Speech by

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NTU-TUM MOU SIGNING CEREMONY

Monday, 31 August 2009, 7.50pm
TUM Asia (10 Central Exchange Green 03-01 Pixel Building)

Your Excellency Mr. Jörg Ranau,
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Singapore,

Professor Wolfgang A. Herrmann,
President of Technische Universität München (TUM),

Prof. Rudolf Schilling,
Vice President of TUM,

Dr Markus Waechter, Managing Director
of the German Institute of Science and Technology - TUM Asia,

Distinguished guests,

Friends and Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,
It is my pleasure to be here with all of you today, to celebrate the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Technische Universität München (TUM).

First of all, let me congratulate the GIST-TUM Asia on your new name. The German Institute of Science and Technology (GIST) has been a close and active partner in promoting linkages between the higher education institutions, industry and research in Singapore and Germany. We at NTU share your celebrations in the launch of your new name, brand new look and highly impressive new premises.

Today's signing and the opening of GIST-TUM Asia's new premises mark a signature milestone in ties between Singapore and Germany's education sector, particularly for the graduate education landscape of our two countries.

The rapid globalization of science and technology in the past decade has significantly changed the landscape of graduate education.

The increasingly complex global market of the 21st century requires countries like Singapore and Germany to build up a technically
competent research workforce equipped with diverse skills and perspectives to enable them to create and sustain international excellence and leadership in different niche areas.

To achieve this ultimate goal, one strategic approach for NTU is to globalise its graduate degree programmes through forging strong collaborative partnerships with premier overseas institutions. These programmes with strategic and elite partners like TUM are vital formalized gateways for our researchers to learn from the best in the field, and for NTU to attract talented researchers from the renowned institutions around the world.

The ties between NTU and TUM go back some years ago, when the first Joint Master of Science programme in Industrial Ecology was established. In July 2005, NTU's School of Electronics and Electrical Engineering (EEE) also established the joint Master of Science programmes with the Department of Electrical Engineering & Information Technology, TUM in Integrated Circuit Design (ICD).

Two years later, in July 2007, we established a Masters programme in Microelectronics (ME). This month, we are commencing a new
joint MSc programme in Aerospace Engineering under the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering.

I am also pleased to note that one of the TUM faculty, Professor Paolo Lugli is also the Co-Principal Investigator in one of NTU's successful National Research Foundations' research programmes, "The manufacturability of carbon nanotube-based printed electronics" with Co-Principal Investigator A/Prof Zhang Qing of EEE and Principal Investigator A/Prof Mary Chan of School of Chemical and Biomedical Engineering.

As partners in progress, NTU and TUM are keen to deepen bilateral relationship and grow the spectrum of our collaborative efforts, building upon the success of past and existing joint activities.

In fact, the working relationship and rapport between faculty at NTU and the faculty at TUM are excellent. The first Joint NTU-TUM research Workshop, which featured presentations on aerospace, IC design, microelectronics, chemistry and related research, was held in NTU in September 2008. There was also participation from the industries including EADS, Siemens, Infineon and the German Federal Armed Forces. It was during the workshop that NTU and
TUM entered into a Letter of Intent on 3 September 2008, with a view to work towards a joint Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme and research collaborations in areas of common interest and mutual benefit.

Following that, in April 2009, a second Joint Workshop was held in TUM, Munich. Areas covered included Integrated Circuit Design, Micro- and Nano-electronics.

Since that time, both universities have reached substantial understanding in the development of the joint Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) with the signing of an Agreement governing the Joint Supervision of Doctoral Theses on 27 April 2009 by NTU Provost Professor Bertil Andersson and Vice-President of TUM Professor Schilling. Under this joint PhD programme, students will be co-supervised by faculty members from each institution and have the opportunity to spend some time at the host institution. Successful PhD candidates shall be jointly issued a PhD degree under the seals of NTU and TUM.

This new collaboration marks a new chapter in the history of our two universities and significantly strengthens our relationship in education
between our two countries. For a start, the collaboration in graduate education will be between TUM’s Department of Electrical Engineering & Information Technology and NTU’s EEE in Integrated Circuit Design, Micro and Nanoelectronics.

We plan to progressively expand it to the other areas such as Aerospace, Transportation, Computational Sciences, Chemistry and even the fields of study offered by the School of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, and beyond.

A possible list of projects of common interest to both parties has already been identified and the next phase is to identify qualified students to work on these projects. I am pleased to announce that both NTU and TUM will provide scholarships for outstanding PhD students.

This MOU is genuine proof of the commitment by NTU and TUM to optimize the synergy from our training expertise and facilities for our graduate talents and faculty. By pooling together our complementary strengths and working towards industry needs, we are charting new territory and re-defining the paradigms of post-graduate education for Europe, Asia and the rest of the world. I am sure other universities
will be turning to us to learn from our model and together, we will enrich the quality of higher education internationally.

Thank you.