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## **Singapore's Institutes Of Higher Learning Announces Multi-lateral MOU On IT Management Cooperation**

In a first of its kind initiative, the Chief Information Officers (CIOs) of the Institutes of Higher Learning: Institute of Technical Education (ITE), Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), National Institute of Education (NIE), National University of Singapore (NUS), Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), Republic Polytechnic (RP), Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore Polytechnic (SP) and the Temasek Polytechnic (TP), today formalized their spirit of cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding to form a "IHL-CIO Forum" which will collectively:

- (i) monitor and review relevant IT practices;
- (ii) identify opportunities for expanding communication, cooperation and collaboration;
- (iii) undertake related information interchange, technology transfer, and joint-project development; and to hold consultations thereon.

First mooted by NUS, the IHL-CIO Forum through previous meetings has already achieved several milestones benefiting the IHL community. In March 2003, the IHL-CIO Forum conducted a first ever collective purchase (bulk-tender) of Internet bandwidth and through the economies of scale managed to lower the cost of bandwidth by more than half; in other words allowing the IHL community to double their Internet capacity without additional costs. Today the IHL-CIO Forum also announces the first project EDUWIN - Educational Wireless Network - that will enable the IHL community to gain Internet access and other e-Services from any IHL campus.

Mr Khoong Hock Yun, Assistant Chief Executive (Industry) of the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore, said, "The vision of anytime, anywhere access to the Internet will characterise the connected world of tomorrow. The EDUWIN initiative is a significant first step towards realising this vision in the learning environment."

These projects form part of the underlying infrastructure for seamless integration of teaching, learning, research, and administration across the Internet. This has dramatically enhanced learning productivity and places the IHL community firmly at the forefront of the e-learning revolution.

"Today one of the major challenges for the IHLs is to provide the environment and the means for knowledge to grow and be shared. By ensuring that the IT environment is in place not just within each campus but pervasively in our broader community, we have a unique opportunity to make the IHL educational experience a more seamless one," said Dr. N. Varaprasad, Deputy President, NUS.

"Our long-term objective through this greater cooperation is to create the best computing and communications infrastructure for tertiary education and to better position Singapore as an education hub," said Mr Tommy Hor, Director of Computer Centre, NUS on behalf of the Forum members. "We are continuously upgrading our IT resources and strengthening our IT infrastructure to enhance our students'

learning experience and facilitate the development of borderless communities. We are making IT a much more pervasive and dependable utility, pretty much like power and mobile phone services.”

As part of the new initiatives under the MOU, the IHL-CIO Forum will host visits by business leaders in the global IT arena to improve mutual understanding of IT development in our respective communities and build corporate alliances. Some of the visits will be facilitated in partnership our technology providers like Cisco Systems. Other key initiatives include the reciprocal use of IHL campuses for Disaster Recovery, the benchmarking for campus IT management; and the collective purchase of notebook computers and personal digital assistants to capitalize on the economies of scale.