SPEECH BY MR CHOO THIAM SIEW, NAFA PRESIDENT, AT THE MEMORANDUM-OF-UNDERSTANDING SIGNING CEREMONY @ NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY ON 30 MARCH 2006 (THU)

Guest-of-Honour, Minister of State for Education and Trade & Industry and NAFA Patron, Mr Chan Soo Sen,
Dr Su Guaning, NTU President,
Professor Cham Tao Soon, Chairman of NAFA Council and NTU University Distinguished Professor,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen:

Good afternoon to all of you.

I am pleased to be here today and be part of what is surely a momentous occasion for NAFA and NTU – the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between both institutions, which marks a new chapter in our respective histories of our common quest for excellence in education.

With the formal cooperation framework now in place after months of negotiation, NAFA will team up with NTU to offer expanded higher learning options to our Diploma graduates who have excelled in their studies at NAFA and who seek to refine their creative skills and knowledge in related disciplines, such as Digital Filmmaking; Interactive Game Design or Visual Communication, etc.

This Agreement signifies NAFA’s first tie-up with a reputable local partner university. The advance placement arrangement presents qualified NAFA Diploma holders with the opportunity to pursue a direct honours degree at NTU over a shorter span of three years. Its rigours will also broaden their intellectual capacity and enhance their career prospects.

Since 1938, NAFA has been fostering the essence of cultural diversity in art forms and expressions. Our pedagogy and training methods have always focused on embracing the elements of Oriental and Western cultures; blending the traditional with the contemporary; and creating a unique style that reflects our identity, as well as the indigenous influences of the environment in which we live.
Today, we are proud to be recognised as one of Singapore’s foremost tertiary institutions. We offer an array of 14 diploma and 17 BA (Hons) and Master’s degree programmes in artistic disciplines to talented students from Singapore and the region. However, elevating the status of arts education is not simply a numbers’ game. What is more important is for our curriculum to be constantly revamped and tailored to keep abreast with rapid developments in this knowledge-based economy.

As a responsible and committed arts education provider, NAFA will uphold our principle of imparting the essential artistic skills and knowledge to our students, while exposing them to contemporary practices in the creative industry. In so doing, we nurture them into versatile individuals possessing maturity in both their outlook and craft. Such attributes will give our graduates an edge over others when they join the workforce.

Over the years, NTU has established a strong reputation for its superior academic training and for producing outstanding graduates with a practical focus. The imminent cooperation thus promises to be the onset of a rewarding relationship for both parties. We hope to garner valuable experience from NTU, as well as benefit from the professional expertise of its renowned faculty.

On this occasion, I wish to conclude by thanking my NTU counterpart, Dr Su Guaning and his staff for their effort in facilitating this institutional cooperation. It has been an encouraging start. So let’s work closer together to ensure that the journey that follows will be a smooth and successful one. Thank you!

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