Statement from the Asia Internet Coalition (AIC) on
Singapore Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Bill
1 April 2019

(Please attribute quote to Jeff Paine, Managing Director, Asia Internet Coalition)

-start-

The Asia Internet Coalition ("AIC") supports the Singapore Government's goals of protecting social cohesion, harmony, and the integrity of institutions and political processes.

However, we are deeply disappointed by the lack of meaningful opportunities for public consultation during the drafting process of this bill, given the significant implications it could have for diverse stakeholders, including industry, media and civil society, in Singapore, the region and internationally.

We reiterate our position, which echoes that of many experts around the world, that prescriptive legislation should *not* be the first solution in addressing what is a highly nuanced and complex issue.

We are also concerned that the proposed legislation gives the Singapore government full discretion over what is considered true or false. As the most far-reaching legislation of its kind to date, this level of overreach poses significant risks to freedom of expression and speech, and could have severe ramifications both in Singapore and around the world.

AIC will be studying the bill in the coming days. We remain committed to working closely with the Government and other stakeholders to tackle misinformation, and hope that the enforcement of this legislation will not be at the expense of the benefits that public debate and exchange of ideas can bring.

-end-

About the Asia Internet Coalition
The Asia Internet Coalition (AIC) is an industry association comprising leading internet and technology companies. The AIC seeks to promote the understanding and resolution of Internet policy issues in the Asia Pacific region. For more information, visit www.aicasia.org