



EMBARGOED UNTIL 10 MAY 2005, 8.00 PM

10 May 2005

Joint Media Release

**GLOBALISED ECONOMIES, GLOBALISED LANGUAGES –
THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATION**

At the “Globalised Economies, Globalised Languages – The Importance of Translation” seminar this evening, the co-organisers, Nanyang Technological University (NTU), International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore) and Singapore Interpreters’ and Translators’ Union (SITU), unveiled plans by various partners to develop Singapore’s capabilities in the area of translation and interpretation, and to position it as a key player in the global translation and interpretation industry.

2 Recognising the importance of and need for multi-linguistic capabilities and multi-cultural sensitivities in a global environment, particularly with the expanding economies of China, India and other Asian countries, the partners – the Government, business enterprises, education institutions and the union – had come together to find ways to raise the level of professionalism and competencies in the local industry.

3 The Government had set up a multi-agency Translation and Interpretation Steering Committee in 2004 to further develop the translation and interpretation capabilities in Singapore. Initiated by IE Singapore at the request of the then-Trade and Industry Minister George Yeo, the Steering Committee, chaired by NTU President Su Guanng, had recommended a multi-pronged approach to develop a pool of multi-linguistic and multi-cultural talent locally.

4 For a start, NTU would offer a Graduate Diploma in Translation and Interpretation in English and Chinese to develop a pool of translators and interpreters in Singapore. The Graduate Diploma programme, which would commence in July 2005, would help to build up the local translation and interpretation industry, which in turn, would play a crucial role in enhancing Singapore’s standing as an international communications hub. (Please see ANNEX for more information on the Graduate Diploma in Translation and Interpretation.)

5 “With the increasing engagement of China by Singapore-based companies, those who are able to build their language skills to better communicate with the Chinese will enjoy even greater advantages in their Chinese business development,” said Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Vice Chairman of the Steering Committee and Chief Executive Officer of International Enterprise Singapore. “Moreover, given the robust growth in India and China, there is an opportunity for Singapore to take on the role of a useful arbitrator in trade, investments and knowledge between the two economic entities. Singapore’s role as a value-adding node will be further enhanced if we have a pool of



professionals and businessmen trained in or with access to translation and interpretation capabilities,” added Mr Lee.

6 Recognising this, IE Singapore would sponsor companies who are keen to sharpen their employees’ language capabilities for successful international business development, through its Manpower for Internationalisation Programme. “This is an excellent opportunity for those who have or are planning to have frequent dealings with China to build up their language skills for the market,” said Mr Lee. (Please see ANNEX for more details on the Manpower for Internationalisation Programme.)

7 The Steering Committee had also proposed accreditation through SPRING Singapore to evaluate companies’ translation and interpretation capabilities and to enhance the translation and interpretation industry’s standards.

7 For the private sector, the Steering Committee had suggested the formation of the Singapore Translators Association (STA), to drive industry development. Said Mr Tan Dan Feng of Interlexis Pte Ltd, who currently heads the association pro-temp committee, “We have been actively drawing on the best practices of other international translators associations. We have in-principle agreements with several of these in the areas of affiliations, publications, events and information sharing.” The STA’s constitution, drawing on the best practices of these other international translators associations, will be finalised in June 2005 and is expected to be formally registered by September 2005.

8 The labour movement, through the Singapore Interpreters’ and Translators’ Union, is lending its strong voice and support too. SITU has worked hard to enhance the scheme of service for interpreters and translators in the public sector. Looking ahead, the challenges facing the SITU would include – attracting and retaining talented members, training and upgrading of members, and raising of the members’ professionalism.

Jointly issued by:

**NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
INTERNATIONAL ENTERPRISE SINGAPORE
SINGAPORE INTERPRETERS’ AND TRANSLATORS’ UNION**



Nanyang
Technological University



For media enquiries, please contact:

Sophia Lim
Manager
Corporate Communications Office
Nanyang Technological University
Tel: 6790 6684
Handphone: 9683 4733
Email: Sophia_lim@pmail.ntu.edu.sg

Natalie Choo
Assistant Manager
Corporate Communications Division
International Enterprise Singapore
Tel: 6433 4573
Mobile: 9763 3751
Email: natalie_choo@iesingapore.gov.sg

Lim Beng Gii
Senior Executive
Corporate Communications Department
National Trade Union Congress
Tel: 6213 8186
Handphone: 9645 4742
Email: limbg@ntuc.org.sg