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## **MUSIM MAS PLEDGES S\$5 MILLION TO LOCAL BENEFICIARIES**

*One of the largest donations this year during the coronavirus pandemic in Singapore will assist vulnerable families and individuals affected by COVID-19*

SINGAPORE (22 June 2020) – In a show of solidarity, and commitment towards vulnerable families and individuals displaced by the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the world’s largest palm oil corporations and a committed leader in sustainability, Singapore-based Musim Mas Group, is pledging S\$5 million to five local beneficiaries through its multi-million-dollar care fund.

Called Musim Mas Project Onward, the company will disburse S\$1 million in cash donation to each beneficiary. This initiative is in support of Singapore’s move forward after months of Circuit Breaker measures.

The move also comes on the back of Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat’s national address on Saturday, 20 June 2020, where he announced the formation of the Singapore Together Action Networks, which draw on ideas from partners across different sectors and turn them into new solutions to help take Singapore forward. Some of the networks include those that help disadvantaged students, support vulnerable families and look at mental health among young people.

Musim Mas’ S\$5 million care fund is the largest donation made this year by a privately-owned company during the COVID-19 pandemic so far..

The five beneficiaries are:

- Alzheimer’s Disease Association
- Metta Welfare Association
- The Majority Trust
- The Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund
- The Singapore General Hospital

“The Government’s swift and decisive policies meant that most Singaporeans are able to cope with the aftershocks of COVID-19. However, we recognise there are many less privileged families and individuals who need more help now,” said Mr Alvin Lim, Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director of Musim Mas Holdings.



“We are fortunate to be in a position to be able to give back to the very society that has embraced our businesses and housed our headquarters. We hope this cash donation will inspire and empower these organisations to rise above the uncertainties brought about by the pandemic, and to continue serving their communities with fervour.”

The Group strives to improve the livelihoods of the communities from where it operates. It has committed to the various efforts in the 13 countries where it has offices, especially Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. Last year, Musim Mas donated S\$1 million to the Alzheimer’s Disease Association (ADA). This year, the national association for dementia will receive another S\$1 million through Project Onward.

“After seeing the impact on society brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Musim Mas decided to ramp up its philanthropic efforts to help ensure that no Singaporean will fall through the safety net”, said Mr Lim.

“While working with ADA, we were moved by their continuous work to serve the dementia community despite facing multiple challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. ADA chief executive officer Jason Foo has also inspired us to recognise that there are many more communities out there who need our assistance,” added Mr Lim, whose team then went on to identify four more beneficiaries for Project Onward.

## **THE BENEFICIARIES**

The Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund (STPMF) provides pocket money to children from low-income families to help them through school.

“These are very trying times, and many more families will find themselves in need. Which is why we are grateful to generous donors, such as Musim Mas, for stepping up to help charitable efforts. Through these donations, we are able to do more to help ensure that our young do not go to school hungry or in need,” said Mr Warren Fernandez, Editor-in-Chief of Singapore Press Holdings’ English /Malay/Tamil/Media Group, and Chairman of the STPMF.

Metta Welfare Association is a Buddhist organisation that offers a myriad of community welfare services to the less fortunate. Its president, Venerable Chao Khun Fa Zhao, BBM, said the Association is very heartened to “receive the generous support from Musim Mas in these challenging times in journeying with us and championing change for our beneficiaries and their families”.



Venerable Chao added: “This donation will go a long way in constructing the new Maitri Building and ensuring our Metta School graduates aged 18 and above, diagnosed with intellectual disability and/or autism are able to continue their vocational, work and life skills training to help them achieve economic independence and self reliance now and in the future. With the collective effort and contributions, we will overcome these challenging times and emerge stronger.”

The Majority Trust (TMT) is a philanthropic organisation that seeks to work with donors and charities to build a thriving and sustainable community for all in Singapore. “We are extremely grateful to Musim Mas for their generous donation that will go to supporting charities and programmes serving children and youth suffering from depression and anxiety,” said Mr Martin Tan, Executive Director of TMT.

“Declining mental health is an issue that TMT has identified for urgent attention. The impact of COVID-19 has worsened the collective mental health and wellbeing of our society. Many are facing increased levels of psychological distress. Our children and youth are among the most vulnerable. In recent years, there has been a worrying increase in the number of youth suicides. This Musim Mas donation will provide timely support to complement existing efforts to help our youth struggling with mental health challenges.”

Singapore General Hospital (SGH), the largest and oldest hospital here, said preparedness during times of a pandemic and ability to respond swiftly and effectively are critical. The donation supports the development of innovative models of care and research at SGH that will shape and drive informed decisions during a pandemic and address the well-being of healthcare workers and affected patients.

Mr Foo, the chief executive officer of ADA, added that Musim Mas’ generosity will go a long way in easing the association’s cash flow and help sustain its programmes and services. “We are most grateful to Musim Mas for believing in our work. Their confidence and trust in us are testament that we are doing something right,” he said. “With this support, we will be able to bring more quality dementia care programmes, services and support to persons with dementia and caregivers, especially in these challenging times.”

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### **About Musim Mas Holdings**

Headquartered in Singapore, Musim Mas is one of the world's largest, integrated palm oil corporations with operations spanning the entire value chain across the Americas, Europe and Asia. Our global workforce pursues innovative and sustainable developments across the whole spectrum of the palm oil supply chain, ensuring product quality, safety and efficiency as the industry evolves.

As one of the most prominent players in the palm oil industry, it aspires to be a responsible leader in the evolution of the industry, driving a new era of sustainability with innovation. To that end, we work hard with our stakeholders to address their concerns such as greenhouse gas emissions, loss of biodiversity, as well as labor and human rights. We take active steps to go beyond industry-recognized sustainability standards and will continue to step up in response to critical industry issues in our quest to contribute to a more sustainable industry and equitable world.

### **About Musim Mas Holdings' social causes:**

Musim Mas has extended its efforts to assist its stakeholders and communities in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, through monetary and in-kind contributions to local and regional relief efforts.

In Indonesia, it has committed up to US\$ 2 million of cash donations and in-kind assistance, which was targeted to support frontline healthcare workers, local communities, and the government to combat the pandemic. The group has disbursed the donations to the Tzu Chi Foundation for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provisions, various government initiatives including contributions to build a COVID-19 PCR testing laboratory at a Medical School in the University of Sumatera Utara, and to the local communities directly by providing in-kind support like food, hygiene products, PPEs and disinfectant products.

In support of frontline healthcare workers in Johor, Malaysia, Musim Mas also contributed towards the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) donation of 100,000 KN95 masks and five tonnes of hand sanitisers to the Johor State Government.



ANNEX:

### **Alzheimer's Disease Association**

Formed in 1990, Alzheimer's Disease Association strives towards a dementia inclusive society while aiming to advocate and inspire the society to regard and respect persons living with dementia as individuals who can still lead purposeful and meaningful lives. They provide daycare for people with dementia, as well as services such as counselling, support groups, referrals and public education talks, as well as training and workshops for caregivers.

### **Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund**

Started in 2000 as a community project initiated by The Straits Times, they provide pocket money to children from low-income families to help them through school. The financial help eases the burden of many parents as the children can use this money for school-related expenses, such as buying a meal during recess, paying for transport or using it to meet other schooling needs. The Fund supports about 10,000 children and youth a year. Since 2000, the Fund has disbursed \$68m and helped over 170,000 cases of children and youth.

### **Metta Welfare Association**

Registered as a society in 1994, Metta is presently endorsed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Education (MOE). They are also members of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS), Singapore Hospice Council and Singapore Disability Sports Council. They currently serve 1,200 beneficiaries with ten welfare centres islandwide. In accordance with The Great Compassionate Vows of The Buddha of Medicine, they aim to provide welfare services for the community, regardless of race or religion.

### **The Majurity Trust**

The Majurity Trust is a philanthropic organisation that seeks to work with donors and charities to build a thriving and sustainable community for all in Singapore. They bring like-minded people, ideas and creativity together to impact individual lives and the community. With platforms such as forums, dialogues and exhibitions, they create opportunities for conversations, idea creation and collaboration to achieve greater social impact.

### **About Singapore General Hospital**

Singapore General Hospital, a member of Singapore Health Services, is the public sector's flagship hospital. Established in 1821, SGH is Singapore's largest acute tertiary hospital with 1,700 beds and national referral centre offering a comprehensive range of more than 40 clinical specialties on its campus. Every year, about 1 million Singaporeans benefit from medical care delivered by its 800 specialists. As an academic healthcare institution and the bedrock of medical education, SGH plays a key role in nurturing doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, and is committed to innovative translational and clinical research in her continual strive to provide the best care and outcomes to her patients.