

# Singapore Government **PRESS RELEASE**

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**SPEECH BY MR ONG TENG CHEONG, MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS,  
AT THE ASEAN INDONESIA-SINGAPORE SUBMARINE CABLE  
INAUGURATION CEREMONY AT COMCENTRE, EXETER ROAD  
ON FRIDAY, 8 AUGUST 1980 AT 10.15 AM**

In October 1978 we witnessed the beginning of a new era in ASEAN telecommunications with the commissioning of the first segment of the ASEAN Submarine cable network, the ASEAN Philippines-Singapore (P-S) Cable. Today, hardly two years later, ASEAN telecommunications has taken another step forward with the completion of the second segment of the ASEAN Submarine cable network - the Indonesia-Singapore Submarine Cable. The S\$63.7 million Cable with a capacity of 480 channels was completed in April 1980. It is 570 nautical miles long and links Ancol Cable Station in Jakarta with Katong Cable Station in Singapore. The Cable will complement existing satellite circuits in providing high quality telecommunication traffic including telephone, telegraph, telex and facsimile between Indonesia and Singapore.

I would like to congratulate Perumtel of Indonesia and the Telecommunication Authority of Singapore for making this project a success and completing it on schedule. In these days of high inflation rates and escalating costs, any delay in such a capital-intensive project will be costly. The speed which the various administrations worked towards achieving the completion of the first two segments of the ASEAN submarine cable network on schedule, augurs well for the realisation of the remaining segments of the ASEAN network.

Looking ahead ..... /2.

Looking ahead into the future, I see exciting plans being formulated between Singapore and Indonesia to further improve and upgrade telecommunication ties between the two countries. Two such plans are Singapore's proposed use of Indonesia's Palapa satellite and the Singapore-Medan submarine cable project.

Palapa is an Indonesian satellite system used primarily for her domestic communication needs. Indonesia has kindly offered the use of Palapa to the other ASEAN countries for their domestic and regional communications. Singapore's earth station to link up with the Palapa satellite system will be ready in early 1982. The Palapa satellite will play an important role in improving telecommunication links between Singapore and the outlying areas in Indonesia like Pulau Batam, Dumai, Pekanbaru, etc. We are also exploring other possible uses of Palapa by Singapore. These include non-commercial TV exchanges of sports and cultural programmes, and its use as a standby for transmission links within Singapore and between Singapore and the other ASEAN countries.

Another plan is the proposed Medan-Singapore submarine cable. This project which will provide a link from Singapore to Sumatra will augment the ASEAN Indonesia-Singapore cable which runs from Singapore to Jakarta. Medan is also being eyed as a potential focal point for submarine cables into the Indian Ocean to points in Sri Lanka, India, the Middle East and Europe. This Indian Ocean telecommunication highway when established, will improve the quality and reliability of telecommunication links between the ASEAN region and the rest of the world, particularly the Middle East and Europe. It would also optimize the usage of the ASEAN submarine cable network.

Together with the ASEAN submarine cable network, these plans for the future show the strong dedication of ASEAN countries to work towards a common goal of mutual benefit to all.

It is with this encouraging note that I have great pleasure in officially inaugurating the operation of the ASEAN Indonesia-Singapore submarine cable.