

**WELCOME SPEECH BY PROFESSOR TAN CHORH CHUAN,
PERMANENT SECRETARY (NATIONAL RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT), AT THE 2024 IEEE CONFERENCE ON ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE (IEEE CAI 2024) ON 25 JUNE 2024 AT MARINA BAY
SANDS, SINGAPORE**

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen.

1. Good morning. It is my great pleasure to join you today at the 2024 IEEE Conference on Artificial Intelligence. I warmly welcome the international AI community to Singapore, as well as all meeting delegates. We are indeed honoured that IEEE has chosen Singapore as the host city for this esteemed event. This is the conference's first appearance in Singapore, and it will add significantly to the vibrancy of our AI ecosystem. It also reflects our strong commitment to global collaboration in AI.
2. I was just speaking with our distinguished participants that this is a period of such explosive growth in the knowledge of AI. Discoveries in basic research of AI are very quickly finding their way into applications.
3. In Singapore, we have updated and launched our second National AI Strategy, or NAIS 2.0, in December 2023. It outlines our vision for Singapore to be a place where AI serves as a force for good, and where we harness AI to uplift and empower people and address major global

challenges such as environmental sustainability and climate change. In line with this, we will be doubling down on driving AI research; using AI to accelerate scientific research and innovation; and applying AI to make step-change enhancements in key sectors in the real world.

4. This is underpinned by underlying efforts to support talent through a range of talent schemes including professorships, investigatorships, and PhD talent. We have also been building up our data infrastructure and compute capacity.
5. Just to share one example of our efforts - the National Research Foundation (NRF) is developing a new funding programme to catalyse, support and drive the use of AI to transform and accelerate scientific discoveries and innovations. Since April, NRF has organised more than ten thematic workshops involving experts from AI and multiple scientific domains such as Materials Science, Hybrid Quantum Computing, and RNA Biology. The outputs from these workshops will help NRF to shape its programmes so as to better support research collaborations between AI and domain experts, attract and train researchers to bridge these disciplines, and establish the essential enablers for a sustained AI in research initiative.
6. Within and beyond these efforts, we recognise that close partnerships between companies, research entities and government agencies are critical to enable relevant AI solutions to be developed and deployed. One example is the Maritime AI Research Programme, hosted under A*STAR's Centre for Maritime Digitalisation (C4MD). Together with

research partners from our universities, the programme is developing AI solutions in areas such as near collision detection, predictive maintenance, and energy consumption prediction, working closely with industry partners such as PSA Marine, and with strong support from the Maritime Port Authority (MPA).

7. As we might expect, AI development and adoption comes with its own set of significant challenges. In this regard, top-flight conferences like the IEEE CAI are critical. IEEE CAI plays a pivotal role as a platform that brings researchers and practitioners together, not only to showcase successful cases of AI application, but also to share openly on the issues they face, and hopefully spark new ideas to address them. The topics in this year's programme have been chosen very thoughtfully to enable this. For example, discussions on the societal implications of AI, resilient and safe AI, are vital for advancing the field responsibly and inclusively.

8. To realise the full promise of AI, while mitigating unintended risks, I hope that all stakeholders including government agencies, research institutions and companies will work closely together to develop and apply AI for the public good. Together, we can harness the power of AI and work to create a better, more inclusive future.

In closing, I wish all participants a fruitful conference filled with insightful discussions and ground-breaking ideas. Thank you.

I hope you get the chance to enjoy Singapore, and that this conference will lead to new collaborations with each other, as well as more

partnerships with Singapore's ecosystem.