

**JOINT OPENING PLENARY OF
THE SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL WATER WEEK 2010
AND
THE SECOND WORLD CITIES SUMMIT**

29 JUNE 2010 AT SUNTEC CITY

**OPENING REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN
PROF TOMMY KOH**

As the Chairman of this Joint Opening Plenary of the Singapore International Water Week and the World Cities Summit 2010, I would like to welcome you and to thank you for your participation.

Cities and water have an intimate relationship. A city cannot survive without water. Historically, most cities were located at the mouth of rivers or on their banks. Many cities in the world are facing great difficulties in supplying their citizens with safe drinking water because of the tremendous increase in the populations of our cities, because of pollution and because of poor water policy and mis-management.

This Joint Opening Plenary is titled, "Sustainable Cities: Leadership and Governance". Strong leadership and good governance are essential to achieving sustainable development. Sustainability is, in essence, the optimisation of resources to meet today's needs without compromising the needs of the future. Our quest to build sustainable cities is made more difficult by two concurrent global crises: the crisis of global warming and climate change and the crisis of the accelerated and irretrieval loss of biological diversity. On the second crisis, I refer to the Third Global Biodiversity Outlook, co-authored by UNEP and the Secretariat of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, which was published in June this year.

All our cities face the challenge of liveability. Our ambition must be to make all our cities liveable. No city can be called liveable if it does not afford to all its residents, among other things, safe drinking water and modern sanitation. This is one of the linkages between the World Cities Summit and the International Water Week.

With 70% of the world's population expected to live in cities by 2050, the challenges of providing affordable housing, employment opportunities, safe and healthy cities, and building cohesive and inclusive societies will become more pressing in the years ahead. In this respect, I wish to refer to the UN-HABITAT's "State of the World Cities Report 2010/2011", "Bridging The Urban Divide", which is a flagship publication of the UN Human Settlement Programme.

This year's discussions will continue to focus on finding solutions – in the areas of governance, technology and financing.

Let me now introduce the first of our panellists.

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