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**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT HALIMAH YACOB AT THE SCHOOL  
OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL SCIENCES RENAMING  
EVENT ON THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2018, 930AM AT THE  
SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills)

Mrs S R Nathan and family

Faculty and students of SUSS

Community partners from the social services sector

Ladies and gentlemen

A very good morning to everyone. This is my first visit to the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) since it acquired its new status as Singapore's sixth autonomous university last year.

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We gather here this morning to mark another significant milestone for the university. Today's renaming ceremony honours one of our nation's outstanding leaders who distinguished himself in the field of social service – the late President, Mr S R Nathan. Mr

Nathan was an extraordinary man in many ways. Despite challenging family circumstances, he completed secondary education while holding a job and only entered university at 28. Being a purposeful and focused learner, he graduated with distinction from a University Diploma in Social Studies.

Mr Nathan was a sterling example of service and outstanding values. Those of us who knew him will not forget his unwavering passion for inclusivity. He always had a heart for those who were less fortunate. He also believed strongly that education is a social enabler. Till today, anecdotes continue to abound about how he would ask for a list of needy students and families, and personally send encouragement and financial aid out of his own pocket. And the most amazing thing is that he did all of these in his quiet and unassuming way, without expecting anything in return.

During his term as the President, Mr Nathan rallied the social services sector and encouraged everyone to constantly look for

fresh solutions to emerging societal issues. He started the President's Challenge. As a firm believer of life-long education, he also advocated many educational causes, emphasising the importance of charting one's life course in order to emerge stronger and useful to the community.

In some sense, the mission of SUSS is closely aligned with Mr Nathan's purpose in life. The university plays a strategic role in social sciences education landscape. The university aims to nurture its students to be lifelong learners, ready to serve society.

Therefore, in honour of Mr Nathan's legacy, I am happy to announce that the School of Human Development & Social Services will be renamed the S R Nathan School of Human Development.

This new name recognises the potential impact of the school's academic programmes and research which are closely aligned with

Mr Nathan's lifelong commitment of uplifting fellow Singaporeans and forging closer social cohesion.

The School's vision "Transforming Lives, Serving Society" is a fitting tribute to Mr Nathan. I am confident that his contribution to Singapore's social services sector, the labour movement and other nurturing professions, will continue to inspire future generations of students from the School to embrace a culture of inclusivity and empathy for the underserved.

As a multi-disciplinary School, the S R Nathan School of Human Development will focus on the applied study of the socio-cultural needs of human well-being, across a broad spectrum of community-driven disciplines. The School's teaching and research will span a range of strategic factors determining the abilities of the individual, the family and society. With programmes from Early Childhood Education to Gerontology, the School's programmes will cover humanity's development from young to old.

Social work, Counselling and Life Coaching will be at the heart of the School's work. Other programmes such as Art Education, Human Resource Management and Community Leadership will recognise the dynamic relation between the individual and the community.

The School will build strong connections amongst alumni, community partners, industries, teaching associates and government agencies.

Ladies and gentlemen

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I am privileged to be here with you today. The naming of the

S R Nathan School of Human Development is a significant milestone for SUSS. It is also to honour the memory of someone who was relentless in his lifelong mission to help others. I am confident that the S R Nathan School of Human Development will

continue to inspire future leaders to create significant and sustainable social impact in Singapore and the world.

Congratulations and thank you.

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