

PRESS RELEASE

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE'S STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO MR GEORGE GOH'S UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

The Presidential Elections Committee decided on Mr George Goh's application based on the proper application of Article 19(4)(b) of the Constitution, and the Committee's letter explained its rationale to Mr Goh. Mr Goh's suggestion that the Committee failed to do so is firmly rejected.

2 In response to the public allegations made against the Committee, the Committee has decided to make public its letter to Mr Goh (pursuant to Regulation 11(3)(c) of the Presidential Elections (Certificate of Eligibility) Regulations 2017) which explains its rationale for being unable to grant Mr Goh a Certificate of Eligibility. See Annex for the letter to Mr George Goh.

3 As mentioned in the Committee's letter to Mr Goh, Article 19(4)(b) requires the Committee to consider whether an applicant has the experience and ability that comes from managing one very large private sector organisation – the experience and ability that comes from managing multiple smaller private sector organisations is not equivalent to this. Mr Goh's application acknowledged that the five companies he relied on are not a unitary company and are not owned by a common holding company, but Mr Goh submitted that the five companies should be regarded as a single private sector organisation.

4 The Committee carefully considered Mr Goh's submission. However, after taking into account the relevant facts and circumstances (including how the companies were owned, managed and operated), the Committee was not satisfied that the five companies constituted a single private sector organisation. Consequently, for the reasons explained in the Committee's letter to Mr Goh, the Committee was unable to grant Mr Goh a Certificate of Eligibility under Article 19(4)(b) of the Constitution.

**ISSUED BY
SECRETARIAT, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
C/O ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT**

18 AUGUST 2023



ELD (A)4-22 Pt 2

18 August 2023

Mr Goh Ching Wah



Dear Sir

**PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2023
RE: APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY**

I refer to your application for a Certificate of Eligibility dated 4 August 2023.

2 In assessing your application, the Presidential Elections Committee considered the information given in your application and the further information you provided on 15 August 2023 at the Committee's request.

3 I regret to inform you that your application is unsuccessful, for the reasons set out below.

4 Your application relied on Article 19(4)(b) of the Constitution and your service as the:

- (a) Group Executive Chairman of Ossia International Limited,
- (b) Executive Deputy Chairman of Pertama Holdings Pte Ltd,
- (c) Group Executive Chairman of ITG International Pte Ltd,
- (d) Chief Executive Officer of Crown Essentials Limited, and
- (e) Chief Executive Officer of Vernal Ventures Pte Ltd.

5 Article 19(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution requires that an applicant must have "served for a period of 3 or more years in an office in a private sector organisation". This refers to one office in one private sector organisation, and not various offices in multiple private sector organisations.

6 Under Article 19(4)(b)(ii) of the Constitution, the Committee must be satisfied, having regard to the nature of the office, the size and complexity of the private sector organisation relied on by the applicant and the applicant's performance in the office, that the applicant has experience and ability that is comparable to the experience

and ability of a person who has served as the chief executive of a typical company with at least \$500 million in shareholders' equity and who satisfies Article 19(4)(a) of the Constitution in relation to such service.

7 Thus, Article 19(4)(b)(ii) requires the Committee to consider whether the applicant has the experience and ability that comes from managing a very large private sector organisation – the experience and ability that comes from managing multiple smaller private sector organisations is not equivalent to this.

8 The Committee accordingly proceeded on the basis that it could only consider a single office in a single private sector organisation for the purpose of assessing whether the applicant has the experience and ability that is comparable to the experience and ability of a person who has served as the chief executive of a typical company with at least \$500 million in shareholders' equity and who satisfies Article 19(4)(a) of the Constitution in relation to such service.

9 The Committee considered your submission that the five companies you relied on in your application (listed in paragraph 4 above) should be regarded as a single private sector organisation rather than separate entities. On this basis, you submitted that the shareholders' equity of these five companies should be considered collectively for the purposes of your application under Article 19(4)(b).

10 However, after considering the relevant facts and circumstances (including how the companies were owned, managed and operated), the Committee was not satisfied that the five companies you relied on constituted a single private sector organisation under Article 19(4)(b). The Committee therefore did not aggregate the shareholders' equity of the five companies for the purposes of your application.

11 The Committee further considered whether any one of your offices in each of the five companies (listed in paragraph 4 above) would individually satisfy Article 19(4)(b). However, the shareholders' equity of each of these five companies was significantly below \$500 million. Thus, the Committee was not satisfied, having regard to the nature of your office in each of the companies and your performance in the office, and the size and complexity of each of the companies, that you have experience and ability that is comparable to the experience and ability of a person who has served as the chief executive of a typical company with at least \$500 million in shareholders' equity and who satisfies Article 19(4)(a) of the Constitution in relation to such service.

12 The Committee was therefore unable to grant you a Certificate of Eligibility.

Yours faithfully,



CINDY KHOO
SECRETARY
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS COMMITTEE