Welcome Speech by Professor Bernard Yeung, Dean of the NUS Business School at the Inaugural NUS Business School - UBS Philanthropic Breakfast Talk at Nexus, University Hall, Thursday 30 July 2009, 8.30am

Mr Jet Li, founder of Jet Li One Foundation
Ms Christine Ong, Chief Executive Officer, UBS Wealth Management
Prof Tan Chorh Chuan, President of NUS
Mrs Yeong Phick Fui (pronounced as ‘yeung-pick-fwee’), Regional Market Manager, UBS Wealth Management
Mr Neville Azzopardi (pronounced as ‘ah-zo-par-dee’), Singapore Country Team Head, UBS Wealth Management
Colleagues and alumni of NUS Business School
Distinguished guests

Good morning.

I am happy to welcome you to the first NUS Business School – UBS Philanthropic Breakfast Talk, hosted by both UBS and the Center for Social Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy at NUS Business School.

In the Prime Minister’s speech during Budget Day 2008, the government has pledged $57.8 million to promote volunteerism, support philanthropy and to strengthen community and social services. In a recent survey by National Volunteer
Philanthropic Centre, they have found that donor participation has increased since 2004 and the average amount given also increased by 140%.

Despite the economic uncertainty, it is obvious that philanthropy is growing exponentially – a sure sign that the level of giving does not always correlate with our financial situation. This is wonderful news!

For NUS Business School, we are also keen to give back to the community. This was one of the reasons behind the setting up of Center for Social Entrepreneurship & Philanthropy (CSEP). It aims to provide the practical experience and exposure to philanthropy and entrepreneurial research, education and community development, every step of the way. As an institution of higher learning, our students are reminded that they have a broader social responsibility. Through their education and training, they can offer social entrepreneurial solutions to organisations that support the less fortunate and hence make a difference in our society.

We are pleased to partner with UBS for this project. They are passionate about this cause and their commitment can been seen through initiatives such as the Global UBS Philanthropy Forum which was held in Singapore last year. Established in 2004 in Switzerland, the UBS Philanthropy Services has organised six philanthropy roundtables in Asia Pacific since 2005 as well as a number of other philanthropy-related events. They are no stranger on the philanthropic scene and I look forward to more opportunities for collaboration.

We are honoured to have Mr Jet Li as our inaugural speaker. I am sure that everyone is familiar with his work on screen. We are becoming aware of his
profound and passionate interest in helping to alleviate poverty and helping the world's poor.

Jet Li brings with him passion and knowledge of how to reach those in our communities who are frequently overlooked. As we hear him speak later, I am sure that his energy, creativity and work with the One Foundation will challenge and excite us.

The Jet Li One Foundation was founded under a strategic partnership with the Red Cross Society of China by Jet Li, a Red Cross ambassador. Personally I like the belief of his foundation – that it is not the quantity that you give but the heart behind it. Every individual gift, when combined, has the power to change things and make a difference. No effort is too weak and no amount too small. This line reminds me of Wu Xun. Born in 1838, Wu Xun was a beggar with no home and no jobs and no formal education. He had the conviction to help so that others would not experience his difficulties. He went around China as a beggar to raise money to build ‘schools.’ His passion and his heart motivated tens of millions to chip in, a tiny penny each, to help hundreds of thousands of the underprivileged.

Recently my daughter was working with NVPC on a Singapore Care project. She was so moved by volunteerism that she has decided to give all her income from her internship back to charity. She tells me that she is Mr. Jet Li’s fan and wants to follow his 1-1-1 example.

Allow me to end with this thought. Everyone in this room is a change agent. With every single decision that we make, even on a daily basis, we change and impact
our community. I hope that you will leave this place with a deeper understanding about philanthropy and how you can inspire someone else to be a change agent too.

Thank you.