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**SPEECH BY DR YEO NING HONG, MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION AND SECOND MINISTER FOR DEFENCE (POLICY) AT THE GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY OF THE SINGAPORE AVIATION ACADEMY AT TELOK PAKU ROAD ON TUESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 1990 AT 10.00 AM**

I am happy to join you this morning for the ground-breaking ceremony of the Singapore Aviation Academy.

The Year 1990 is expected to usher in a new decade of high air traffic growth. Forecasts by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) envisage that by the year 2000, the Asia Pacific region would have captured 40 per cent share of the world's international passenger market. This means that the region's international passenger traffic will treble from just 67 million in 1988 to 187 million by the year 2000.

Such high traffic volumes will require increased and improved airport infrastructure in the region. As our contribution toward civil aviation in the region, Singapore will spend \$1.6 billion in the coming decade to improve and upgrade its airport infrastructure, for example, a third passenger terminal; extension of the second runway to 4,000 metres; additional cargo agents building; and retrofitting of Terminal I. But infrastructure upgrading alone is not enough.

The success of an airport depends on the quality and dedication of its workforce. Changi Airport has won many acclamations for its efficiency, speed, safety standards and quality of service. To be voted the Best Airport in the World, twice in a row, by discriminating international business travellers, in 1988 and 1989, is indeed an honour, given the keen competition among the thousands of airports worldwide. A world-

class airport needs a world-class workforce, skilled, competent, dedicated and well-trained, imbued with a mission to give of their best.

The specialist personnel in this workforce come from our Civil Aviation Training Centre located at Seletar. The Centre has been conducting courses in Air Traffic Control, Airport Fire Fighting and Rescue Services and Airport Management since 1958.

Over the years, the Training Centre has developed an international track record of providing quality training in all aspects of civil aviation management. In 1977, the Centre was declared by the First meeting of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Civil Aviation and Related Services, as an ASEAN Centre of Excellence for its courses in Air Traffic Control, Airport Fire and Rescue Services, and Aeronautical Information Services. The following year, it was selected by the United Nations Development Programme and the International Civil Aviation Organisation as a designated Regional Training Centre for the Asia-Pacific Region.

These regional and international recognition had attracted many foreign trainees to the school. To date, more than 5,000 personnel had been trained. Half of them are foreign trainees from some 70 countries in the Asia-Pacific, Middle East and African regions.

We must look ahead. In the coming years, with the fast-growing aviation market, there will be greater demands for more airport personnel, both at the operational and management levels in Singapore and around the world. It is timely that we take stock of new training requirements and pursue new strategies and initiatives to help meet these needs.

CAAS has decided to upgrade the present Training Centre. The new training institution will be known as the Singapore Aviation Academy. It will be the first of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Academy will be housed in a brand new \$40 million Complex expected to be operational by end 1991. It will offer both basic and advanced aviation courses. It will work closely with international aviation institutions and organisations such as ICAO and FAA (US Federal Aviation Administration) to organise joint courses, information exchange, and collaboration on research projects to promote civil aviation in the Asia Pacific region. The Complex will be double the size of the existing Training Centre, with state-of-the-art equipment and training simulators. Together with on-the-job hands-on training at Changi Airport nearby, the Academy will provide a total training environment of world standards.

Ten years ago when Mr Ong Teng Cheong, then Minister for Communications, laid the Foundation Stone for Changi Airport, few would have imagined that Changi Airport would in the short span of ten years become one of the foremost air hubs in the world. It is my hope that ten years from now, the Singapore Aviation Academy will also become one of the major aviation training centres of the world.

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