MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

I extend a warm welcome to all participants of the 9th World Convention of the International Confederation of Principals. Singapore is happy to play host to colleagues and friends from over 1,000 schools in some 30 countries for this biennial meeting of the international educational fraternity, jointly organised by the Academy of Principals, Singapore, and the International Confederation of Principals.

Every country wants their young to be well-educated, because education is the best investment for our future. This can only be achieved through effective school leaders and committed teachers. One critical challenge is therefore to attract, develop and retain talented principals and teachers. The second critical challenge relates to the school environment, not only for students but also for the teachers.

As principals, you shape the direction, culture and ethos of your schools, creating a strong sense of belonging for both teachers and students. These are the softer, intangible factors. You also play the critical role of building the necessary support structures and systems within your school to enable teachers to focus on their professional duties and perform at their best. These are the tangibles. You need to make both work together seamlessly, so as to motivate and inspire in your teachers a sense of dedication to nurture young lives and to prepare them well for the future.

At this Convention, you will be exchanging views with fellow principals from around the World and hearing different perspectives from renowned thought leaders in education. You will have an exciting part to play in Charting the New Education Landscape. In these challenging economic times, it is even more important for you as educational leaders to re-affirm your sense of purpose and to walk the journey with colleagues and friends who share your mission. My fervent hope is that the different perspectives shared from educators around the World at this Conference will help us find answers and more effective solutions to educate our children well. The future of our communities depends on good leadership in schools.

I wish all participants an enriching Convention.

Dr Ng Eng Hen
Minister for Education and
Second Minister for Defence
Singapore