

**Opening Remarks by
Professor Yeo Tiong Min, Dean, SMU School of Law,
at the Opening Ceremony of the
SMU School of Law building
on Wednesday 15 March 2017**

Guest of Honour, Prime Minister

Lee Hsien Loong;

The Honourable the Chief Justice

Sundaresh Menon;

SMU President, Professor Arnoud De Meyer;

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen;

A very good morning to all of you and a warm welcome to our new 'home'.

Over the past three years, there has been much anticipation not just among my colleagues, our students and our alumni, but also among our partners in the business and legal fraternity, and we are most delighted and excited to have moved into this new premise. This state-of-the-art facility will be a space and platform for us to deepen our engagement with all our stakeholders.

Here, the SMU School of Law will continue to pursue a holistic, broad-based approach towards nurturing legal minds. In fact, this has become a distinguishing feature of our law school.

Interdisciplinary knowledge is today becoming increasingly relevant in legal practice. In a world of growing complexities, the law graduate of tomorrow needs to possess a deep reservoir of knowledge *and* cross-disciplinary expertise and mental agility to think, analyse and communicate. In this regard, we are grateful for the foresight of those who were involved in shaping the curriculum and ethos of this University and the SMU School of Law right from the start.

As a young law school, we are very proud to have produced many outstanding law graduates – some 800 over the last 6 years. They are now in private practice, public service, or contributing their legal skills and knowledge in areas outside of law. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to our law faculty for their dedication and conviction, and to our many donors and partners who have supported and believed in us over the last decade. Your generosity has motivated many talented

undergraduates to pursue excellence in the journey of their legal education.

It is without doubt that the new School of Law building will be a venue where legal minds will be able to meet, interact, network and collaborate. The new seminar spaces will welcome more members of the legal fraternity to our campus – whether to impart their knowledge to our aspiring lawyers, or to share their expertise and experiences with the legal profession through Continuing Legal Education programmes.

I also expect to see, at the roof terrace and other social spaces in our new home, more networking events with our alumni, partners and donors, through which relationships will be further strengthened. The Kwa Geok Choo Law Library, with its rich resources, will serve to enhance the research of not just our faculty and students but also our wider legal community.

The SMU Pro Bono Centre, which was established in 2013, also finds a new home in this building. Besides giving back to the community, the work of the Centre also sensitises law students to social justice issues, and provides opportunities for them to appreciate and integrate academic work with real-life experience. This, as well as the diverse community service activities and projects that our law students partake in locally and abroad, will nurture in students a strong sense of social mission as well as empathy for the less privileged among us.

On this note, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks once again to our faculty, students, alumni, donors and partners. It is everyone's collective effort and support that has brought the SMU School of Law to where it is today. In the next 10 years, from this new home, we will be able to give back more to society and advance the School to even greater heights of excellence.

Thank you.