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HOME'S NEW YEAR 2010 MESSAGE

3rd January 2010

As we begin 2010, we begin the New Year with promise of more good years to come. Before we ended last year, we were much encouraged to receive the renewal of our charity status for the next 3 years. This gives us reason to celebrate 2010 with optimism and confidence on the recognition of our positive contribution to the social service sector.

The recent news from statistics released from the Ministry of Manpower on the improving conditions in Singapore for our migrant workforce is indicative of the impact HOME and her partners in Singapore have made to change policies and practices for the better for migrant workers. Though there is still more to be done to enhance laws and enforcement, we are grateful for the collaborative efforts we made with state and non state actors.

HOME's contribution to global and regional forums on migration has also been recognised by our NGO partners - UNIFEM, MFA, ADWA and CARAM Asia. We were invited to be in the consultative process for GFMD and the ILO Domestic Workers' Convention 2010. HOME has taken a proactive and constructive role on a world agenda that would lead to the greater protection of the rights of migrant populations everywhere.

Most importantly, however, is the support base, HOME has built with migrant communities here. HOME has become a house brand for migrant workers who need our services. Those who come to us for assistance know us by word of mouth. Our work is recognised by that we serve and that is the bottom line of impact.

The events of 2009 have also alerted us to the need to review our constitution so that HOME's leadership would continue to live the spirit of service to migrants living and working in Singapore. Our amended constitution allows all migrant workers including migrant domestic workers to be eligible for ordinary membership. Ordinary membership provides migrant workers the right at a General Meeting to vote for the leadership of HOME. In so doing HOME recognises the voice of migrant workers to choose the leadership they wish for HOME. They would also have the right as voting members to approve programmes and services that would serve their needs in the years ahead.

HOME has over the years been making outreach to student communities. We recognise the youth in Singapore as our hope for the future and the New Year also sees our constitution changed to open up membership to students, 18 years and below to support our tremendous work and challenge in a globalised economy.

2009 was a year of uncertainty; we believe 2010 will be a year of promise.

Bridget Tan
President, HOME