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**SPEECH BY DR ALINE WONG, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR
EDUCATION AT THE ANIMATION 2000 COMPETITION PRIZE
PRESENTATION CEREMONY, ON MONDAY, 30 OCT 2000, 4.00 PM, AT
THE NANYANG POLYTECHNIC AUDITORIUM**

Good afternoon Guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I am pleased to be here today to congratulate the winners of the Animation 2000 Competition.

2 Animation is one of late 20th century's most innovative and expressive contributions to the development and application of computer technology. Some of us may have seen the antics of Wallace and Gromit shown in local cinemas only recently. I myself am a fan of Disney type cartoon movies, the latest of which I saw was "The Prince of Egypt" which I enjoyed tremendously. When we see animation films, whether on TV or in cinemas, we only see the end product. Behind the characters are the works of animators who have conceptualised, created and breathed life into these characters. For the audience, the creative genius of the animators is exemplified by the programmes' accessibility and conceptual vigour.

3 Animation is an important avenue for creative expression. When I think of Animation, I am reminded of the correlation between the arts and sciences. The late Canadian philosopher Northrop Frye said that science allows us to see and interpret the world as it is, while the arts allows us to imagine what the world could be. The arts and sciences need not be a dichotomy, they can have a closely intertwined relationship. In the new economy, breaking old paradigms of thought and relationships can give rise to great leaps in innovation and creativity. The development of Animation is a classic case where the arts can complement the sciences.

4 To imagine, we have to be creative. The art of animation is closely linked to Information Technology. While IT is often perceived as the cold, scientific infrastructure of information, Animation provides the imaginative platform for seeing information. Because we are visual beings, animation appeals to our senses immediately.

5 The development of animation is often the result of teamwork. The camaraderie and esprit de corps that is imbued in a project team is a great boon to experiential learning. Work that develops as a result of teams brainstorming and bouncing ideas off each other is frequently better than what one individual can come up with alone. The educational value of animation therefore lies not only in its stimulation of the creative instinct in pupils, but also in its encouragement of the team spirit, not forgetting it is also fun to do.

6 Launched to promote the art of animation and the value of creative thinking among students, Animation 2000 is jointly organised by NAC's Arts Education Programme and the Nanyang Polytechnic. It offers a comprehensive programme that began with Animation Workshops in March and May this year. Attracting 120 teachers and 300 students, these workshops provided attendees with an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in animation. Other activities of Animation 2000 include this animation competition, Animation Week in October and the setting up of a website whose online tutorials bring students through the process of creating animation with different media. In addition, easy step-by-step animation creation guidebooks with CD-ROMs have also been produced to aid the learning process. I understand that the Animation Week in October, which included animation screenings and live demonstrations, received an overwhelming response with an attendance of over a thousand students. It was also the first time NAC invited an animation expert from the US to impart his skills and knowledge.

7 I am heartened to note the enthusiasm of our young students in participating

in the Animation Competition. I am told that some 114 participants from 23 schools have participated in this event. I must congratulate the schools especially the principals and teachers for identifying the enormous potential of animation and for taking up the challenge to offer their students a window on creative learning through this art form.

8 Finally, I would like to congratulate the National Arts Council and Nanyang Polytechnic for effectively putting together an enriching programme. I am pleased to see the NAC's Arts Education Programmes keeping up with technological developments while nurturing the artistic impulse of our students. I also commend Nanyang Polytechnic's Digital Media Design Centre for making a significant contribution in developing Singapore's and possibly SEAsia's first Animation Portal.

9 I wish all continued success.

Thank you.

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