

Opening Remarks by MOS Low Yen Ling at the Launch of the Enterprise Sustainability Programme, 1 October 2021

- A very good morning to friends from the media as well as our Enterprise Sustainability Programme (ESP) partners. Thank you also to our friends from Koda/Commune for hosting us today.
- At MTI, we are constantly seeking new opportunities of growth for our enterprises and ways to support them in the process. We recognise that in addition to supporting the fight against climate change, sustainability has the potential to be a new source of growth for our economy as well as our local enterprises.
- The feedback from local companies which have already started their sustainability journey is that being sustainable has given them a competitive edge.
 - Studies have shown that enterprises which have embraced sustainability and integrated sustainability into their business and products have benefitted in tangible ways.
 - They have benefitted from an improved reputation.
 - They have also observed that being sustainable has helped them enjoy better sales and profitability, and also better employee engagement.
- Companies also tell us that, by integrating sustainability into their business and products, they are better able to improve resource and cost efficiency, and address risks such as regulatory risks and reputational risks.
 - Many of our local companies serve big global players, especially in developed markets like the US and Europe. Increasingly, such global players in developed economies are imposing sustainability requirements on their suppliers. By being sustainable, our local companies will have a competitive edge.
 - Companies who are sustainable are also in a stronger position to capture new consumers and markets not just locally, but also globally.
- With the push towards sustainability, new job roles will also be created, providing more job and upskilling opportunities for Singaporeans. We know that Singaporeans, especially young Singaporeans, are looking forward to job opportunities and upgrading opportunities in this area.
- The Government is very happy to observe that some Singapore companies have already started their sustainability journey. Koda is one such early mover, and this is why we are here today to learn from its experience.
- During my visit to Koda today, I learnt how the company designs, develops and produces high-grade furniture in an environmentally responsible manner.
- Koda's sustainability efforts include:
 - Careful selection of materials to minimise environmental impact – this is the commitment Koda has made to both its retail and wholesale customers.

- Maximising resource efficiency by reducing, recycling and reusing waste – for example, Koda uses offcuts from timber to produce items such as chopping boards.
- Putting in place measures to ensure occupational health and safety in its manufacturing operations, and also ensure the health and safety of their customers through careful selection of the raw materials it uses.
- Such sustainability efforts have allowed Koda to distinguish themselves from other furniture manufacturers and leverage sustainability as a competitive advantage to capture consumer demand in key markets like the US and Europe.
- There will be increasing demand and requests from investors and consumers for companies to integrate sustainability into their business processes and products.
- With the launch of the ESP, we hope to encourage more local companies to start taking small steps in your sustainability journey. We know that different companies are at different levels of readiness, and we will support you every step of the way.
- For those who have yet to get started, we encourage you to take the first baby step. The ESP is designed to support companies based on their level of readiness with regard to sustainability. Thank you.