



Mita Duty Officer Media/MTA/SINGOV
09/30/97 12:56 PM

To:
cc: (bcc: Bing Tang NG/MTI/SINGOV)
Subject: (EMBARGOED) Speech by Tang Guan Seng, 1 Oct 1997, 9AM

Singapore Government PRESS RELEASE

Media Division, Ministry of Information and the Arts, #36-00 PSA Building, 460 Alexandra Road, Singapore 119963. Tel: 3757794/5

EMBARGO INSTRUCTIONS

The attached press release/speech is **EMBARGOED till AFTER DELIVERY**.
Please check against delivery.
For assistance call 3757795

SPRInter (Mk II), Singapore's Press Releases on the Internet) is located at:
<http://www.gov.sg/mita/pressrelease/sprint.htm>

Embargoed till delivery
Please check against delivery

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY TANG GUAN SENG
SENIOR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY (MTI)
AT THE OPENING OF 13TH APEC INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE &
TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP MEETING
9.00AM, 1 OCTOBER 1997, MARINA MANDARIN HOTEL**

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

A very good morning. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of you to Singapore.

2 Much has been said about the striking economic growth of the Asia Pacific region. It has been predicted that as the region continues its rapid development, it will lead the world economy into the 21st century.

3 I believe I do not have to emphasize further the importance of scientific

and technological cooperation for the growth potential of the region to be expanded. It is for this very reason that the APEC Industrial S&T Working Group was formed in 1989. Each member economy, although different in many ways, shares the common belief that such cooperation will sustain and enhance our regional growth and prosperity. Our meeting here today, gives us the opportunity to reaffirm this belief and to discuss ways to achieve even greater cooperation.

4 I am pleased to note that the areas put up for discussion at each meeting have always been met by enthusiastic response from member economies. The most recent testimony to this is the response to the subject of "Creativity and Mobility of Researchers Across APEC" - several more new initiatives have been put forward since the Seoul Ministers' Conference last year. Singapore supports this initiative whole-heartedly, as we fully recognise its importance and relevance to us. Researchers and scientists are the fundamental factor driving science and technological development in APEC economies. Our constant challenge is to generate and maintain an adequate pool of researchers, and to improve the quality and productivity of their research work.

5 As all of us have witnessed, rapid economic development in the region also brings about a surge in the demand for quality healthcare and more effective pharmaceutical products. And in order for effective medical solutions to be developed and delivered, it is crucial that we have in place Good Clinical Practice (GCP), which ensures that clinical research data is credible, and that the rights, integrity and confidentiality of patients are safe-guarded. Much as the ICH (International Conference on Harmonisation) was initiated between Europe, US and Japan to facilitate the mutual acceptance of clinical data by the regulatory authorities, it is timely for our region to also work towards a common platform in terms of GCP guidelines.

6 Singapore is pleased to be able to contribute by setting up and funding an APEC Co-ordinating Centre for Good Clinical Practice (APEC CCG). The Centre, set up in mid 1996, remains focused on its objectives to provide a platform for the economies to come together to address GCP needs and to provide a common framework for medicines to be evaluated for safety, quality and efficacy. This will help pave the way for more research and development work to be done, particularly to meet unique medical needs of the region. The increasing number of pharmaceutical companies moving to the region to undertake R&D sends a clear signal that we are moving in the right direction in the development of an extensive pharmaceutical industry in the region.

7 At this point I am honoured to launch the APEC CCG Website. The Centre has developed it with a set of 3-fold objectives; firstly, to foster active linkage with the relevant bodies among the APEC economies; secondly, to provide information on the services and news of clinical trials and GCP activities in APEC economies; and thirdly, to encourage interactions and sharing of experiences and facilitating communications among member economies.

8 I look forward to your contribution to this website. Only with your active participation will we be able to have an information-rich website which will be effective in facilitating the development and delivery of medical solutions across populations in the region in the quickest time.

9 On this note, I would like to wish you a very successful meeting. I also hope that our overseas delegates will find time amidst your busy schedule to visit and enjoy some of the places of interest around the island. Thank you.