

**ADDRESS BY DR TONY TAN KENG YAM, CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE PRESS HOLDINGS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE BOOK “DIPLOMACY – A SINGAPORE EXPERIENCE” ON THURSDAY 9 JUNE 2011 AT 5.00PM AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

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**Good Evening**

**Professor S Jayakumar  
And Mrs Jayakumar**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**I am delighted to be here as Guest-of-Honour to officiate the launch of my old friend and former Cabinet colleague, Professor S Jayakumar’s book, “Diplomacy – A Singapore experience”.**

**I have known Prof Jayakumar for many years even before we entered politics.**

**We worked together most closely when he served as Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1994 to 2004 and I as Minister for Defence.**

**Prof Jayakumar’s many decades in public service and his tenure as Foreign Minister encompassed a momentous period in Singapore’s history, during which the government had to deal with a wide range of issues.**

**Many of these issues are familiar to us all.**

**They included the water and Pedra Branca episodes with Malaysia, the tumultuous period in Indonesia following the Asian Financial Crisis and the Michael Fay incident with the United States, just to name a few.**

**Other issues, of course, never made it into the public domain.**

**Right in the centre of the action was Prof Jayakumar.**

**With insight and sound judgement, Prof Jayakumar quickly grasped the key issues and the implications of the available courses of action.**

**With his clear-eyed approach to problem-solving, together with his persuasive abilities, Prof Jayakumar won over hearts and minds to resolve disputes and build consensus and understanding with other countries earning the respect and friendship of his international contemporaries and his colleagues.**

**Prof Jayakumar also led Singapore to secure global recognition through the cultivation of strong bonds in diplomatic relations and creation of economic spaces.**

**Among other achievements, Prof Jayakumar was instrumental in Singapore being elected in 2000 to a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council from 2001 to 2002.**

**When Prof Jayakumar first showed me the draft of his writing project, I encouraged him to publish it as a book.**

**His accounts are rich with valuable lessons and bring to life the real world of diplomacy.**

**I felt they deserved to be read by a wider audience, beyond those working in foreign affairs and the civil service.**

**Indeed, I am pleased that this book is now a reality, published by Straits Times Press, the book publishing arm of Singapore Press Holdings.**

**“Diplomacy – A Singapore Experience” is a book that captures the essence of Prof Jayakumar’s ten years as Foreign Minister as well as his earlier service in various other roles.**

**His reflections on the challenges and vulnerabilities faced by Singapore in its four decades of independence will appeal to a broad spectrum of readers, such as the members of the diplomatic corps, corporate business leaders and students.**

**I understand from my colleagues at Straits Times Press that Prof Jayakumar was a joy to work with.**

**Always careful about how words were used in the book, he was meticulous and was also very prompt in replying to queries and meeting deadlines. In some instances, he responded to emails within minutes of receiving them!**

**I can only encourage Prof Jayakumar to undertake more writing projects, so that Singaporeans and foreigners alike can learn from his experiences.**

**For now, I would like to congratulate Prof Jayakumar on the publication of this book, and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.**

**Thank you.**

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