



27 February 2014

COTTON ON GROUP EARMARKS SINGAPORE AT THE EPICENTRE OF ITS ASIA GROWTH PLANS

Now considered one of the fastest growing retail groups in the world, the Cotton On Group announced the opening of its Asia headquarters in Singapore, cementing the Group's commitment to Singapore as the cornerstone of its operations in the region. The move also further reinforces the Australian retailer's focus on Asia as vital to its global expansion blueprint.

From humble beginnings in 1991, the Cotton On Group has grown to more than 1300 stores across nine brands in 16 countries, with no plans to slow down. With more than 160 doors throughout Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, the Australian born retailer plans to open several hundred stores in the region in the next five years.

"We're thrilled to have had the support of the Singapore Government and the Economic Development Board as we continue to focus our energies on identifying new retail growth opportunities in the region that will best service our customers in Asia," said the Cotton On Group Chief Financial Officer, Michael Hardwick when addressing guests, including Australian High Commissioner to Singapore, Mr Phillip Green OAM, this evening at the Cotton On Megastore in Suntec City.

"Singapore is a market rich in talented, innovative, forward thinking individuals," said Mr Hardwick. "As consumers, Singaporeans value design, they are ahead of the global curve, retail savvy and are driven by trends that move as quickly as we at we do".

As an employer of choice, the Cotton On Group is committed to creating meaningful and long term careers within Singapore and takes great pride in its ability to attract and retain a strong and diverse workforce across many disciplines including design, marketing, ecommerce, supply chain, technology and management.

"I congratulate the Cotton On Group for embracing Singapore and Asia. Cotton On is showing true Aussie spirit - bold and innovative, taking on the world. Cotton On has come a long way from when founder Nigel Austin sold acid wash jackets at a small market in Geelong," said Australian High Commissioner to Singapore, Mr Phillip Green OAM. "Now, it has more than 19,000 staff and is a true global player in the value fashion space. With Singapore being an international hub for business and the regional leader in consumer trends, it makes perfect sense for the Cotton On Group to have its Asia headquarters here. Cotton On and Singapore is a formidable combination".



In the past 18 months, the group has invested significantly in the development of its people, rolling out a AU\$30M educational platform, *Cotton On Group Uni* in partnership with Deakin University. The program was successfully launched in Asia in July, 2013.

“We acknowledge the value of having world class individuals at every level and are invested in ensuring our team members globally reach their full potential,” said Mr Hardwick.

Singapore EDB Director Consumer Businesses, Ms. Kow Ree Na said, “The Cotton On Group is one of the world’s fastest growing retail groups and ranks amongst Australia’s largest retail groups. We are heartened by the Group’s decision to establish their Asia headquarters in Singapore, which is a significant milestone for the industry. Cotton On has identified Singapore as a key location to develop its next generation of retail talent, building key capabilities such as brand management, marketing and merchandising. By leveraging Singapore’s ready pool of skilled professionals and ecosystem of partners in branding, marketing, supply chain management, and IT solutions, the Group is well positioned to capture even more growth opportunities in the Asian market.”

ENDS

Further information contact:

Greer McCracken - Cotton On Group

greer.mccracken@cottonon.com.au +61 467 505 189 or +61 3 5277 7837