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Speech by Prof S.K. Chou, President, The Institution of Engineers, Singapore, at the Official Opening of World Engineers Summit 2013, 11 September, Wednesday, 9.00 am, Marina Bay Sands Expo & Convention Centre

Our Guest-of-Honour,

Mr Teo Chee Hean, Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Home Affairs;

Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Minister of State, Ministry of National Development and Ministry of Defence, Singapore;

Mr Quek See Tiat, Chairman, Building and Construction Authority;

Dr John Keung, Chief Executive Officer, Building and Construction Authority;

Mr Paul Beh, President Asia Pacific, Reed Exhibitions;

Eng. Adel Al-Kharafi, President, World Federation of Engineering Organisations;

Distinguished Guests,

Fellow Engineers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good morning. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Official Opening of the World Engineers Summit, or WES 2013. On behalf of the Council of The Institution of Engineers, Singapore, or IES, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean for his strong support of WES and for taking time away from his busy schedules this morning to be our Guest-of-Honour. WES 2013 is held in conjunction with the General Assembly of the World Federation of Engineering Organisation (WFEO).

Among us this morning and over the next few days are friends and colleagues who have come from all over the world to join us at the Summit. To them all, we extend our warmest welcome.

2. Climate change is here to stay, and it is here for the long haul. As our planet warms, sea levels will rise and weather patterns will be irrevocably altered. Over the next 40 years or so, we can expect extreme weather such as no other that we have ever seen before. We are beginning to take stock of the consequences of man-made climate change such as the flooding of coastal cities, loss of food sources, adverse impacts on the environment, and the loss of livelihoods to countless millions. The choice of Climate Change for a topic for this inaugural WES is therefore obvious and timely. We engineers relish a challenge.

3. Set among the most pressing concerns of this new millennium, Climate Change poses seemingly insurmountable odds that require sustained and costly efforts. IES and friends recognize that Climate Change demands innovative solutions that must be fashioned by coming together on a global platform. IES hopes that WES will be able to provide that platform for sharing experiences, and for engineers and our colleagues in the various branches of science and technology and government to discuss potential approaches to face up to the myriad of tasks ahead.

4. Judging by the turnout this morning, I am glad that WES has struck a resonating chord with so many engineers and professional colleagues across industry and from abroad. I am confident that this Summit will provide delegates invaluable opportunities

to gain insights from some of the most notable global experts in climate change, and to forge links with like-minded individuals from around the world.

5. Mindful that climate change is a longstanding issue which affects generations to come, IES has also organised the Young Engineers Day, which will be held tomorrow as part of WES 2013. At the same time, we will also be hosting the annual National Engineers Day during WES. This year, we aim to give bright young minds a head start in exploring possible solutions to combat climate change. In so doing, we hope to enthuse them to embark on engineering as a career so as to make a difference to the lives of people around the world.

6. Through these concurrent events, we hope to create a positive perception of engineering among students, better equip them to make informed choices on their course of study, inspire them to take up engineering as a career, and motivate them to be proactive in taking positive action to fight climate change.

7. While we make an effort to engage our youths, we also want to raise the debate of Climate Change to the greater engineering community we serve. The enormous challenges brought about by Climate Change will require the contributions of engineers across a broad spectrum of skills. IES seeks to forge links with key agencies and other professional bodies with the view to developing professional updating programmes and career advancement pathways. In so doing, IES can continue to offer value to our members and create opportunities for them to make impactful and long-lasting contributions to the engineering community and society

8. As such, I'm delighted to announce the launching of the IES Chartered Engineer accreditation programme aimed at engineers who practise in the various engineering sectors of our economy. The Chartered Engineer accreditation will be a quality mark earned by engineers of diverse engineering disciplines and will be an official peer endorsement of their experience, expertise and practising competence, and an accreditation of the individual's professional standing. We hope that the IES Chartered Engineer accreditation will raise the professional profile of engineers and enhance opportunities for benchmarking and practice here and abroad.

9. In concluding, I would like to thank DPM Teo once again for his strong support. I thank all our distinguished guests, speakers, conference participants and accompanying persons. I also wish to thank all our sponsors who have contributed so generously to WES and the many associated events. Our appreciation also goes out to WFEO for co-organising this event with us, to the many moderators and chairpersons who contribute so much of their time, and to the organising committees and IES staff for the detailed planning and execution.

10. I wish you a rewarding Summit packed with interesting, stimulating and enriching discussions over the next few days and hope that when the doors to the Summit close in three days' time, we will be a step closer to a sustainable future.

Thank you.