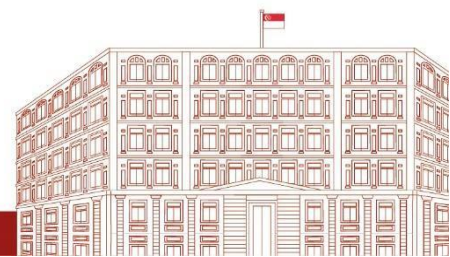


**SPEECH BY MINISTER FOR  
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION MRS JOSEPHINE TEO  
AT ASIA TV FORUM AND MARKET (ATF) ONLINE+ 2021  
(1 DECEMBER 2021)**

Distinguished guests  
Ladies and gentlemen

1. Good morning. I am delighted to join you at this year's Asia Television & Market Forum and the Singapore Media Festival.
2. I am glad that our media sector continues to thrive in these difficult times. Due to COVID-19, productions were delayed, and in some cases, even cancelled. Cinemas had to be closed for several weeks, postponing the release of some films. But we faced the challenge and thrived. Last year's festival was held virtually because of COVID-19. Nonetheless, we still managed to secure over \$190 million US dollars' worth of partnerships and deals. This translates to about \$260 million Singapore dollars.
3. One important development was the signing of an MOU between Mediacorp and Screenworks Asia. Arising from this MOU, Mediacorp and Screenworks Asia will co-produce a new anthology series. Early next year, you will be able to catch this Chinese series, Twisted Strings. It will be on local and international platforms such as HBO, CATCHPLAY and meWATCH.
4. This year, ATF is able to bring back some physical elements. This is a positive sign for the broader industry.
5. While the pandemic has no doubt disrupted productions and livelihoods, the industry has confidently bounced back. Last year, while the broader economy shrank by 5.4%, our Infocomm and Media Sector grew 4.8%. Industry leaders like WarnerMedia also cast a vote of confidence in Singapore's media ecosystem. Earlier this year, they chose Singapore as their regional home. I had the pleasure of officiating the opening of their RHQ.
6. Today, there are sure signs of recovery. I am excited for the future of media in Singapore in this brave new world.
7. Our vision is for Singapore to be a platform for the region's stories. The theme of this year's Festival - "Asian Storytelling, Reimagined" is therefore apt. It captures our focus on sharing our rich Asian stories with the world. Indeed, this festival is a platform dedicated to our storytellers and creative talents. Our Asian stories are passports for our audiences, bringing them to different parts of the world. They also connect us with one another and remind the world of Asia's rich tapestry of cultures and stories.
8. To help our stories travel, I am pleased to share that IMDA has enhanced its Capability Partnership Programme by bringing new partners on board. Under the Programme, Singapore media companies will partner global media companies to co-create quality content. In the first of such partnerships, local production house Clover Films is working with iQIYI on a slate of online films. These include Reunion Dinner and Confinement, which are set to premiere on iQIYI next year.
9. Beach House Pictures is also creating factual premium content for OTT platforms and broadcasters. The first of such content is Lift The Ice with CuriosityStream. Through these collaborations with new and existing partners, our companies and talents will have the opportunity to link up with the rest of the



world. More than 80 local SMEs and over 500 media talents are expected to benefit from these collaborations.

10. For our local and regional creative talents and contents, IMDA's programmes have provided unstinting support.

11. Since 2019, IMDA has supported 20 projects through the Southeast Asia Co-Production Grant. I am pleased to note that two projects from the pioneer batch of the Grant have garnered top awards at prestigious festivals. The first project is Indonesian film *Vengeance is Mine, All Others Pay Cash*. Co-produced by Singapore producers, Natalie Balakrishnan, Nathaniel P. Gunawan and Lai Weijie, this film won the coveted Golden Leopard at the Locarno Film Festival. You might have caught it at last week's Singapore International Film Festival, where it was the opening film.

12. The other project is *Yuni*, a film co-produced by Indonesia and Singapore. *Yuni* premiered at the 2021 Toronto International Film Festival and won the Platform Prize competition. My heartiest congratulations to the teams behind *Vengeance is mine* and *Yuni*! I am sure that under IMDA's initiatives, more made-with-Singapore productions will follow your path!

13. We are also committed to supporting the talents who tell these wonderful Asian stories. Last week, Vidcon celebrated six of Singapore's most influential creators for the first time. My colleague Minister of State Tan Kiat How also shared IMDA's new pilot to provide training and mentorship for promising local online creators.

14. IMDA also supports our talents by funding high-quality projects under its Talent Progression Programme (TPP).

15. Today, I am happy to share that six new Southeast Asia co-productions will be supported under this Programme. They will receive a grant of up to \$300,000 each.

16. We will also support the creation of new content, beyond strengthening existing programmes. Therefore, I am pleased to announce that next February, 15 to 20 screenwriters will be attending a whole new workshop by Netflix. With IMDA's support, these emerging talents from Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia will gain insights from industry experts. They will also get to hone their craft in series writing.

17. The workshop will be led by Christopher Mack, the director of Grow Creative at Netflix, and screenwriter-producer Joe Peracchio. Guest speakers like the screenwriters behind various popular Netflix series, will also share their craft and pro tips.

18. The initiatives I have shared capitalise on Singapore's globally connected media ecosystem.

19. The growing diversity of talents, content and connections rooted in Singapore makes for a most exciting future.

20. I welcome partners to collaborate with us and leverage on Singapore's status as a gateway to not just Asia but also the world.

21. I wish everyone a fruitful time at the Festival. Thank you.

