SPEECH BY MR LIM CHUAN POH, CHAIRMAN, AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH, AT THE OPENING OF THE DELTA-IBN LIFE SCIENCE AND DIAGNOSTICS LAB ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2015, 1300 HRS AT EXPLORATION THEATRETTE, MATRIX, BIOPOLIS

Mr Cheng Ping, CEO of Delta Group,

Prof Jackie Ying, Executive Director of IBN,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Introduction**

Happy New Year to all of you and what a great way to start this year with this event today.

This is a special year for Singapore as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary, what we coined as SG@50.

For the scientific community, we are also celebrating Science@50 and positioning ourselves to transform the next 50.

At the same time, we are also entering the last year of this quinquennium or RIE 2015 and are right in the midst of planning for the next quinquennium.

The opening of the Delta-IBN Life Science and Diagnostics Lab at Biopolis is certainly a fitting addition to this eventful year.
Enhancing Industry Engagement for Greater Economic Outcome

It marks another milestone in Singapore’s efforts to grow our biomedical sciences sector.

This sector has been earmarked as one of the four pillars of the Singapore’s manufacturing economy since 2000.

In less than 15 years, the biomedical science sector has grown to become a powerful economic engine and medical technology is an important part of this sector.

The sector’s manufacturing output has grown five times to reach over $29 billion in 2012, contributing to five per cent of Singapore’s GDP.

We are happy to note that 30 of the world’s leading biomedical sciences companies have now set up their regional HQs here.

They have established 50 manufacturing plants which employs close to 16,000 people.

Public-private partnerships in research under the open innovation framework and the ability to capture value arising from the partnerships are key to sustaining this momentum.

The global demand for MedTech products is strong and the growth is promising. Global MedTech sales are projected to see a steady growth of five per cent per annum to reach a size of S$600 billion by 2020.
We are confident that Asia and, Singapore in particular, will be able to benefit from this global trend.

IBN has much to contribute to this sector’s growth.

It has been building up Medtech intellectual property and technological innovations since 2003.

Singapore is now home to 26 R&D centres while more than 30 MedTech companies have set up commercial-scale plants to manufacture diagnostic devices for the global market. Singapore’s MedTech manufacturing output grew from S$3.3 billion in 2009 to about S$5.1 billion in 2013.

**The Delta-IBN Partnership**

We are delighted that Delta is now part of our MedTech growth.

The Delta-IBN Life Science and Diagnostics Lab, which is incubated at IBN in Nanos, represents a strong commitment from Delta to establish a long-term partnership with IBN, and to continually invest in R&D in Singapore for the future.

I am pleased to note that this partnership has also resulted in the creation of high-value jobs. The joint lab has grown to 22 Delta staff in nine months, and is expected to have over 50 Delta staff in joint projects with IBN researchers in due course.
As the world’s first bioengineering and nanotechnology research institute, IBN has contributed to the growth of Singapore’s R&D sector and created a niche at the interface of science, engineering and medicine.

The Institute has been active in publishing high-impact papers in leading scientific journals, and has also contributed 39 per cent of active patent portfolio under A*STAR’s Biomedical Research Council.

Along the way, it has spun off 7 Med Tech companies and licensed over 80 patents.

IBN’s excellent technology portfolio has also attracted collaborations with a diverse range of multinational companies from various industries.

These include Janssen, a US company, to develop alternative sources of human liver cells based on IBN’s technology on liver tissue engineering; and ;

ARKRAY, a Japanese company, to develop new disease detection and monitoring devices based on IBN’s paper-based assays;

And, P&G, another US MNC, to co-develop better consumer care products based on IBN’s library of novel antimicrobial agents.

We are therefore excited to have Delta on board as a partner and we are confident that the opening of the Life Science and Diagnostics Laboratory will lead to many productive and impactful outcomes.
Conclusion

Let me conclude by mentioning another key event this year for A*STAR. In October, we will be officially opening Phase 2A of Fusionopolis, the counterpart campus to Biopolis. A*STAR is located in both Biopolis and Fusionopolis with Biopolis for biomedical sciences research and Fusionopolis for physical sciences and engineering research. This is a significant event, as by then, almost the whole A*STAR family will be in this precinct called One-North in both the Biopolis and Fusionopolis Campus. In an area where there was zero research space before, there will be over 8 million square feet of space devoted to research and innovation come October this year. Likewise, in an area where no one worked on research and innovation before, there will be over nine thousand people working in this space with close to 60% from the private sector come October this year. We are all looking forward to the realization of a 15-year journey.

On this note, let me congratulate Delta and IBN again on the opening of the Joint Laboratory.

Thank you.