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***“Enabling our people to seize opportunities”***

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Chairman, Minister Lim Hng Kiang, Minister Iswaran, SMS Sim Ann, and SMS Koh Poh Koon have spoken about how our economy has to transform.
2. We face global trends, such as the shift in economic weight towards Asia and the emergence of new technologies.
3. What does this mean for our people, as Singaporeans? With these changes come opportunities. All of us, whether as students, as employees or as business owners, need to constantly learn, constantly adapt, and constantly embrace new skills and knowledge all the time.
4. As the Government, we will strive to enable our people for the future, especially through **(i) the deepening of relevant skills**; and **(ii) the nurturing of global market expertise**.

**ENABLING OUR PEOPLE WITH RELEVANT SKILLS**

5. **Mr Liang Eng Hwa, Mr Yee Chia Hsing and Ms Cheryl Chan** talked about the importance of continuous skills upgrading in today’s evolving economic landscape. I totally agree that Singaporeans need to be enabled with relevant skills for jobs today, tomorrow, and the future.
6. That is why it is absolutely crucial for every Singaporean to make lifelong learning a way of life. We are fostering this cultural change through initiatives such as the national SkillsFuture movement as well as the Adapt and Grow programme.
7. While we recognise that continuing education and training may not be easy due to competing demands on our time, it is a necessary investment so that we can stay ahead for the future.

*Professional Conversion Programmes (PCPs)*

8. The changing economic landscape means that for some people, mid-career switches have become necessary. The kinds of jobs that are available may be different as some sectors undergo restructuring. For those looking to make a career switch into another sector, the Government has developed a suite of Professional Conversion Programmes (in short, PCPs) under the Adapt and

Grow programme. These career conversion programmes help mid-career jobseekers, including Professionals, Managers, Executives and Technicians (PMETs), to reskill and move into new occupations and sectors.

9. In July 2017, the Ministry of Manpower identified five priority sectors with strong potential for PMET job creation. And they are: Healthcare, Infocomm and Media, Wholesale Trade, Professional Services and Financial Services. In partnership with Workforce Singapore, our economic agencies are working closely with companies as well as Trade Associations and Chambers (TACs) to train and place local PMETs in these sectors.
10. We have just heard from SMS Koh Poh Koon on the Wholesale Trade sector. I will also use this as an example. In the Wholesale Trade sector, International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore), Singapore Management University (SMU), the International Chamber of Commerce Academy, and Workforce Singapore have jointly developed a PCP called the International Trading PCP. This provides training for the fundamental skills and knowledge of international trade, such as digital marketing, procurement, supply chain management, and logistics. In the past year, the programme has successfully placed close to 70 PMETs with trading companies.
11. Mr Kenny Ang is among those who have benefitted from this PCP. After having worked in Food Services for seven years, Mr Ang was keen to make a career switch. Despite his lack of experience in Wholesale Trade, he was able, through the PCP, to pick up the relevant skills and knowledge needed. Mr Ang is now a Marketing Executive for Raduga Pte Ltd, which is a regional distributor of mobility solutions and mobile phones. He manages the company's marketing campaigns and branding projects with regional partners.
12. The International Trading PCP is but only one of the many, many PCPs available. The Ministry of Manpower will be giving further updates on the Adapt and Grow initiative.
13. Chairman, please allow me to continue in Mandarin.

### 以产业需求为主导的培训 (Industry-Led Training)

14. 刚才我提到 PCP, “专业人士转业计划”如何协助更多有意中途转行的成熟员工, 掌握技能, 胜任新岗位。
15. 在我们开发更多培训项目的当儿, 其实最重要的是要确保培训内容, 可以符合企业的需求。因此, 政府在制定产业转型蓝图时, 一定会和雇主、商会、商团及工会密切合作, 确认相关领域所需要的技能, 并将这些技能纳入各个产业的技能框架当中。当个人和企业制定培训计划时, 其实只需要参考技能框架, 就能一目了然。到目前为止, 我们已经为 16 个产业勾画出技能框架, 而 WSQ 已经为多达 31 个技术的领域推出了技能与能力框架, 并有 9 个通用领域的技能与能力框架。

16. 在带动整个产业转型和技能提升的历程当中，雇主，是我们的重要伙伴。
17. 例如，惠普新加坡（HP Singapore）就积极地投资培育本地人才，并推出了“Brain Candy”学习平台，以及研究生课程等等计划。这些培训计划，例如数据分析和三维打印等新兴领域的技能，让他们的员工能够跟得上产业改变的进度，应对新的工作需求。惠普新加坡为了响应我们技能创前程计划（SkillsFuture），他们最近也在公司内部委任 20 名员工为“乐学善进大使”（Growth Mindset Ambassadors），这 20 位大使将负责把终身学习推广到公司的每一个团队，每一个角落。
18. 因此，我们希望更多雇主可以像惠普新加坡一样，带头推动员工进行培训，鼓励员工提升技能。在目前科技日新月异的情况下，所有的企业都必须跟进颠覆性科技发展的速度，确保员工成长，企业才可以发展。俗话说，勤劳好学的员工，就是一个好员工；而能够鼓励员工勤劳好学的老板，就是一个好老板。再说，重视员工的培训和给予相应的酬劳，也有助于吸引和留住好的员工。
19. 说到底，如果员工具备产业相关的技能、更具生产力，并能够支援公司的发展，雇主也能够从中受惠。因此鼓励员工提升技能，才是让企业能够长久保持竞争力的关键。

### **Translation (Paragraphs 14 – 19)**

14. Earlier, I mentioned how PCPs can enable older workers making a mid-career switch, to obtain the necessary skills and knowledge for their new job roles.
15. As we develop more training programmes for our people, it is crucial to ensure that these programmes are relevant to industry needs. While creating Industry Transformation Maps, the Government works closely with employers, TACs and unions to identify the existing and emerging skills required in the sector. These skills are consolidated into Skills Frameworks for each sector, which individuals and companies can use to make informed decisions on training. To date, Skills Frameworks for 16 sectors have been launched. In addition, there are 31 Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Frameworks covering technical skills and competencies, and 9 WSQ frameworks covering generic skills.
16. Employers are also an important partner in leading industry-wide training and supporting their employees in skills upgrading efforts.
17. For example, HP Singapore has invested in its local workforce through a range of training initiatives, including its own “Brain Candy” learning platform and graduate programmes. These training initiatives, such as courses in data analytics and 3D printing, and related emerging technologies, enable employees to keep up with changes within the industry. In support of the SkillsFuture movement, HP recently launched an in-house initiative that certified 20 employees as Growth Mindset Ambassadors. These Ambassadors will be tasked with promoting lifelong learning throughout the organisation.
18. The Government calls on more employers to take the lead in training efforts, and encourages workers to undergo training. In order to grow, all companies need to keep up with technological advancements and ensure the development of their employees. As the saying goes, employees who are hardworking and eager to learn are good employees; and employers who encourage employees to actively pursue learning are good employers. Furthermore, placing emphasis on employees’ training, while providing the appropriate compensation, is also useful in attracting and retaining talent.
19. Ultimately, employers will only stand to benefit when workers are equipped with industry-relevant skills, are more productive, and are better able to support their companies’ growth. Encouraging employees to deepen their skills is the key to ensuring companies are able to remain competitive.

### **ENABLING OUR PEOPLE WITH GLOBAL MARKET EXPERTISE**

20. Chairman, back to English. My colleagues have highlighted the need for Singapore companies to venture beyond our shores, especially to the rest of Asia. A lack of familiarity with overseas markets is often cited as the biggest

hurdle to internationalisation. I agree with **Mr Yee Chia Hsing** that our enterprises and our people need to develop greater global market expertise to capture Asia's potential.

21. The Government is committed to helping Singaporeans build up international networks and cross-cultural awareness through market immersion and overseas training programmes.
22. These programmes are aimed to equip individuals of different ages and experience – from young students to current and future business leaders.

#### *SkillsFuture Young Talent Programme (YTP)*

23. For our students, we have the SkillsFuture Young Talent Programme (in short, YTP). The YTP provides students with opportunities for overseas internships and work-study programmes in fast-growing Asian markets, including Southeast Asia. The YTP is open to students in universities, in polytechnics and in the Institute of Technical Education. And I am pleased to report that, to date, over 5,000 students have benefitted from the Young Talent Programme. And over the next three years, another 3,000 students can look forward to being sent out under this initiative.
24. On behalf of MTI, I would like to thank our industry partners and post-Secondary educational institutions (PSEIs) that have developed the YTP to this scale, since its launch in 2012.
25. Many students come back from the YTP relating their enriching experiences. With your permission, Mr Chairman, may I display a photo.
26. This is ITE College Central's Ms Lim Siying. Last December, Siying spent a stint working at Big C Supercenter in Lamphun, Thailand. During her stint with the hypermart operator, Siying led a group of 18 trainees and managed the store's labelling and inventory, as well as its promotional campaign for the cosmetics section. Siying shared with us that this exposure has sparked her interest in the different Southeast Asian markets, and she observed that the different Southeast Asian markets have diverse leadership and business styles. And she shared that the stint has also broadened her horizons and led her to make many friends overseas. And she's quite sure that whether she works for a company or she becomes a business owner, these friendships with many different nationalities will serve her very well throughout her lifetime. And that is the impact that we hope to make via the YTP.
27. Thus, the YTP not only offers our students valuable opportunities for cross-cultural learning, they allow them to learn, like Siying, to venture out of their comfort zones and build networks in today's increasingly interconnected world.

### *SkillsFuture Leadership Development Initiative (LDI)*

28. So that's for students. How about our current and future business leaders? Our current and future business leaders are able to tap on the SkillsFuture Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) to enhance their growth and international exposure to key overseas markets.

### *ASEAN Leadership Programme*

29. In his Budget Statement, the Minister for Finance, Minister Heng Swee Keat, announced the launch of the new ASEAN Leadership Programme under the LDI. We have heard earlier from Minister Iswaran – he spoke about the ASEAN Leadership Programme. The ASEAN Leadership Programme, under the LDI, offers opportunities for business leaders, current and future, to gain overseas market immersion and training that are vital for the development of global market expertise. As our Singapore companies expand across ASEAN and beyond, it is crucial that we have a pipeline of talents ready to lead and ready to support these efforts.
30. The ASEAN Leadership Programme will focus on creating a vibrant pool of business leaders who understand the unique business environments and the unique cultures of Southeast Asian markets. These countries offer significant growth opportunities for our companies, especially as ASEAN continues to integrate. The ASEAN region is an important one - we heard Minister Lim Hng Kiang talk about it. ASEAN's GDP is expected to grow 5.2% annually from 2018 to 2020. By 2030, ASEAN could become the fourth largest single market in the world, after China, the US and the EU – that will be ASEAN in year 2030. With more than 600 million people, and a middle class that is expected to rise from 38 million households in 2015, to 161 million households in 2030, ASEAN has lots of untapped promise and untapped potential.
31. In the second half of this year, the ASEAN Leadership Programme will be launched by Enterprise Singapore and its partner, the Human Capital Leadership Institute. Besides the knowledge of business cultures and leadership styles in key Southeast Asian markets, the ASEAN Leadership Programme will also arm participants with the chance to go in-market to learn from as well as to network with both private sector and public sector leaders.
32. This not only helps our business leaders better navigate the region and capture emerging trends, it extends their connections and growth into new markets. The ASEAN Leadership Programme is expected to support more than 100 Singaporeans over the next three years.

### **CONCLUSION**

33. In conclusion, the Government is deeply committed to enabling Singaporeans with the skills and knowledge to stay relevant. However, we cannot do this alone. We need employers, we need TACs, we need unions, we need PSEIs, and we need training providers to all work closely together to empower our people.

34. Now, on the individual level, we each have to take responsibility for our future by embracing lifelong learning. Only then, can we capture new potential, only then, can we grow in step with the changes in our economy and, only then, can we rise to overcome the new demands of tomorrow.
35. Thank you. And on behalf of the entire MTI team, I would like to wish everyone a happy Chap Goh Mei.