

**OPENING REMARKS BY DR TONY TAN KENG YAM, CHAIRMAN  
OF NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION, AT THE CREATE  
CONSTRUCTION COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY ON TUESDAY, 28  
JULY 2009 AT 2.45PM**

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**Deputy Prime Minister**

**Ministers**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Thank you for joining us at the CREATE Construction  
Commencement Ceremony today.**

**I am delighted to welcome Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for  
Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean, who has been appointed the new Deputy  
Chairman of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Board, together  
with all members of the new NRF Board.**

**Today is the first meeting of the new Board and I look forward to the input  
and guidance of Board members as we discuss plans and initiatives to  
develop and strengthen research, innovation and enterprise in Singapore.**

## **Rising R&D Investments in Singapore**

**The annual survey of R&D in Singapore, carried out by the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR), reported that Singapore is fast establishing itself as an R&D powerhouse.**

**The nation's overall expenditure on R&D increased by an unprecedented 26.5% to hit S\$6.3 billion in 2007.**

**As a percentage of GDP, the gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) rose from 2.31% in 2006 to 2.52% in 2007.**

**We are on track to achieve our target, set in 2006, of GERD rising to 3% of GDP by 2010.**

**Singapore's research talent base has likewise, continued to expand, growing by 9% from 25,000 in 2006 to over 27,000 in 2007.**

**All indications are that this rising trend would continue.**

**This bodes well for Singapore's research environment and shows that we have made considerable progress in building up our capability for research and development and establishing Singapore as a vibrant global hub for cutting-edge R&D.**

## **Significance of CREATE**

**The Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council (RIEC) chaired by the Prime Minister approved the concept of the Campus for Research**

**Excellence and Technological Enterprise (or CREATE in short) at its first meeting in July 2006.**

**CREATE is envisioned as a research facility that brings together in one physical location, a selection of the top research universities of the world, working on inter-disciplinary research projects in collaboration with each other and with the Singapore research community.**

**CREATE would congregate some of the best research minds in the world from diverse backgrounds and cultures, serve to excite our own researchers and act as a magnet to attract scientific talent from around the globe.**

**We are hopeful that the CREATE environment would nurture a cadre of extraordinary scientists, whose discoveries and innovations could generate new areas of growth for Singapore's economy.**

**CREATE is a significant investment – the government has committed S\$360 million to build the facility.**

**This commitment reflects the importance the Government places on the need for continued investments in research capabilities that will keep our economy competitive in the long term.**

### **Strategic Location of CREATE**

**CREATE is ideally located within the new NUS University Town, just across from the main NUS campus and the National University**

**Hospital, close to the science parks and in the vicinity of One-North, host of Biopolis and Fusionopolis.**

**It will thus become an integral part of the high tech south-western technology corridor of Singapore, contributing to the character and vibrancy of the area.**

**Researchers at CREATE will benefit from being part of a multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary scientific community.**

### **Inter-Disciplinary Research at CREATE**

**CREATE is not just any research campus.**

**It sets out to bring about inter-disciplinary research.**

**The labs are designed to enable the easy interaction of researchers working in different disciplines and can be readily configured and reconfigured to serve this need.**

**We believe that research which involves scientists from different disciplines coming together to solve a major challenge often offers the highest probability for breakthroughs to occur.**

**The Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology or SMART Centre, the first research centre in CREATE, has set up three 'Inter-Disciplinary Research Groups' or IRG in short.**

**The 3 IRGs are: Infectious Diseases, Centre for Environmental Sensing & Modeling and Biosystems & Micromechanics.**

**Researchers from various disciplines are working in each of these IRGs.**

**Besides MIT, NRF has recently signed an agreement with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Israel to set up a similar research lab in CREATE, working with NUS and NTU scientists in the area of regenerative medicine.**

**Several other Israeli universities and top universities from other parts of the world have expressed keen interest to be part of CREATE as well.**

**Like SMART, these research centres will host inter-disciplinary research programmes involving faculty, researchers and students from their parent institutions collaborating with their counterparts in Singapore.**

**CREATE will therefore have a great concentration of diverse talents carrying out cutting edge research in multiple areas.**

**The success from these multi-disciplinary teams from world renowned universities and research laboratories will make Singapore a hotbed for cutting edge research, technology innovation and enterprise.**

**The new knowledge they generate and the industries that could be spawned from the new knowledge would help us move more towards a more knowledge-based innovation-driven economy.**

**CREATE is not just about research.**

**The last two letters of CREATE – T and E stand for Technological Enterprise.**

**We want the research outcomes to be applied for the benefit of the society and economy.**

**There is therefore also the emphasis on the commercialisation of intellectual property arising from research in the CREATE entities.**

**The SMART Centre, for instance, has an Innovation Centre to bring innovation to the market, drawing from the success and wide ranging experience of technology commercialisation at MIT.**

### **Conclusion**

**Before I close, I wish to acknowledge the good work of the CREATE Master Planning and Development Committee that is behind the design of the CREATE building we see today.**

**The Committee is chaired by NRF advisor Professor Lui Pao Chuen, who has rounded up a truly multi-agency team for the task.**

**They come from NUS, NTU, A\*STAR, Building & Construction Authority, Economic Development Board, Jurong Town Corporation, Land Transport Authority, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources**

**and Singapore Land Authority, plus SMART Centre and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology or ETH.**

**I look forward to the completion of the CREATE building in 2011 and breakthroughs in research and innovation coming out of CREATE.**

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