

Media Release

SMU China Forum explores “China’s Alternate Vision for the World” on the 25th Anniversary of Sino-Singapore diplomatic relations
Insights on “One Belt, One Road” strategy, key initiatives and global issues in the next phase of economic partnerships

Singapore, 16 November 2015 (Monday) – The Singapore Management University (SMU) hosted the **SMU China Forum 2015** today themed “China’s Alternative Vision for the World?”. The opening address was delivered by **Guest of Honour, Mr Lim Swee Say, Singapore’s Minister for Manpower**. Distinguished experts from the business, academic and government sectors shared insights on China’s “One Belt, One Road” initiative and the “Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation” strategy.

Eminent **keynote speakers** included **Professor Chen Zhimin, Dean, School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University; Professor Thomas Christiansen, Jean Monnet Professor of European Institutional Politics, and Co-Director of the Maastricht Centre for European Governance, Maastricht University; and Mr Jim Lai Chi Ming, Vice President, Tencent Corp.**

The Forum discussed how both countries can leverage the strong relations and distinct advantages to contribute to the “One Belt, One Road” and the “Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation” strategies in the next phase of economic partnership. The developments of these strategies are expected to influence global trade significantly.

Held just after Chinese President Xi Jinping’s visit in Singapore just over a week ago, the event delivered timely discussions and expert views on the current China-related hot topics that impact the global economy.

The Forum also marks the 25th anniversary of the Sino-Singapore diplomatic relations and partnerships, as well as Singapore’s 50th year of independence and SMU’s 15th birthday. Organised for the third year, the SMU China Forum aims to provide business leaders, policy makers and the academia with a common platform to attain in-depth understanding and exchange on current issues and trends that are shaping China’s growth critically.

At the same time, the Forum helps to also increase understanding on Singapore’s unique position and strategic perspectives. Undoubtedly, Singapore plays an integral role to China, the region and the world, serving as an important internationalisation base for China with its excellent connections worldwide and regional hub forte. Singapore was China’s largest source of foreign direct investments in 2014 and 2013, and is China’s second largest overseas investment destination in the first half of 2015. It is also the current Country-Coordinator for China-Asean relations, and played important roles in multi-lateral events such as the recent historic meeting between Mr Xi Jinping and Mr Ma Ying-jeou.

The invaluable exchange is important in anticipation of the growth of multi-faceted cooperation in numerous aspects, particularly with both countries strengthening and deepening cooperation in areas such as finance, leadership, education, innovation, culture and human resources development. Both are collaborating and playing pivotal roles on issues of common

interest and platforms such as the United Nations, World Trade Organisation, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and Asean. There will be many more new and all-rounded partnership aspects, including those on regional and international issues.

SMU President Professor Arnoud De Meyer said in his welcome remarks, “It is notable that Chinese President Xi Jinping said during his recent Singapore visit that a key factor for the development of Sino-Singapore ties is their young people, who need to understand the history and culture of both countries, and foster deeper friendship. I believe that knowledge institutions such as SMU and the multi-sector stakeholders at the Forum here today must share the same vision – that we play critical roles in nurturing youths and in being changemakers who shape and transform our future.”

With Mr Xi’s announcement of the third Sino-Singapore government-to-government (G-to-G) project in Chongqing, SMU aims to contribute to the third G-to-G project by working with Chinese university partners and industry partners in relevant applied research and talent development. SMU has strengths and capabilities to contribute to the four priority areas of collaboration in Chongqing -- financial services, aviation, transport and logistics, and information and communication technology.

Last year’s Forum touched on “The New Normal”. SMU has been organising multiple large-scale China-related fora both in Singapore and China every year since late 2012, when SMU’s China Initiatives was first formed. Besides the annual SMU China Forum, the University has also jointly organised global fora with Fudan, Tsinghua and Xinhuanet.

SMU’s strategic collaborations and relationships with China in the last three years have advanced tremendously. There has been significant progress in strengthening its expertise in China, and serving as a knowledge partner and platform for numerous Chinese entities and joint work. SMU now partners Chinese institutions as well as enterprises to offer study or internship exchange and even community service opportunities in China for students. It is also looking to conduct more research and leadership development for faculty and industry.

Prof De Meyer shared some highlights of SMU and its China Initiatives since establishment:

In China, SMU has established a PhD scholarship partnership with the China Scholarship Council (CSC), set up the SMU-Fudan Joint Research Centre in Development Studies, and together with the Shanghai Jiao Tong University formed the SMU-SJTU Joint Centre for Quantitative Economics and Finance.

SMU’s Master of Science in Applied Finance (MAF) programme, which is offered in China with SMU’s longstanding partner Xiamen University, has been ranked 2nd in Asia by FT Global Masters in Finance Pre-experience Ranking 2015. Recently, SMU’s Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) programme was the highest-positioned new entrant in the FT EMBA Ranking 2015, ranking 10th in Asia and 36th in the world.

In China, the University has launched the Peking University-SMU Masters of IT in Business (MITB) Dual Degree Programme and the Tsinghua University-SMU Masters of Science in CFO Leadership (MCFO) Dual Degree Programme. It is currently finalising a Dual-Masters degree partnership in MAF with a leading Chinese university partner to contribute talents to the “One Belt, One Road” initiative that includes the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

On industry partnerships, the University has collaborated with Huawei to conduct research on Information Security and Trust, and with Ping An Technology to establish Pinnacle, a research lab focusing on Big Data.

In youth entrepreneurial development, the SMU-Peeli Rural Entrepreneurship Programme, and the Asian Youth Entrepreneurship Programme were held.

SMU is the strategic partner of International Enterprise (IE) Singapore's Global ICT Talent Network in China, helping to facilitate ICT talent requirements of Singapore ICT companies expanding in-market, together with the partner university in China. Just last week, IE Singapore, SMU and Zhejiang University signed a MOU at the 11th Singapore-Zhejiang Economic and Trade Council (SZETC) meeting, to develop local ICT talents through local job placements and internship opportunities, exchange and study programmes as well as other cooperative activities.

Remarking that the links and ties have grown from strength to strength, and the pace of collaboration and interaction will accelerate even more, Prof De Meyer added, "SMU aims to contribute to the Singapore-China bilateral cooperation, by building and nurturing China-ready and bicultural graduates, and engaging in top-notch China-related research projects. We hope to achieve excellence in these through innovative and different ways, because it has always been part of SMU's DNA to be so."

For more information on SMU's China Initiatives, please visit <http://ci.smu.edu.sg/>

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About SMU China Initiatives

China plays an important role in SMU's next phase of growth and international reputation building. SMU China Initiatives was launched in late 2012 to focus on enhancing collaborations with existing universities as well as extending its network of partners in China, to develop win-win sustainable relationships.

SMU's long-term strategy in China is based on four priorities:

1. Raise the international profile, brand name and reputation of SMU in China
2. Improve the quality of student-intake for SMU's undergraduate, postgraduate and executive programmes
3. Engage faculty members in common research and PhD co-supervision with their counterparts at leading Chinese universities
4. Engage students in student exchange programmes and internships in China

About Singapore Management University

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to over 9,300 undergraduate and postgraduate students, SMU comprises six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors, masters and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg

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