

**ADDRESS BY MR CHANDRA MOHAN K NAIR, NUSS PRESIDENT  
@ THE NUSS NEW ALUMNI DINNER 2006  
(22 JULY 2006 @  
SUNTEC CITY GUILD HOUSE)**

Mr Lee Tzu Yang, Chairman of Shell Companies in Singapore,  
President of NUS, Professor Shih Choon Fong,  
NUS Faculty members,  
NUS Graduating Class of 2006,  
Fellow NUSS members,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good evening to one and all, and a very warm welcome to our annual NUSS New Alumni Dinner.

1. On behalf of the Management Committee of NUSS, I am pleased to extend a very warm welcome to our Guest-of-Honour, Mr Lee Tzu Yang. Mr Lee, thank you for gracing this evening's function.
2. Our Guest-of-Honour, Mr Lee Tzu Yang, is the Chairman of Shell Companies in Singapore and concurrently, the Vice President Asia Pacific of Shell Global Solutions (Singapore). Outside his work, Mr Lee takes time to sit on the boards of various other organisations such as the Singapore International Chamber of Commerce, National Arts Council and the Public Utilities Board. Mr Lee graduated with an honours degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science. Mr Lee is contributing significantly to NUS as a member of the NUS Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee. He also serves on the advisory committee of the NUS Masters of Science programme in Environmental Management.

3. (a) We are all very fortunate in having had a university education. Benjamin Disraeli, British statesman and novelist once said. "A university should be a place of light, of liberty, and of learning."
  - (b) And FM Dostoevsky, Russian novelist remarked. "You are told a lot about your education, but some beautiful, sacred memory, preserved since childhood, is perhaps the best education of all. If a man carries many such memories into life with him, he is saved for the rest of his days. And even if only one good memory is left in our hearts, it may also be the instrument of our salvation one day."
  - (c) Graduation from tertiary institution is the culmination of hard work and perseverance, and it is a great feeling for graduates and their loved ones. It signifies the beginning of a new phase of life for each fresh graduate. It is a period of time when mixed emotions run high - when the air of excitement that pervades this joyous occasion is tinged with a sense of trepidation and uncertainty as well. For me personally, graduation was a crucial cross-junction in my life. It was at this point in time, some 30 years ago, that I had to prioritise and pursue my main goals in life. These are till today - to care for my family, to contribute to my profession and to serve my University, my school, my less privileged people and my country. These may seem to be lofty and abstract notions, but they have guided my life since graduation.
4. This year, NUS confers 8,209 degrees – of which 5,791 are undergraduate degrees, 2,055 are Master's degrees and 363 are PhDs. These 8,209 graduates, yourself included, are now part of an alumni family comprising more than 150,000 NUS graduates. You belong to an alumni family that, now more than ever, needs to play a strategic role in

ensuring the growth and development of its alma mater. NUSS was established to do exactly that.

5. NUSS is the oldest and largest organised graduate body in Singapore with a membership base of around 12,000 graduates. We are pleased to note that more than 70% of our membership is made up of NUS graduates. That 30% of our members are graduates from other recognised local and foreign universities create a diversity and vibrancy that is unique to NUSS.
6. Nonetheless, as an alumni body of NUS, our Constitution has as its first objective the promotion of the interests and development of NUS. Over our last 50 years, we have supported the University through various means and ways. Most recently, NUSS has given \$5 million towards the establishment of the new Shaw Foundation Alumni House. Together with a refurbished Kent Ridge Guild House, this will constitute a single integrated entity known as the Alumni Complex. It is the joint aspiration of NUS and NUSS that this architectural landmark will serve as a 'Home on Campus' for all graduates, past and present.
7. NUSS believes in sustaining the sense of belonging that graduates feel for the University by serving as a bridge between alumni and alma mater. Since the year 2000, we have been organising annual New Alumni Dinners to welcome each graduating class into the NUS alumni family. Our flagship Kent Ridge Guild House too serves this purpose by encouraging our members to return to campus regularly. As NUS returns to Bukit Timah Campus, so will NUSS with the establishment of a brand-new Bukit Timah Guild House.
8. In the course of our lives, we are seeking happiness and a sense of achievement for ourselves and our loved ones. I hope all of you will be happy pursuing your lives, and your dreams. However, please do not

forget your NUS – come and serve NUS in whatever way you can. Bertrand Russell, English philosopher sometime ago stated that the secret of happiness is to “let your interests be as wide as possible, and let your reactions to the things and persons that interest you be as far as possible friendly rather than hostile.”

9. Tonight is as significant an event for NUS as it is for NUSS. We are fortunate that Professor Shih Choon Fong, President of NUS, has agreed to give an Opening Address. He will have something to say about how you can serve NUS and its alumni bodies, including NUSS. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the President of NUS, Professor Shih Choon Fong.

Thank you.

Chandra Mohan K Nair  
President, NUSS