



**Opening Remarks by
SMU-TA Centre for Excellence in Taxation Centre Director,
Associate Professor Goh Beng Wee
at the 2nd SMU-TA Centre for Excellence in Taxation Conference
“The Future of Tax –
Reforms for Growth and Protection of Revenue Base”
Friday, 9 September 2016, 9am
Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre, Singapore**

Senior Minister of State for Law and Finance, Ms Indranee Rajah

Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore,

Mr Tan Tee How

Distinguished Guests and Participants,

1. Good morning. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the second SMU-TA Centre for Excellence in Taxation (SMU-TA CET) conference “The Future of Tax – Reforms for Growth and Protection of Revenue Base”.

2. The SMU-TA CET is the first tax research centre in Singapore. Jointly set up by the Singapore Management University and the Tax Academy of Singapore, it focuses on undertaking policy-relevant, practice-oriented research and providing thought leadership in international tax with a particular focus on Asian economies and tax systems.

3. The SMU-TA CET is dedicated to generating and producing ideas and works that guide and lead thinking on the relevance, development, application and impact of international tax rules and standards for Asia. It provides a supportive framework of ample research opportunities to those who are keen to delve into International Taxation.

4. Although taxes have been around for decades, its role has evolved significantly over time. A basic and perhaps traditional way to think about the role of taxes is that to finance government expenditure. However, as we all know, in today's economically driven global environment, taxes serve a larger purpose than that. Amongst other reasons, taxes are tools to encourage economic growth and innovation. Given the many roles of taxes and the differences in how countries rely on tax policies, it is no wonder that discussions are abound whenever new tax changes are brought up for feedback, introduced or implemented. There are after all, many angles and perspectives from which tax issues can and should be considered and debated. This, in my view, is what makes tax research exciting and I hope through robust and good quality discussions and research work, the SMU-TA CET will contribute to continuous improvement to the tax environment.

5. The SMU-TA CET has been very fortunate to benefit from the experience and insights of a panel of international and leading tax experts, chaired by Prof Dr Jeffrey Owens, of whom we are very pleased to have as the facilitator for our first panel today. We are also very encouraged by the interest in the SMU-TA CET from academics and tax practitioners all around the world as can be seen from the enquiries that we have received. Indeed, such support and participation from tax enthusiasts is instrumental in enabling the SMU-TA CET to thrive and stand in good

stead as a tax research centre. I encourage and look forward to more participation from those who are interested in tax research work, with the SMU-TA CET.

6. I am pleased that the SMU-TA CET has made good progress in the past two years.

We have put together some of the recent work done, and coupled that with substantial debates on key international tax issues, to create this one-day conference. I am confident that you will find today's programme meaningful. I thank all of you present here today, whether as panellists, speakers, or participants, for your continued interest and support in the work of the SMU-TA CET.

7. I hope that you will have a fruitful conference today.

8. It is now my pleasure to introduce our Guest of Honour. We are honoured to have

Ms Indranee Rajah, Senior Minister of State for Law and Finance to grace this event.

I would now like to invite Ms Indranee Rajah on stage to deliver her opening address.

Ms Indranee please.

9. Thank you.