

SCCCI BUILDING DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION AND MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL DINNER

SPEECH BY SCCCI PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG

17 SEPTEMBER 2024

SCCCI BUILDING

Mr Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second
Minister for Law,

SCCCI Council Members and Members,

Distinguished Guests,

Good evening!

1. Today marks an important milestone as we celebrate the SCCCI Building's diamond jubilee and Mid-Autumn Festival. On behalf of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), I extend a warm welcome to all and I wish everyone a very happy Mid-Autumn Festival!
2. On Mid-Autumn Festival 60 years ago, then Prime Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew officiated the opening ceremony of the SCCCI Building. In his speech, Mr Lee said, "The building is a symbol of a great and proud heritage. It speaks of security, for it is concrete proof of the qualities of thrift and industry of a people who came to the South Seas and made good and settled with the indigenous people here. It is the security of achievement. It is immovable proof that the Chinese had put their lot with the others in this country."

3. Through the years, this building is a strong witness of Singapore's progress from mudflats to metropolis and has become a unique part of Singapore's skyline – the nine-dragon relief walls, stone lions, vermilion doors and glazed roof tiles hold a special place in the memories and hearts of generations of Singaporeans. At the same time, they also represent values that are forward-looking and deeply significant to us all.

The SCCCI Building – A Symbol of Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit and Patriotism

4. First, the SCCCI Building stands as a fortress of Singapore's Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit and traditional Chinese values. It has witnessed generations of Chinese migrants and entrepreneurs sink their roots here in Singapore and build their businesses from scratch. Guided by the Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit of integrity, hard work, unity and innovation, they have built many successful homegrown brands that are pillars of our economy. In 2022, the refurbishment of the SCCCI Building was completed. Incorporating traditional and modern design, the SCCCI Building affirms the importance of remembering our roots and innovating to keep up with the times.
5. This building also embodies our forefathers' selfless spirit of "Benefitting from Society, Giving Back to Society". In the early days of nation-building, our forefathers raised funds for the National Defence Fund here to support National Service and spearheaded the construction of the Civilian War Memorial. Today, we also award scholarships and raise funds for disaster relief. The generosity of our Chinese entrepreneurs continues to inspire many young entrepreneurs to be part of SCCCI and build a caring society together.
6. Third, this building also embodies the patriotism of Singapore enterprises and our mission to progress as one united nation. SCCCI strengthens communication between the government and

business community, improving the business environment and fostering innovation. Over the years, SCCCI also works closely with our Government and has launched numerous initiatives here to help businesses expand globally, such as the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention (WCEC) that is in its 17th edition this year. The SCCCI Building has also hosted many government leaders and business delegations from all over the world. I firmly believe that this building will continue to support Singapore, our Little Red Dot, in building friendships, connections, resources and strength, overcoming limitations and unlocking new opportunities!

7. In summary, the SCCCI Building is a “Home” for the business community – where Chinese entrepreneurs unite to build our nation together. Through ups and downs, SCCCI has built a closely knitted family of integrity. Most importantly, our members are our “family” who selflessly support one another, both in their careers and on a personal level, living out the core values of patriotism, integrity, succession, innovation and uniting businesses which will propel us forward for many years to come!

Highlights of SCCCI Building Diamond Jubilee Celebration

8. Over the years, SCCCI has fostered a strong sense of belonging and vitality among our members, encapsulated in “Home to the Business Community”. Therefore, among the series of events that we have planned for our big “family”, is a special exhibition titled “Home to the Business Community” at the SCCCI Chinese Business Culture Hub at Level 4, showcasing more than 200 artefacts that document the history of SCCCI and its building. This special exhibition is open to the public from today until mid-2025. I encourage Singaporeans to learn more about our forefathers’ contributions and gain a deeper understanding of the SCCCI Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit.
9. As we celebrate this building’s diamond jubilee, promoting education and succession remains an integral part of SCCCI’s

mission. In line with our belief in education and support for all the public universities in Singapore, I am honoured to announce that SCCCI will donate \$1.2 million to the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) to nurture the next generation of talent. This is the sixth public university that we are establishing a scholarship with, for which we will apply for government matching. At the same time, in the spirit of inclusiveness, we will continue to make donations to Yayasan MENDAKI, Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) and Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC) to support education for all ethnic groups.

10. Last but not least, I must take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to our members who have supported the SCCCI “Home” over the years. As a token of our appreciation, a special commemorative gift symbolising SCCCI’s mission of “Uniting Businesses to Benefit Society” and the SCCCI Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit will be presented to all members who have been with us for 60 years or more. Thank you for journeying with SCCCI all these years! Imbued with resilience and determination, we look forward to forging ahead together with all of you!

11. SCCCI is also deeply grateful and fully supports our 4G Government’s “prudent and bold” approach in refining policies and renewing our social compact, including greater emphasis on mother tongue education and actively promoting our Chinese culture. SCCCI will fully support these efforts through the SCCCI Chinese Business Culture Hub, as well as celebrating traditional festivals, education initiatives and awarding scholarships to promote our Chinese culture and the Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit. I encourage all to visit our special exhibition titled “Home to the Business Community” with your families and friends!

12. SCCCI is the “Home” to the business community, and the Mid-Autumn Festival symbolises reunion. No matter where we are, I urge all SCCCI members to stand united and work together for our business community, country, society and future generations. Once again, I thank Minister Edwin Tong for your presence tonight. I wish



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everyone a happy Mid-Autumn Festival and happiness in your families! Thank you.
