

**Opening Remarks by SMU Provost Professor Lily Kong  
at the inaugural SMU Cybersecurity Forum and  
Presentation of AXA Chair Professorship of Cybersecurity  
Monday, 17 April 2017  
Mochtar Riady Auditorium  
Singapore Management University**

Mr Jean Drouffe (Jhawn Droof), CEO of General Insurance AXA Asia

Mrs Doina Palici-Chehab (Doe-ena Pa-lee-chee Sheh-hob), CEO of AXA Insurance  
Singapore

Professor Arnoud De Meyer, President of SMU

Mr Chaouki Boutharouite (Cha-ooki Boo-ta-rui-te), Selection Officer at the AXA  
Research Fund

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Good afternoon.

Welcome to the Singapore Management University for the inaugural SMU  
Cybersecurity Forum and Presentation of the AXA Chair Professorship of  
Cybersecurity.

The advent of the digital age has brought great progress and many benefits to our  
lives and to society. Information is now more easily accessible: people can  
communicate with others almost anywhere in the world; consumers enjoy increased  
convenience and more choices; businesses are able to extend their market reach;  
and new business models have developed.

However, the digital age has also brought cyber threats to individuals, businesses  
and governments – who will have to work together to defend against these threats.  
Therefore, holding the inaugural SMU Cybersecurity Forum today is both relevant  
and timely, and complements SMU's efforts in nurturing cybersecurity talent and  
conducting research into this important field of study.

SMU is the first institution of higher learning in Singapore to make cybersecurity a  
required part of the Information Systems curriculum. The Information Security &

Trust course has been a core course of the undergraduate curriculum for the School of Information Systems since 2004.

In 2014, SIS created an Information Security & Assurance track to further expand and strengthen our undergraduate offerings in cybersecurity. The ISA track answers the call from the government and industry to produce qualified cybersecurity professionals.

Starting from the new academic year in August 2017, SIS will introduce a revamped undergraduate curriculum which emphasizes creating innovative computing and information solutions for business and society. Students will build up their core skills and knowledge in the first two years. In their final two years, they will specialize in career tracks, one of which is Cybersecurity.

In the forthcoming academic year, SIS will also launch a new major on Smart-City Management & Technology, with Security Management & Data Privacy as one of its core courses.

Professor Robert Deng of SIS has played a significant role in the planning and delivery of cybersecurity courses since joining SMU in 2004. His passion and dedication to cybersecurity education has won him admiration and appreciation from colleagues and students alike.

But more than being a teacher of distinction and an able administrator, Professor Deng has also made his mark in cybersecurity research. Today's event serves to honour and celebrate the conferment of the prestigious AXA Chair Professorship of Cybersecurity to Professor Deng. He is the first named Chair professor at the School of Information Systems, one of only six AXA Chairs selected for this honour worldwide in 2016 and the only one from Singapore, as well as the only AXA Chair in Asia to undertake research in the Data & Technology risks cluster under the AXA Research Fund.

In addition to being a Professor of Information Systems, Professor Deng is also the Director of the Secure Mobile Centre, which is funded by Singapore's National

Research Foundation to develop efficient and scalable technologies and solutions that strengthen the security of mobile computing systems, applications and services. He is also the Dean of Postgraduate Research Programmes at SMU. Professor Deng has worked on areas including data security and privacy, multimedia security, and network and system security. He has more than 350 publications in international conferences and journals, along with 26 patents. He has served and is currently serving on the editorial boards of many international journals in cybersecurity, such as IEEE Transactions on Information Forensics and Security.

Among Professor Deng's numerous awards are the Outstanding University Researcher Award from the National University of Singapore in 1999 and the Lee Kuan Yew Fellow for Research Excellence from SMU in 2006. In January last year, Professor Deng was elevated to IEEE Fellow in recognition of his long history of professional contributions to the field of cybersecurity, and in particular for work on cybersecurity algorithms, protocols and systems.

As AXA Chair Professor of Cybersecurity, Professor Deng will undertake a research programme to systematically investigate a unified framework for protecting data. The research is expected to yield new security models, algorithms, protocols, and analysis techniques which will provide new ways of protecting data security and privacy.

While this chair professorship is housed in SIS, Professor Deng's work will be interdisciplinary, through the integration of his cybersecurity research with several of SMU's larger scale projects in the area of excellence we call "Analytics for Business, Consumer and Social Insights", cutting across technology, management and social science. Professor Deng and his team will have ample opportunity to collaborate with several labs and centres at SMU to develop, test and demonstrate new cybersecurity methods.

The conferment of the AXA Chair Professorship to Professor Deng serves as further recognition and affirmation of research excellence at SMU. It strengthens our efforts to attract and retain thought leaders and outstanding professors who deliver exceptional teaching experiences as well as create and share new knowledge

through their cutting-edge research. These scholars will provide impetus and strong support for our ambition to become a premier university in Asia.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in congratulating Professor Deng on this well-deserved honour. [CLAP] We look forward to learning more about his groundbreaking and impactful research in cybersecurity in the years to come.

We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to AXA for its generous support of Professor Deng's research and confidence in SMU's research environment and programme. We look forward to more partnerships with AXA in the future. I am confident that our collaborations will yield fruitful results and make a meaningful impact.

Thank you.