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**SPEECH BY MR TEO SER LUCK, SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR
MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND SPORTS AND
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND CHAIRMAN FOR NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL
AND YEP ADVISORY PANEL AT THE SIGNING OF LETTER OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND NATIONAL YOUTH
COUNCIL ON 12 MARCH 2009, 10 AM AT THE INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL
EDUCATION HEADQUARTERS (ITE HQ)**

Mr Bruce Poh
Director & CEO of ITE

Staff of ITE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning.

It is my pleasure to be here today to witness the signing of the Letter of Agreement between ITE and NYC.

- 2 YEP was set up in 2000, with the following objectives:
- a. To develop self-confident youth who are able to work in teams;
 - b. To develop youth with strong convictions about their roles and obligations towards the community;
 - c. To develop youth with a strong Singaporean heartbeat, and a better appreciation for our policies, systems and way of life;
 - d. To develop Singaporeans as caring neighbours and global citizens through sustainable and meaningful projects.

To date, YEP has supported more than 15,000 youth in over 700 community service-learning projects overseas.

3 Beyond encouraging international volunteerism, YEP also place a strong emphasis of participants' involvement in serving the community in Singapore. This way, YEP helps participants develop a better appreciation of the challenges facing Singapore.

4 ITE was set up in 1992 as a post-secondary institution to provide pre-employment training and continuing education and training to working adults. ITE has since come a long way to be now an internationally-recognized institution, with your unique brand of "Hands-on, Minds-on, Hearts-on" College Education. I am happy to note that ITE is seeking to create opportunities for your students to have a global exposure, develop self-confidence and independence through the Global Education Programme (GEP).

5 The National Youth Council is very delighted to have ITE as one of the strongest supporters of YEP. The strategic partnership is built on how ITE has integrated overseas service-learning projects and local community projects into the curriculum.

6 For example, the Overseas Community Service Programme (OCSP), a key initiative under GEP, embodies the Service-Learning model and taps on YEP to design overseas educational learning journeys for your students. Since 2006, some 1000 students participated in 42 YEP expeditions in various countries such as China,

Vietnam, and Thailand. I commend ITE for building strong partnership with your overseas host partners to surface long term developmental needs for the communities, and to send regular teams to work on these areas.

7 ITE has also been actively involving your students to provide service to the local community by using their competencies they have learnt in ITE. The “SAFE HOME” programme with the various Community Development Councils (CDCs) aims to create a safe and ergonomically friendly home environment for the elderly residents. This is one of the regular local projects that ITE students engage in before they depart for their YEP expedition.

8 ITE was naturally one of the first partners NYC invited to take up the Request for YEP Proposal (RFP) initiative introduced in 2008. The RFP aims to empower organizations to develop high quality service-learning programmes holistically. A total of 16 YEP projects were implemented from September 2008 to March 2009 under this funding scheme. These projects were generally of high service learning quality.

9 Building on both organisations’ interest in overseas service learning as a youth development tool, I am glad that NYC and ITE have agreed to further collaborate through the programme funding scheme. Under the scheme, NYC provides a lump sum to ITE for launching YEP projects. ITE also takes over decisions on grants. Together, we believe ITE will be able to further enhance the quality of learning for the youth participants and the quality of service to the overseas communities.

10 Today's ceremony hence marks the beginning of this strategic partnership between ITE and NYC. I am truly excited of the potential and synergy that will be generated from this mutually benefiting partnership.

11 Thank you.