Mr Chairman,

1. The rise of globalization with the free-flow of goods and services and the availability of technology has led to new and complex security challenges. Dual-use technology and material with civil and military application have become increasingly accessible in the global market-place today. These items, if acquired, could be used to produce Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Till recently, our primary concern over WMD was focused on its possession by states. Now, we need to additionally consider the threat of non-state actors that seek to acquire, and possibly use, WMD. This increased complexity in the security environment has made it more urgent for multilateral cooperation to address such threats. While we need to equally promote disarmament and non-proliferation, we believe that gains on one front need not be seen as a loss for the other. These are mutually reinforcing concepts.

2. To deal with these new threats, Singapore takes seriously its obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1540, which calls on all UN member states to implement effective domestic controls against the trafficking of WMD-related items. Singapore also supports multilateral non-proliferation regimes like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. Universal adherence to these regimes is a goal to strive for. In practice, we believe that multilateral non-proliferation regimes are empty constructs if they are not accompanied by effective national implementation. National efforts by individual states are crucial for countering proliferation.

Mr Chairman,

3. Singapore is an aviation hub and port located along one of the world’s most important shipping lanes. As the busiest port in the world, Singapore attracts more
than 140,000 vessels and processes about 28 million containers (Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit) annually. We are also home to the top ten petrochemical industries in the world. Singapore does not wish to be used by would-be proliferators in their illicit activities. In this regard, we rely on robust export control systems and active counter-proliferation efforts. While there may be some commercial impact in terms of additional procedures, these measures enhance our physical security and therefore strengthen our long-term economic vitality. It also contributes to global non-proliferation. Allow me to elaborate on our efforts in three areas: first, export control systems; second, our participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative; and third, our contribution to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Export Control System

4 In January 2003, Singapore enacted a Strategic Goods (Control) Act to strengthen our control of the export, transhipment and transit of strategic goods and technology. The Strategic Goods (Control) Act works in conjunction with other national legislations that cover chemical weapons, biological agents and toxins, arms and explosive and radiation protection. Specifically, the Act provides legislation that covers brokering controls, controls on Intangible Transfers of Technology (ITT), and a “catch-all” provision that allows us to control items that are intended for WMD end-use but are not included on our list of controlled items. In January 2008, Singapore took a big step forward by expanding its strategic goods export control lists to include all items controlled by the four multilateral non-proliferation regimes, namely, the Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime. This will help ensure that Singapore continues to keep pace with international efforts to limit the proliferation of WMDs.

Proliferation Security Initiative

5 Singapore is also an active participant in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The PSI aims to deepen international cooperation to stop the movement of WMD and related items from flowing to state and non-state actors. PSI members are committed to the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles, which ensures that all actions taken under the PSI are consistent with relevant international law and national legislation. The PSI is not a stand-alone initiative. Instead, it complements international efforts like UN Security Council resolutions, existing treaties and control lists. Most recently, in September 2008, Singapore participated in a counter-proliferation maritime interdiction exercise hosted by New Zealand. Eight countries participated and shared expertise and experience in combating WMD proliferation. In addition, other PSI partners from the Asia-Pacific region and beyond were also invited as observers. We congratulate New Zealand for hosting a successful exercise.
Chemical Weapons Convention

6 As one of the foremost petrochemical hubs in the world, it is in Singapore’s interest to ensure that our industry conforms strictly to our obligations to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Apart from regularly facilitating routine inspections by OPCW inspectors to our facilities, Singapore’s National Authority has been working closely with the OPCW to enhance regional cooperation in efforts related to the implementation of the CWC. Singapore has also pledged assistance by being part of the declaration network and sharing with neighbouring countries our system of implementing the Convention. In March 2008, we updated our pledge of assistance to the OPCW under Article X by enabling our chemical verification laboratory, the Defence Science Organisation (DSO) National Laboratory, to provide technical assistance in support of the verification regime of the CWC. We have contributed specifications for data inclusion into the OPCW Central Analytical Database (OCAD) to facilitate comprehensive chemical weapons analysis, as well as training courses to assist in capacity building.

Mr Chairman,

7 In the final analysis, effective counter-proliferation can only succeed if all of us can work together. National implementation of measures in support of multilateral non-proliferation regimes remains critical. Likewise, national efforts cannot succeed without comprehensive implementation by and cooperation from other states.

Thank you.

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