



Speech by Mr Benedict Cheong, CEO, Temasek Foundation at the Launch of the Temasek Foundation – Nanyang Technological University Public Administration Programme in Lao PDR

Ambassador Yong Chanthalangsy, Director-General, Institute of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lao PDR,

Mr Bouleau Phandanouvong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lao PDR

Professor Er Meng Hwa, Vice President (International Affairs), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore,

Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sabaidee, Good Morning.

In March 2009, Temasek Foundation supported its first programme in public finance management for senior public officials in Lao PDR. The programme was a success!

2 Today, we are launching a programme in partnership with the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, and this is our 10th programme in Lao PDR.

3 Asia continues to develop at a good pace. But for economic growth to be sustained, we need strong institutions led by capable leaders. And our officials and leaders need to learn from each other. That is why Temasek Foundation is supporting this programme in public policy, public administration, and governance. About 100 senior officials from the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Lao Youth Union will participate in the programme and they will then share the learning with many more.

4 Indeed, in recent years, Temasek Foundation has increased support for public administration capability with 51 programmes to date.

5 The foundation was set up in 2007 by Temasek, a Singapore investment company. The foundation supports human and social capital development through capability programmes in health care, education, urban management, public administration, and disaster-preparedness, and also through leader- and student-exchange programmes. To date, we have around 300 programmes across Asia from India to SE Asia to China.

6 Why do we support such programmes? Communities in Asia have a shared history – our pasts are connected to each other. We have a shared heritage – our cultures and customs are similar. So now, we hope to build a shared future in Asia together, by learning from each other and working together. Temasek Foundation hopes to contribute to this vision.

7 For this programme, while Temasek Foundation has committed a grant of about 375,000 US dollars. We would like to thank the Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Lao Youth Union for co-funding the programme. Thank you for your strong leadership and support which will ensure that the programme is a success.

8 I would also like to thank our partner from Singapore – the Nanyang Technological University and the Nanyang Centre for Public Administration. Our partnership with the Nanyang Centre for Public Administration is strong and has resulted in positive outcomes in other communities in past programmes. Professor Er Meng Hwa and your team, thank you for your continued partnership.

9 I would like to mention our sincere appreciation to Honourable Vice Minister Sengphet Houngbounnong who will be joining us shortly to witness the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. Despite his very busy schedule, he has made time to lend us his support. With the leadership and commitment of everyone involved, I am confident that the programme will bring about good outcomes in institutions in Lao PDR in the long run.

10 *Khob Chai*, Thank you.