

**OPENING ADDRESS BY NUSS PRESIDENT
MR TONG HSIEN-HUI
AT THE CONFERMENT CEREMONY OF HONORARY MEMBERSHIP
FOR PROFESSOR TOMMY KOH AND DR GERARD EE
5 NOVEMBER 2025, WEDNESDAY, 12PM
KENT RIDGE GUILD HOUSE, INNER CHAMBER**

Professor Tommy Koh,
Dr Gerard Ee,
NUSS Past Presidents
Distinguished and Outstanding NUSS Members,
Good afternoon, and a very warm welcome to all.

It is a privilege to host this special luncheon in honour of two remarkable individuals whose leadership and service have profoundly shaped Singapore's social and intellectual landscape.

Professor Tommy Koh, Dr Gerard Ee, today's conferment of the NUSS Honorary Membership celebrates your distinguished contributions to Singapore, your exemplary leadership in public service, and your steadfast support for NUSS, NUS, and the broader community.

The Honorary Membership is the Society's highest form of recognition, reserved for exceptional individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the nation, NUS, or NUSS. Amongst our Honorary Members are some of Singapore's most respected leaders — individuals whose integrity, vision, and service have inspired generations.

Professor Koh has long been regarded as one of Singapore's foremost diplomats and thought leaders — shaping our nation's foreign policy, advancing global environmental and maritime law, and nurturing a culture of dialogue and understanding.

Dr Ee, a champion of social justice and good governance, has strengthened public trust in Singapore's social and healthcare institutions, leading reforms that ensure transparency, compassion, and accountability in service to others.

Your lives and leadership exemplify what it means to serve with conviction, humility, and grace. You continue to inspire our members to excel in their professions and to give back to society — embodying the values that NUSS holds dear: integrity, service, and community.

On behalf of the Management Committee and the entire NUSS family, I extend our sincere gratitude and esteem for your service to the nation, NUS and NUSS. It is our great honour to welcome you both as Honorary Members of the Society.

Thank you.

NUSS HONORARY MEMBER – PROFESSOR TOMMY KOH

Citation for Professor Tommy Koh

Delivered by Mr David Ho, NUSS Past President

Good afternoon,
Honorary Members,
NUSS Past Presidents,
NUSS President and Members of the Management Committee,
Professor Tommy Koh,
Dr Gerard Ee,
Fellow NUSS Members,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Prof Tommy Koh is a man of many talents and achievements — diplomat extraordinary, recipient of the Great Negotiator Award by Harvard University, UN Chair for the Conference on the Law of the Sea, and champion of the downtrodden. Today, I am so honoured to read this citation for Prof Koh, and I honestly do not know where to start.

I will follow Prof's approach in most of his speeches — to cover only two aspects of his distinguished achievements: one, his journey with us at NUSS; and two, his lesser-known contributions that have had a significant impact on the world and humanity.

Prof was one of the pioneering members of our NUSS Advisory Panel, which was established in 2008. He has served NUSS for the past 17 years, giving his time and advice to promote NUSS as a pillar of support for NUS, Singapore, and our community. During my term as President, Prof was the Patron of the Paint-a-Portrait Project of our Past Presidents. It was with his guidance that the project received a grant from the National Heritage Board. Prof moderated our NUSS 60th Anniversary Lecture in 2014, and we had a fireside chat, *Conversations with Prof Tommy Koh*, in 2013. He also contributed frequently to the NUSS publication, *The Commentary*, sharing his thoughts on various issues of the day.

On his distinguished achievements on the world stage and his contributions to Singapore — as our Ambassador to the UN and now Ambassador-at-Large — many of us will remember his leadership in the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea, his role in the International Court of Justice on Pedra Branca, the Earth Summit, and his service as Chairman of the National Arts Council and the National Heritage Board, Dean of the NUS Law Faculty, Founding Rector of Tembusu College, and many more. The list goes on.

Let me now share with you one of his lesser-known but significant contributions to the world. Recently, I was touring the Baltic countries — Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania — and discovered

that 30 years ago, Prof led a team of UN staff to visit these countries to successfully negotiate an agreement with Russia for the withdrawal of Russian troops from their territories after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Baltics were formerly part of the Soviet Union, and with its breakup, these small countries achieved independence. Today, they are modern, democratic, and thriving nations. Prof has recently written a book about this journey of peace to the Baltics, which is available at the National Library. Singapore may be a small nation, but we have a giant of a man who persuaded Russia to withdraw its troops peacefully. Amazing.

Lastly, allow me to share a personal story. A few months ago, a family friend asked me to assist his son, who was between jobs. He is a First-Class Honours graduate from NUS and a PhD scholar from the UK. He was keen to continue his academic career and research. I emailed Prof to seek his help through his network, even though he did not know the young man personally. Despite his very busy schedule, Prof took the effort to write to a few of his associates to assist. I was deeply touched — this shows the true human spirit of Prof, who is always ready to help those who have fallen through the cracks.

In recognition of his outstanding service to the world and Singapore, and to NUS and NUSS, we are deeply honoured to confer upon Professor Tommy Koh our Society's highest award — the Honorary Membership of NUSS.

Thank you, Prof Tommy Koh.

NUSS HONORARY MEMBER – DR GERARD EE

Citation for Dr Gerard Ee

Delivered by Mr Johnny Tan, NUSS Advisory Panel Member and Past President

Honorary members

NUSS President

Fellow Advisory Panel Members Past Presidents

Friends n fellow members

Good afternoon!

It is a distinct honour to present this citation for Dr Gerard Ee, who, together with Professor Tommy Koh, was among the first to serve on the NUSS Advisory Panel when it was established in 2008.

A chartered accountant by profession, and a lifelong champion of public service, Gerard Ee has exemplified leadership marked by integrity, humility, and an unwavering commitment to the greater good.

His career spans social service, healthcare, and corporate governance—and in each domain, he has made a profound difference.

As a founding member of the NUSS Advisory Panel since 2008, Gerard Ee has guided our Society with wisdom and discernment. For 17 years, his voice has been one of quiet strength—shaping our values of stewardship, compassion, and service.

Nationally, Gerard Ee has been entrusted with responsibilities of the highest importance. In 2011, he chaired the Committee to Review Ministerial Salaries, and in 2017, led a follow-up review that reaffirmed the integrity of the framework.

His leadership across Singapore's social service landscape is transformative. From the Charity Council to the National Council of Social Service, from the Agency for Integrated Care to Changi General Hospital— Gerard Ee's contributions have elevated governance, transparency, and trust.

In 2005, when public confidence in the National Kidney Foundation was shaken, Gerard Ee stepped in as interim Chairman and CEO—restoring credibility at a critical time.

For his lifelong dedication and service, he was conferred the Outstanding Lifetime Volunteer Award in 2018 and awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters by NUS in 2017.

In The Graduate, our Society's newsletter, Gerard Ee spoke of compassion, stewardship, and giving back—principles that continue to inspire us all.

In honour of his distinguished public service, his exemplary leadership in advancing social responsibility and governance, and his steadfast dedication as a founding member of the NUSS Advisory Panel for 17 years, we are proud to confer upon Dr Gerard Ee the Honorary Membership of NUSS.