

From the Desk of
**George Goh
Ching Wah**

Press Statement - Unveiling of Platform

Tonight, Mr George Goh launched his platform and slogan for the 2023 Presidential election: **One Chance for Change.**

The office of president has been occupied by persons of similar background since the institution of the elected presidency came into being in 1992. All past presidents were from the political and public sector. The current president walked into office under the controversial "reserved" election in 2017.

It is difficult for citizens outside of this circle to run for President. The rules are so onerous that few can qualify. In Singapore, there also exists a perception that running against an Establishment candidate with the backing of a formidable machinery is either a lost cause or a black mark on your future.

Mr Goh wants to change this. He is offering citizens a chance to vote in someone outside of this political circle with a fresh pair of eyes who can say no when necessary, without the baggage of past links, favours and friendships.

If elected, he also wants to change the Presidency in other ways, especially in making the office more open and inclusive, within the constitutional powers of the presidency.

An Open and Inclusive Presidency

1) Open Book

Looking up government notices in the e-gazette is the only way to know if the President is doing his custodial work - unless the reserves are drawn upon. Alternatively, the President can present a report at the end of the six-year term, like President Halimah did.

This opacity leaves the public unaware of the custodial duties of the president, as what gets publicised are his ceremonial and community roles. Even less is known about the Council of Presidential Advisors, important people that advise the President but also with powers that affect the President's ability to act in certain areas. But how often do they meet and over what issues?

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Another key role of the President is in scrutinising key appointments in the public sector. Currently very little is known about his decisions in this area, when they are brought to him for approval and what his decision is. Mr Goh intends to make this process more transparent.

To put into effect the above ideas, Mr Goh, if elected, will introduce an annual report card containing all his activities and decisions made in the year. This includes signing off on Bills, speeches made and funds raised.

2) Open Heart

Mr Goh intends to enlarge the scope and deepen the impact of the President's Challenge. If elected, he will use his philanthropic experience, business network and the status of the office to raise \$1 billion for welfare organisations and small charities which are less recognised. Setting up a fund and using the interest is a more sustainable method of funding the under privileged.

3) Open Platform

The best of the young people get the most attention and resources. The rest should be helped too. Young people, including the disabled, may have an interest or talent they want to cultivate which could be an edge for them in life later. Whether it is the arts, music, sport or those who have business ideas, they should have a network of people to turn to so that they can grow. Mr Goh, himself a mentor for young entrepreneurs, believes in bringing together a group of mentors in different disciplines who will grow and nurture young people.

This One Chance for Change is not fiction. It is an opportunity to have someone different in the political system, to bring new ideas and to bring change. If we do not seize the opportunity now, will there be another?

George Goh Media Team