Mr Lim Chuan Poh, Chairman of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)

Singapore’s RIE System – Creating the Future

Mr Lim Chuan Poh, Chairman of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research, will talk about Singapore’s Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) journey from its infancy to present day, giving insight into the rationale behind the policies and showcasing how the government’s investments in research and innovation has catapulted Singapore from a skills-intensive developing nation to the thriving metropolis it is today. He will situate Singapore’s system among the world’s most advanced economies around the world and expand on how the RIE system in Singapore today will affect the economy and society; and explore the opportunities that arise as a result of being a knowledge-based, innovation-driven system.

About Mr Lim Chuan Poh

Mr Lim Chuan Poh was appointed Chairman of A*STAR on 1 April 2007 to lead A*STAR in conducting world-class scientific research and developing human capital for a vibrant knowledge-based, innovation-driven Singapore.

Appointed as Deputy Chairman of A*STAR in November 2006, Mr Lim has been a Board Member of Nanyang Technological University (NTU) since 2003, A*STAR’s Biomedical Research Council since January 2004, and the National Research Foundation since January 2006. He is the Chairman of the National Immunisation Security Committee and the Governing Board of the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine. Internationally, Mr Lim is a Council Member of the Science, Technology & Innovation in Society (STIS) forum and a Member of Japan’s World Premier International (WPI) Initiative Programme Assessment and Review Committee since 2007.

Prior to helming A*STAR, Mr Lim was Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education (MOE) from July 2003 to March 2007. At MOE, Mr Lim oversaw the transformation of the publicly funded universities into Autonomous Universities (AUs) to enable them to reach new peaks of excellence. He also reviewed the university research framework that led to the creation of the Academic Research Council and a new Academic Research Funding Framework. A specific proposal of the review was the hosting of Research Centres of Excellence by the AUs to catalyse their evolution into research-intensive universities. The framework for the polytechnics to tie up with top foreign universities to offer degree programmes offshore was also put in place. In addition, he guided the establishment of the NUS-Duke Graduate Medical School at Outram Campus.

Before joining MOE, LG (NS) Lim Chuan Poh spent 23 years with the Singapore Armed Forces and last held the office of the Chief of Defence Force. LG (NS) Lim joined the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) in 1980 on being awarded an SAF Overseas Scholarship. He held various appointments in the course of his military career, including Head, Joint Plans Department; Commander of the 10th Singapore Infantry Brigade; Commander, 9th Division; Chief of Army from July 1998 to March 2000; and Chief of Defence Force from April 2000 to March 2003. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General (LG) in 2001.

During his term as the Chief of Army and then as Chief of Defence Force from 1998 to 2003, LG (NS) Lim oversaw the operational deployment of SAF Peacekeeping Troops to Timor Leste. In response to the changed global security environment, he followed the attacks of September 11 and working closely with the Home Front agencies, LG (NS) Lim led the SAF efforts to put in place plans and measures to counter the threats of catastrophic terrorism. In the same period, LG (NS) Lim also spearheaded the growth and development of the SAF as a technologically advanced integrated force ready and capable of a spectrum of operations. In addition, LG (NS) Lim also contributed to defence diplomacy by hosting the inaugural Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference and the inaugural Pacific Peacekeeping Troops to East Timor. In response to the changed global security environment, he followed the attacks of September 11 and working closely with the Home Front agencies, LG (NS) Lim led the SAF efforts to put in place plans and measures to counter the threats of catastrophic terrorism. In the same period, LG (NS) Lim also spearheaded the growth and development of the SAF as a technologically advanced integrated force ready and capable of a spectrum of operations. In addition, LG (NS) Lim also contributed to defence diplomacy by hosting the inaugural Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference and the inaugural Pacific Peacekeeping Troops to East Timor.

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For his contributions in Science and Technology in Singapore, Mr Lim Chuan Poh was conferred the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science by Loughborough University (UK) on 31 August 2008; the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws by Monash University (Australia) on 10 September 2009; the Fellowship of Imperial College on 28 May 2010; the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws by the Arizona State University (USA) on 3 May 2012. He was also awarded a fellowship under the Invitation Programme for Leaders by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 2010.

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