Speech by Mr Cheng Wai Keung, NOL Group Chairman, at NTU’s Thank You Lunch to NOL for the Establishment of the NOL-Captain MJ Sayeed Scholarship, NTU, 3 Aug 2006

Good afternoon

Prof Su
Mrs Sayeed
Friends from the media
Colleagues from NTU and NOL
Ladies and Gentlemen

Captain Mahammad Jalaluddin Sayeed was the founding Managing Director of NOL. He was a visionary and an industrious entrepreneur. Responding to Singapore’s need for a national shipping line after her new-found independence, in 1968 Capt Sayeed crafted a proposal for a national carrier which was accepted by the Singapore Government. He was a courageous man, and not one to turn down a challenge. He gave up his career in Pakistan, brought along his wife and family, and came over to Singapore to help set up Neptune Orient Lines.

With his broad experience in shipping, Capt Sayeed led a young, inexperienced but pioneering team who benefited greatly from his leadership. Since then, NOL has grown into a US$7 billion global transportation and logistics company, providing world-class shipping, integrated end-to-end logistics services and supply chain solutions.

I was happy to have the privilege of meeting Capt Sayeed and Mrs Sayeed in Singapore when they visited us in July 2004. He must have been very proud of what we have achieved over these short decades. He would have been fulfilled knowing that he started it all the way back in the 1960s.

The day we learnt of Capt Sayeed’s demise in Karachi last September was a sad one for us at NOL. We decided to set up a scholarship in memory of Capt Sayeed for his pioneering contributions to the maritime industry in Singapore.

With the NOL-Capt MJ Sayeed Scholarship, we hope that the pioneering spirit of Capt Sayeed will inspire many generations of young people, from Singapore and overseas, to pursue a career in global transportation and logistics.

NTU’s Master of Science in Maritime Studies and other programmes will be an ideal fit with NOL’s spirit of contribution. We know that NTU will partner us well in our efforts to produce top-notch talents who are read to play leading roles in
Singapore’s drive to be an internationally-renowned maritime and logistics hub. For this, I thank Prof Su and the NTU team for their tireless energy in putting this programme together.

To our scholars, I hope you will always remember Capt Sayeed’s courage and tenacity in the face of challenges, and pursue your own visions and aspirations. Also, remember the NOL story – our success did not happen overnight, but was made possible because we had the leadership, focus and conviction to guide us ahead, to go beyond our boundaries.

Thank you.