink Premium Services as well as International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association (LIMA) and our sister franchise associations for supporting this event, and Global Brands Group for sponsoring the exhibition.

13. On this note, I wish all a rewarding time at Franchising & Licensing Asia 2007.

Thank you.