

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



## **UNESCO Appoints Singapore's First Chairholder for Social Policy Design in Asia**

**Singapore, March 15, 2017** – Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and UNESCO announced earlier today the appointment of Professor M Ramesh – the first UNESCO Chairholder in Singapore. The school is the first institution in Singapore with a luminary to be accorded this esteemed appointment.

Prof Ramesh will join a select group of international scholars in the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme aimed at building research capacities of universities to address pressing social problems and promote sustainable development.

Prof Ramesh is a prolific scholar of policy institutions and processes with a focus on social policy in Asia. His co-authored book *Studying Public Policy* has been translated into over a dozen languages and is widely used all over the world. He is the founding co-editor of the journal *Policy and Society* and the prestigious *Cambridge Series in Comparative Public Policy*. He has also contributed research insights to agencies such as Asian Development Bank, United Nations International Children's Fund and United Nations Environment Programme on a variety of social policy issues.

"The ongoing economic and demographic transformations pose unprecedented challenges to social policy that require fresh approaches and devoted research. The vast intellectual resources and network at LKYSPP, NUS and Singapore broadly, offer unparalleled solutions in addressing these challenges. The stature and goodwill of the appointment will help me strengthen research partnerships across Asia and beyond," said Prof Ramesh.

### **Impacting Social Policy Design through Different Perspectives**

As UNESCO Chairholder, Prof Ramesh will spearhead research to shape key conversations in the area of social policy design in Asia. His role will include promoting understanding of social policy in Asia, strengthening cooperation between public and private sectors in the field, and offering training programmes for capacity building.

The vast cross-disciplinary expertise that exists in the School and NUS offer tremendous opportunities for launching training programmes built on strong research and varied perspectives.

"We are honoured to be given this opportunity to be part of the important UNESCO programme. This initiative also reflects the LKYSPP's commitment to education and research that contributes towards the betterment of society, which this Chair Professorship will further enable," said Professor Tan Chorh Chuan, President, National University of Singapore.

## **Setting Singapore's Governance Model on the World Map**

"The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy is blessed to be surrounded by Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, Singapore Botanic Gardens. It is therefore symbolically appropriate for our School to be chosen as the first school in Singapore to host an UNESCO Chair. This is a true honour. We are delighted that the outstanding scholarship of Professor M Ramesh has received this stellar global recognition," said Professor Kishore Mahbubani, Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and former President, United Nations Security Council.

Prof Ramesh's recent publication revealed that Singapore's remarkable performance in health policy was a result of concerted deployment of diverse policy tools including public ownership, market competition and price transparency. In his upcoming role, he will be involved in projects relating to education governance in Asia. Prof Ramesh's bio can be found in Annex A.

UNESCO Chair's specific objectives are to:

- promote research on critical issues in social policy in Asia and produce reports and publications such as manuals and journal articles, as well as in social and new media formats based on the findings;
- develop learning materials for postgraduate, executive education and civil service and NGO training courses on policy design with a special focus on social policy design in Asia;
- develop training materials for professional and managerial development and capacity building governmental and non-governmental organisations focused on social policy in Asia;
- launch a network of institutions and professionals in Asia and organise conferences and workshops devoted to improving the effectiveness of social policies and social policy design in the region worldwide; and,
- cooperate closely with UNESCO on relevant programmes and activities, as well as with relevant UNESCO Chairs.

"The establishment of the UNESCO Chair at NUS is a fitting recognition of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and Prof Ramesh's global reputation in public policy education and research," said Professor Amitav Acharya, UNESCO Chair in Transnational Challenges and Governance at American University.

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### **About the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP)**

LKYSPP is an autonomous, professional graduate school of the National University of Singapore. Its mission is to educate and train policymakers and leaders, with the objective of raising the standards of governance throughout the region, improving the lives of its people, and, in so doing, contributing to the transformation of Asia and beyond. In addition to Masters and PhD programmes, the LKYSPP offers high quality customised Executive Programmes that cater to the needs of time-constrained senior managers and professionals, with the aim of delivering creative solutions to real management and leadership challenges.

### **About the UNITWIN / UNESCO Chairs Programme**

Launched in 1992, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme promotes international inter-university cooperation and networking to enhance institutional capacities through knowledge sharing and collaborative work.

The Programme supports the establishment of UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in key priority areas related to UNESCO's fields of competence – i.e. in education, the natural and social sciences, culture and communication.

Through this network, higher education and research institutions all over the globe pool their resources, both human and material, to address pressing challenges and contribute to the development of their societies. In many instances, the Networks and Chairs serve as think tanks and as bridge builders between academia, civil society, local communities, research and policy-making. They have proven useful in informing policy decisions, establishing new teaching initiatives, generating innovation through research and contributing to the enrichment of existing university programmes while promoting cultural diversity. In areas suffering from a dearth of expertise, Chairs and Networks have evolved into poles of excellence and innovation at the regional or sub-regional levels. They also contribute to strengthening North-South-South cooperation.

Today, the Programme involves over 700 institutions in 115 countries.

All documents related to the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Network Programme (new applications, progress reports etc.) must be presented in one of the two working languages of the Programme, English or French. “

<http://en.unesco.org/unitwin-unesco-chairs-programme>



**M Ramesh, Professor at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and UNESCO Chairholder**

Ramesh has served as the Founding Head of the Department of Asian and Policy Studies and Chair Professor of Governance and Public Policy at the Hong Kong Institute of Education; Professor of Social Policy at the University of Hong Kong; and Chair of the Department of Government and International Relations at the University of Sydney. He has also held teaching positions at the University of New England and Victoria University of Wellington. Specialising in public policy and governance in Asia with a particular focus on social policy, Ramesh has authored and edited many books. His co-authored textbook *Studying Public Policy* has been translated into over a dozen languages and is used throughout the world. His books and journal articles on social policy in Asia are the standard starting points for research on the subject. He has also published extensively in reputed international journals. He is the Co-Editor of *Policy and Society* as well as *World Political Science Review* and serves on the editorial board of several reputed journals. Moreover, he has served as consultant to prominent international organizations.