

**EMBARGOED TILL AFTER DELIVERY**

**PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY PROF YEOH LEAN WENG, PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS, SINGAPORE (IES), AT THE IES 53<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL DINNER AT THE SHANGRI-LA HOTEL ON THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2019, 7.15 PM**

Our Guest-of-Honour, Mr Heng Swee Keat, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance;  
Mr. Ng Chee Meng, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and NTUC Secretary-General;  
Excellencies,  
IES Emeritus Presidents;  
Presidents of Trade Associations;  
Fellow Engineers;  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Good evening.

**Recognition**

1. The IES annual dinner is an event to celebrate our engineers' achievements. It is also an event to recognise non-engineers who have made significant contributions to IES, the engineering community and our nation.
2. Tonight is special because Deputy Prime Minister Mr Heng Swee Keat has kindly accepted our invitation to be conferred the IES Distinguished Honorary Patron. The IES Distinguished Honorary Patron is the most prestigious and highest IES award. It may only be conferred on individuals of acknowledged eminence and high standing who have rendered significant contributions to the engineering profession and to nation-building.
3. When he was the Minister for Education, Mr Heng strongly supported Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (or STEM) education to nurture Singapore students into the next generation of engineering leaders. DPM has also been a strong supporter of IES events including our Annual Dinner in 2013 and our National Engineers Day in 2014, 2015 and 2018.

4. Er. Edwin Khew told me that when he asked DPM if he would accept being the IES Distinguished Honorary Patron, he agreed without much hesitation. This was even before we wrote the terms of reference. Thank you, DPM, for your kind acceptance and your trust in IES.
5. Tonight is also special because we have two cabinet ministers gracing our event, or more correctly, one deputy prime minister and one minister. IES would like to thank NTUC Secretary-General, Brother Ng Chee Meng for accepting our invitation to be conferred the title of IES Honorary Fellow. I have the privilege of calling him Brother Chee Meng because I am also an NTUC member. So if you also want to call him Brother Chee Meng, please join NTUC. Membership drive for NTUC! And I am pleased to share that IES is exploring with NTUC to set up a joint IES-NTUC membership.
6. We are grateful to Brother Chee Meng for placing a strong focus on STEM when he was the Minister for Education. As NTUC Sec-Gen, he has also guided and supported the Engineers Progression Pathway – a joint initiative by IES and NTUC U Associate. Thank you, Brother Chee Meng.
7. Tonight also marks the first time that IES is presenting the IES Outstanding Partner Award to acknowledge our most valuable partners. The Award Committee, led by Er Ho Siong Hin, had a hard time deciding on this year's award winner as many of the nominees are deserving partners. I am pleased to announce that the inaugural award will be presented to the Defence Science & Technology Agency (DSTA).
8. For the past 10 years, DSTA has given IES outstanding support to promote engineering excellence and develop engineering competency. I remember that in 2007, Richard Lim, then Chief Executive of DSTA asked one of his directors to join IES. He assured the President of IES at that time that "it is not only his director will be supporting IES; the whole of DSTA will be behind him". That director was me. This has not changed. Under the leadership of its current Chief Executive, Mr Tan Peng Yam, DSTA has continued to give IES unwavering support. Thank you, Peng Yam, for your leadership and support.
9. I would also like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the winners of the Lifetime Engineering Achievement Award 2019, Er Tan Ee Ping; the IES-IEEE Joint Medal of Excellence 2019, Er Lee Chuan Seng; and our IES-Yayasan Mendaki Scholarship award student winners, Mr Wan Muhammad Ismail bin Wan Mahmood and Mr Shiek Abdullah Abdul Arshath.
10. IES hopes that these awards will motivate all of you to serve as role models for the engineering community and to inspire our younger generation to embrace engineering.

## **New Initiatives**

11. Beyond recognising our achievements, we will be launching two initiatives tonight. IES will strengthen our railway sector by setting up a Railway Standards Technical Committee to formulate standards and best practices for the operation and maintenance of Singapore's railway systems. We are also proud to unveil the Railway Systems Handbook, a resource tool aimed at helping engineering professionals and students grasp the complex engineering behind railway systems in Singapore.
12. We will also be launching the IES-Incubator/Accelerator (or IES-INCA) programme to help engineers to become successful entrepreneurs.
13. Apart from the above two initiatives, I am pleased to share with you that IES is also moving with the times to accord greater recognition to polytechnic and ITE graduates. To align with our education system of reduced emphasis on grades, IES will also create a culture that places greater emphasis on competency-based knowledge and experience. In July this year, IES signed a Memorandum of Understanding with 20 partners, to look into setting up a career progression framework for Chartered Technologists and Technicians.

## **Conclusion**

14. Our achievements could not have been possible without the support of many individuals and organisations. I would like to thank our dinner sponsors, in particular our diamond sponsors, the Land Transport Authority, SBS Transit, Sembcorp Industries and SMRT. Thank you for your generous support.
15. Last but not least, I would also like to thank our former IES Vice President, Mr Wong Yui Cheong, for his generous donation of S\$1 million to set up the IES-Y C Wong Project Management Scholarship. This scholarship will support post-graduate students to carry out research and study of management of construction projects. Thank you, Mr Wong.
16. The theme of tonight's event, "Engineering a Sustainable Singapore" is a call to all engineers to rise to the challenges of climate change. Together, we can build a sustainable and liveable Singapore for our people. Thank you.