

Parliamentary Question by Mr Ang Wei Neng:

To ask the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance whether he can provide an update on the progress of the Forward Singapore exercise and the plans ahead.

Parliamentary Reply by Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister for Finance Mr Lawrence Wong:

Mr Speaker, Forward Singapore is an exercise to refresh our social compact for Singapore's next bound of development. This involves reviewing our existing assumptions and ideas on making Singapore a better home for our people, to see whether they remain valid. It also involves generating new ideas and policy thinking to address our challenges and seize new opportunities.

Since we launched the exercise in June, the response from Singaporeans in the many conversations with the 4G leadership team has been encouraging. We have received from Singaporeans many useful insights for policy formulations, suggestions of solutions, and offers for action – all of which will help us build a better and stronger Singapore together. We have been working on three broad themes: how to create more

opportunities for Singapore and Singaporeans; how to provide better assurances for Singaporeans in a more uncertain future; and how to strengthen our sense of solidarity as one people. Besides these three themes, we are also deliberating over the shared responsibilities that individual Singaporeans, families, communities and companies should uphold as part of the refreshed compact, so that we can better tackle the challenges ahead, and seize new opportunities for Singapore and for our people.

Over the next few months, we will deepen our conversations and partnerships with Singaporeans. We intend to do so in two ways. First, there will be more engagements for people to offer their own views and ideas, as well as to hear from others. These will span a wide range of topics, such as how to strengthen employability and create good jobs, make our living environment even better, strengthen our bonds to Singapore and with one another, and environmental sustainability, amongst others. Some of these engagements will be held in our neighbourhoods, and some in vernacular languages and different formats, to better reach out to Singaporeans of different needs and preferences. These engagements will allow us to reflect on our values today, and what we aspire to be in the future. They will sensitise us to the choices we have

to make as a people, for ourselves as well as the longer-term interests of future generations.

Second, we will invite people to go beyond just giving views, to also co-develop and implement solutions and policies together with the Government. For example, approaches like Citizens' Panels and Alliances for Action bring people together to deliberate on issues they feel strongly about, and after robust discussions with one another and experts, recommend policy ideas to the Government. Through Alliances for Action, stakeholders can also come together to take direct action in designing and implementing solutions.

I welcome members of the public and organisations to register their interest to participate in these sessions through the Forward Singapore website. We plan to complete the exercise by the middle of next year.

We hope to partner Singaporeans from all walks of life for this Forward Singapore exercise because everyone has a role to play to build a better Singapore for all.