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Subject: (EMBARGOED) Speech by Mr Yeo Cheow Tong, 22 Jan 2000, 11.30am

# *Singapore Government*

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

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### **SPEECH BY MR YEO CHEOW TONG MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NEW FINGER PIERS OF TERMINAL 1, SINGAPORE CHANGI AIRPORT ON SATURDAY, 22 JANUARY 2000, 1130 AM**

1 Changi Airport Terminal 1, or T1, as it is more affectionately known, holds a special significance for Singaporeans. For many, T1 was their gateway to the world. Many a farewell photograph has been taken in front of the miniature waterfall in its departure hall. This is often the travellers' last impression of Singapore before they board their plane.

2 T1 is now nearly 20 years old. She could be considered "middle-aged" compared to some of the newer airports in the region. However, T1 wears her age well and has maintained her good looks with the help of several facelifts. These facelifts have come in the form of refurbishment and new facilities and services to meet the evolving needs of travellers. Regular improvements, not only to physical appearance, but also to the systems and procedures – such as the passenger handling and ground handling systems - ensure that T1 keeps up with her younger sister, Terminal 2 in every way.

## **Changi Airport Development Policy**

3 Herein lies a secret behind Changi Airport's success in achieving the enviable status of best airport in the world year after year. Apart from our policy of building capacity ahead of demand, it is our willingness and ability to invest in additional infrastructure as well in upgrading existing facilities that ensures that users will always get the latest and the best at Changi Airport. This is our competitive edge. We never stop upgrading and improving ourselves.

4 Several hundred million dollars have been invested over the years in upgrading and improving both Terminals 1 and 2. Some \$200 million was spent in 1992 refurbishing Terminal 1 to give it a more modern appearance to make it as appealing as the then newly opened Terminal 2. Shopping areas and a new mezzanine floor were also added in the central core of the terminal. Then in 1994, another \$300 million was spent to extend Terminal 2 with an additional 2 new finger piers with more 14 aerobridges. Soon afterwards, it was decided that the 2 finger piers in Terminal 1 should be extended to add another 14 aerobridge gates.

## **New Finger Pier Extensions in T1**

5 We are here today to inaugurate this latest extension of T1's two finger piers, which cost \$420 million and took four years to complete. This will bring the total number of aerobridge gates at T1 to 33. The extension is timely given the sharp pickup in passenger numbers. As a result of this extension, come rain or shine, all passengers will enjoy the comfort and convenience of embarking or disembarking directly through a connecting aerobridge.

6 The new aerobridge gates are also designed to accommodate all types of commercial aircraft, including the latest extended Boeing 777-200 aircraft. In fact, some of the aerobridges are configured for easy modifications to accommodate the future new larger aircraft. As part of this project, we have provided new shopping and dining facilities in the central transit area, and bigger transfer lounges for passengers. Nine additional remote parking bays for aircraft and two underground tunnels across the airside taxiways have been added. This would benefit the 45 passenger airlines that presently use T1. To add a softer, greener touch to the airport, CAAS has also introduced the world's first airport cactus garden featuring some 20 species of cacti from all over the world.

7 If you look at the two new pier extensions, you will notice they are quite different from the old piers. The new piers do not just add capacity, but give a new experience to travellers. We have moved away from the past design concept of a pier, to fully exploit the use of high ceilings and glass to create an open and spacious feeling for passengers.

8 Passengers alighting at these two pier extensions will be greeted by the sight of the whole airfield through a glass clad aerobridge. The sense of spaciousness and openness continues into the terminal building with the high ceiling and ample natural light, complemented by the soothing colours of the interior. Wider walkways and travellators are provided so that it will be pleasant to walk to the furthestmost gates. No details have been overlooked, right down to the design of the restrooms, with some having a fully equipped Parents' Room to allow parents to nurse their babies in private. This new pier design has set a new benchmark and is a glimpse of what piers would be like in Terminal 3.

### **What Next?**

9 Completion of the pier extension is not the end of upgrading for Terminal 1. CAAS will spend \$20 million to upgrade the departure and arrival halls of Terminal 1. The project will commence next month and take one and a half years to complete. All check-in counters in Terminal 1 will be replaced with newly designed counters for more efficient and friendlier service. Plasma screens will replace LED displays above the check-in counters. The arrival hall will be expanded and the taxi queue area will be air-conditioned.

10 When completed in 2001, these improvements together with the pier expansion project, will increase the capacity of Terminal 1, bringing its existing capacity of 16 million passenger movements per annum closer to its ultimate capacity of 21 million. Terminal 1 will be well placed to cater to the needs of airline alliances in Singapore.

### **Terminal 3**

11 I am also pleased to say that plans are well underway for the development of Terminal 3. Conceptual design of Terminal 3 is almost ready and piling works for the basement will begin in the last quarter of this year. Terminal 3 will be ready by 2006, in time to cater for strong passenger traffic growth

expected in the region. With the three terminals, Changi will be able to handle up to 64 million passengers per annum, making it one of the largest airports in the region.

### **Teamwork and Cooperation**

12 Before I conclude, let me congratulate the team that made the Terminal 1 expansion project possible. This team comprised CAAS, PWD, SATS and CIAS, the Terminal 1 airlines, Takenaka Corporation, the main contractor and its sub-contractors. Major works had to be carried out even as the day-to-day normal operations were on-going. I also thank all passengers and other users at the airport for their understanding for any inconvenience caused during the expansion works.

13 On that note, I am pleased to officially declare the Terminal 1 pier extension open.