

新加坡 Singapore

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各位嘉賓、先生及女士：

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

簡介

很高興今天早上能夠與各位一起參加亞洲文化合作論壇。跟香港一樣，新加坡一向是主要國際貿易通道樞紐。多年來，新加坡已打造成一個國際商業金融中心。與此同時，我們明白到，我們必須保護文化、宣揚文化和投資於文化，使新加坡可以成為多元種族和諧共處的家園。我們認為，藝術能創造環境，鼓勵人們追求夢想、施展抱負，使我們的文化遺產更豐盛，並且有助我們塑造國家的特性。我們亦相信，藝術可以跨越疆界，讓我們加強社會對話和增進對文化的瞭解。我很同意韓國代表的見解，藝術與文化均有助提升國民的幸福感。

Introduction

I am happy to join you this morning at the Asia Cultural Cooperation Forum. Singapore, like Hong Kong, has long been at the intersection of major international trade routes. Through the years, we established ourselves as an international business and financial centre. At the same time, we recognised the importance of preserving, celebrating and investing in our culture, so that Singapore





除了保持經濟中心的地位外，我們亦希望新加坡最終能發展為文化之都，成為一個充滿特色和活力的城市。雖然新加坡只是一個700多平方公里的彈丸小島，但我們常年舉辦的藝術活動卻非常豐富多采，當中包括長期進行的新加坡雙年展、新加坡國際藝術節（表演藝術）、新加坡文化遺產節、新加坡“仲夏夜空”（博物館和文化遺產）和新加坡作家節（文學藝術）等。

文學藝術是文化發展的重要支柱

其實，對任何一個社會來說，文學都是文化和精神生活不可或缺的要害，是支持文化豐盛發展的重要支柱。新加坡早已意識到讀寫能力和文學作品的重要，因此非常看重文化和教育政策。我們認為，應當把發展文學藝術作為社會的重點工作，讓國民得以接觸各類文學作品，並養成終身閱讀的習慣。

正因如此，多年來，我們興建了很多公共圖書館，遍佈國家各處，而國民可以免費

as a multi-racial society can be a home to people from diverse backgrounds. We believe the arts will create the environment to inspire our people to express their dreams and aspirations, enrich our heritage, and shape our identity as a nation. We also believe that the arts will also promote social dialogue and cultural understanding that transcend geographical boundaries. I also share and agree with our Korean colleagues that the arts and culture can also increase national happiness.

Ultimately, we aim not just to be an economic centre but also a cultural capital – a city with character and life. In our tiny island of just over 700 sq km, we already have a busy arts calendar that ranges from the ongoing Singapore Biennale, the Singapore International Festival for the Arts (for the performing arts), the Singapore Heritage Festival and the Singapore Night Festival (for the museums and heritage), as well as the Singapore Writer's Festival, which is our tribute to the literary arts.



享有圖書館的基本會籍。經過多年努力，閱讀風氣已逐漸盛行全國。在新加坡獨立初期，閱讀只是少數人可享受的奢侈活動；時至今日，我們的公共圖書館每年有3,500萬人次到訪，人數大約是我們居住人口的10倍。

挑戰與策略

雖然我們已做出一點成績，但也明白到不能就此自滿。跟其他國家一樣，我們要適應數碼年代的新現象。剛才有不少部長和官員亦談到數碼媒體給社會帶來的挑戰和改變，而新加坡正面對同樣問題。隨著流動通訊器材和互聯網的發展越趨成熟和普

Literary arts as key pillar in cultural development

Indeed, literature is integral to the cultural and intellectual life of any society, and it is also the key pillar for a flourishing cultural scene. In Singapore, we have long recognised the value in literacy and literature, and have made these a key emphasis in our cultural and education policies. We believe in placing literary arts at the heart of the community, so that our people can enjoy a wide range of literature, and develop a lifelong habit of reading.

That is why over the years, we have built an extensive network of public libraries all over the island, and kept basic library membership free for our people. Through these efforts, we have progressively nurtured a nation of readers. When Singapore first became independent, reading was a luxury few could afford. Today, our public libraries receive 35 million visitors a year – about 10 times our resident population.

Challenges and strategies

While we have made progress, we recognise that we cannot afford to be complacent. Like all countries,





及，人們（尤其是年輕人）的習慣亦因此而改變。我最近遇到一位年輕學生，他跟我說，如果沒有F-I-T，就別想跟年輕人打成一片。我問他什麼是F-I-T？他告訴我是Facebook、Instagram和Twitter。我們的孩子經常一心多用，同時瀏覽多個網頁，接收各種資訊和面對各式的視覺衝擊。我們有時不禁擔心，新加坡的年輕人會不會有注意力下降（尤其因他們會同時處理多項工作及面對海量的資訊）的情況出現呢？不過，有一點是十分明顯的，就是我們下一代的思考模式和獲取資訊的方式肯定與我們這一代不一樣，而我們必須適應這個趨勢。

這些挑戰在某些方面其實給我們製造了機會，讓我們的文學藝術更具吸引力和貼近生活。新加坡便採取了以下三個策略。

首先，我們走向數碼化，令傳統的文學範

we are adjusting to the new realities of the digital age. Several ministers and officials mentioned earlier about the challenges and changing realities of digital media, and Singapore faces the same trends. Increasingly sophisticated mobile devices and ubiquitous internet access have changed the habits of our people, especially the young. I recall meeting a young student recently who told me that if I do not have F – I – T I’m not “fit” to hang out with the young. So I asked him what is F – I – T, and he said it is Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Our children are constantly multi-tasking and multi-surfing online – they are saturated with information and visual stimulus. In Singapore, we are sometimes concerned about the reduced attention spans in the youth, especially with multi-tasking and the amount of information available to them. But one thing is clear – the next generation will grow up with a different way of thinking and accessing information. And we have to adapt to these new trends.

In some ways, these challenges provide us with new opportunities to make the literary arts even more appealing



圍界線變得模糊。我們不僅鼓勵人民多到圖書館閱讀，更不斷把更多的文學資料上載至手機應用程式、Facebook和電子書等數碼媒體，務求將圖書館送到國民面前。此外，我們亦鼓勵作家與不同界別的藝術家合作。比如說，我們曾邀請一些視覺藝術家以新加坡文學寫作為題，創作新的藝術作品。這樣既可促進藝術交流，又可利用視覺藝術拓展新的觀眾羣，令更多人欣賞新加坡文學。

第二，我們不斷投放資源在學校的藝術教育。過去三年，我們的國家藝術理事會與教育部一直緊密合作，把更多的新加坡文學納入教學大綱（不僅是文學課，還有一般的語文課）。我們希望新加坡的年輕人可以及早接觸本國的文學，給予本地作家長期支持。我們亦希望學生能夠在書本中找到共鳴，日後自成一派，成為優秀的作家、詩人或思想家。

第三，我們加強支援本地文學創作。我們不斷發掘新方法以推廣本地文學，並資助作家出版著作，以及協助他們與國際出版

and relevant. In Singapore, we are doing so through three strategies.

First, we are going digital and blurring traditional boundaries. Our libraries are pushing out more content online, through mobile and Facebook apps, as well as e-book titles. We have gone beyond encouraging visits to libraries, to literally taking the libraries to our people through digital media. We are also getting our writers and artists from different disciplines to collaborate together. For example, in one project, we invited visual artists to create new works based on Singapore literary writing. In this way, we promote more artistic exchanges, reach out to new audiences, and also foster greater appreciation for Singapore literature through visual means.





商聯繫。我們會協助建立藝術家社區，支持本地藝術家到國外駐場創作和參與導師計劃，以及激勵新加坡的年輕一代成為新一批的創意作家。

新加坡作家節

為推廣文學藝術，我們每年都會舉辦新加坡作家節。作家節已成為一年一度的文化盛事。今年踏入第16屆，作家節仍然是亞洲區內唯一一個多語言的文學節，所推介的文學創作及翻譯多達四種語言，包括英文、中文、馬來文和泰米爾文，反映我們新加坡文化的多元特色。新加坡作家節專為亞洲而設，有幸獲得多國不少優秀作家參與。

Second, we are investing in arts education in schools. Over the past three years, our National Arts Council has been working closely with our Ministry of Education to integrate more Singaporean literature into our syllabus. Not just for literature classes, but also for general language classes. We want our young to encounter Singaporean works early on in life, and to develop a lifelong appreciation for local authors. We also want our students to identify with what they study on the page, and eventually, to find their own creative voices as future authors, poets and thinkers in their own right.

Third, we are doing more to support local content. We are constantly looking at new ways to expand the reach of our local literature. We extend our writers a helping hand by providing publishing grants, and cultivating international agents. We help build communities of writers, by supporting artists' residencies and mentorship programmes and inspiring a new generation of creative Singaporean writers.

Singapore Writers Festival

Our efforts to promote the literary arts come together in the annual Singapore Writers Festival that I mentioned earlier on. The Festival celebrates the Literary Arts and



總結

新加坡是一個匯聚不同民族和不同文化的大都會，因此非常適合創作出一些既可得到世界共鳴，又能保留新加坡或亞洲獨特風格的文學作品。從各個方面來說，文字就是我們的一切。文字可用於復興社會、團結人民，為我們帶來正面的改變。對於新加坡，一個小國來說，我們堅信，文字的力量往往猶勝於武力。

has become an annual fixture in our cultural calendar. Now into its 16th edition, the Festival remains the only multi-lingual literary arts event in the region. It reflects our diverse cultural heritage and celebrates creativity in our four languages - English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil, with translations too. It has a distinctly Asian focus and has the privilege of welcoming many top writers from your countries.

Conclusion

As a cosmopolitan city that is the meeting point for different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, I believe that Singapore is well-positioned to create content that resonates universally, and yet retains a distinctly Singaporean and Asian tone and texture. In many ways, words are all we have – they have the power to restore, to unite, and to bring positive change. So for a small country like Singapore, our perspective is that the pen is often mightier than the sword.