

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MS LOW KHAH GEK, CEO/ITE, AT ITE'S  
25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, ON FRIDAY 26 MAY 2017, AT  
1730 HRS, AT TAY ENG SOON CONVENTION CENTRE**

Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam  
Deputy Prime Minister &  
Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies

Mr Ong Ye Kung  
Minister for Education (Higher Education & Skills)

Mr Volker Schebesta  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports,  
Baden Wurttemberg, Germany

Mr Bob Tan  
Chairman, ITE Board of Governors

Your Excellencies, Members of Parliament

Distinguished Partners, Overseas Guests and Friends

Former and Current Board Members

Staff, Students and Alumni of ITE

Ladies and Gentlemen

**Introduction**

- 1 Welcome to ITE's Silver Jubilee Celebration! We are honoured to have **Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam**, here to mark this significant milestone with us.
- 2 We are also very privileged to have former Minister for Education, Mr Lee Yock Suan; former Chairman of Temasek Holdings, Mr S Dhanabalan, Daughter of the late Dr Tay Eng Soon, Ms Lucy Tay;

former Chairman of ITE Board of Governors, Mr Eric Gwee; and former CEOs of ITE, Dr Law Song Seng and Mr Bruce Poh here.

- 3 I extend a special welcome to all our international partners and friends from Australia, Canada, France, Hong Kong and USA, who have flown thousands of miles to join us for this occasion.
- 4 I am also grateful to the many local partners, employers, ITE alumni, parents and former ITE staff who have come to express your steadfast and unwavering support for ITE.

### **A Journey of Inspiration. Transformation. Excellence**

- 5 The theme for our Silver Jubilee celebration is – **“At 25 – Inspiration. Transformation. Excellence”**. This encapsulates both the journey of ITE over the last 25 years, as well as reflects the continued commitment of staff and students to always inspire, transform and excel.
- 6 When ITE was established as a post-secondary institution in April 1992, we started our transformation journey by reforming the training programmes, modernising the training facilities and equipment, raising organisation and staff capability, and cultivating collaboration and partnership with many people and organisations.
- 7 As of this year, we have **110** active MOUs with local industry partners and **18** MOUs with overseas partners. We also have **1,700** Internship Agreements with industries to offer almost **10,000**

internship places. ITE staff have benefited from the transfer of knowledge, expertise and technology from our industry partners. Our students have benefited from work attachment opportunities from local industries, as well as exchange programmes through our international partners.

- 8 Our partners have played an integral and significant role in ITE's transformation journey. We will be recognising 25 of them with the **ITE Distinguished Partner Award** tonight.

### **A Tribute to Key People**

- 9 Many of you here have personally been involved in ITE's progress and growth. You inspired us to dream big and set higher goals for ITE and our students. You supported and enabled us to transform these dreams and goals into reality. You applauded when ITE excelled.
- 10 In particular, I would like to pay tribute to some of the people who have been the strongest and most influential 'movers and shapers' for ITE. Special tribute to all our Ministers for Education, former and current, for their leadership in setting the directions for ITE and opening up new possibilities for us. With us in the Auditorium are two former Ministers for Education, **DPM Tharman** and **Mr Lee Yock Suan**, as well as our current Minister, **Ong Ye Kung**. Thank you, Ministers.
- 11 We also thank the Permanent Secretaries and Directors General of Education. In our midst are former **PS Tan Ching Yee**, current **PS Chan Lai Fung** and former Director of Education, **John Yip**.

12 ITE is greatly indebted to all members of our Boards of Governors, who serve in a voluntary capacity. We give special tribute to the three Board Chairmen:

- The late **Dr Tay Eng Soon**, who was the first Chairman of ITE Board, and our strongest advocate. We are grateful to him for championing the restructuring of VITB into a post-secondary institution;
- Former Chairman **Mr Eric Gwee**, who believed that the transformation of ITE must be forged through innovative thinking, forward planning and assertive branding; and
- Current Chairman, **Mr Bob Tan**, who continues to steer ITE's transformation with relentless passion and foresight, always focused on industry's needs and students' success.

13 I was appointed CEO/ITE in February this year and have inherited a great institution with a compelling mission. I thank **Dr Law Song Seng**, ITE's first CEO, and my immediate predecessor, **Mr Bruce Poh**, for their strong stewardship of ITE, and for growing ITE's standing into a globally-admired institution.

14 The staff of ITE, former and current, deserve special mention. Their unstinting commitment to the students, their determined desire to see the students succeed and their tenacious pursuit of excellence for the students, are admirable. It is my privilege to work alongside such a wonderful Team.

### **Students – Our Raisons D'être**

- 15 We must acknowledge another group of people. The students. They believe in ITE and put their lives in our hands. They come to ITE in search of an opportunity to be equipped with skills and competencies for a meaningful career, and a productive life. Our students are the reason why ITE exists. They inspire us to innovate. They motivate us to work harder. They compel us to stay resolute in our belief and commitment to enable each one of them to succeed.
- 16 Thus, this Anniversary Celebration is also a celebration of our students – their unique individualities, skills, achievements and potential. For this evening’s programme, we have consciously tapped on our students’ abilities and skills.
- Our students designed the logo for this event. They designed and created beautiful floral and landscaping displays.
  - Our students are involved in the stage lighting and sound management, as well as the animation sequences for the performances later. They have also prepared a special laser display at the Vertical Garden area outside.
  - Our hospitality and pastry students baked the gigantic anniversary cake *[you will see it later]* and the chocolates that are in the gift packs for all guests. They have also created special mock-tails for this occasion.

- Our Engineering students will be flying Curie Airship balloons in the Foyer during Reception.
- And, we have also gathered our highly-talented students to entertain you with their masterful performances tonight.

### **Students' Testimonies**

17 The best evidence of ITE transforming and enriching the lives of our students must come from the students' accounts of their experience at ITE. Allow me to share two students' and one adult learner's testimonies:

- **Nurul Eriyanie Bte Mohamed Nazri.** Nurul graduated from ITE College West with a *Higher Nitec* in Electrical Engineering in April this year. She chose ITE over the 'O' level route because she valued learning by doing and acquiring practical skills. She shared that ITE provided her an education that is more than skills training. ITE gave her varied exposure and opportunities to develop her potential, leadership and communication skills. She has grown into a confident 'go-getter' and has just articulated directly to 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Diploma in Electrical and Electronic Engineering course at Singapore Polytechnic.
- **Chua Yi Xiang.** Yi Xiang is a current Year 2 student at ITE College Central pursuing *Nitec* in Mechanical Technology. Yi Xiang is on track to achieve a perfect GPA of 4. He shared that his Class Advisor urged him to go beyond his studies to

be active in CCAs, community projects, innovation competitions, and learn from being a mentee, as well as being a mentor, to others. He said, *“ITE enables students to become confident individuals with useful skills, innovative minds and compassionate hearts.”*

- **Seow Chee Teck.** Chee Teck was an adult learner at ITE from Oct 2013 to Sept 2016. In 2013, Chee Teck already had a Diploma in Electronics, a Degree in Business and a job in the uniformed group sector. He was then exploring a career switch and chose to attend ITE’s Continuing Education Training to acquire hands-on and practical skills. He enrolled in ITE’s part-time *Higher Nitec* in Electrical Engineering. While undergoing the course, he was inspired to start his own electrical servicing and maintenance business. Today, he is the proud owner of Atlantis Aegiz. Chee Teck continues to upgrade himself and has just completed yet another CET course at ITE.

## **The Future Beckons**

- 18 As we look forward into the years ahead, the future is yet unknown. But we are confident that ITE will continue to **inspire** hope, **transform** lives, and enable new cohorts of students and adult learners to **excel**.
- 19 I look forward to your continued partnership and support in the years ahead. I commend all the students and staff who have worked with much pride and joy for today's event and performances, and invite everyone to enjoy the evening with us.

Thank you.