

**THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE RENOVATED
SINGAPORE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE &
INDUSTRY BUILDING**

WELCOME ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG

10 SEPTEMBER 2022

SCCCI BUILDING @ 47 HILL STREET

Honourable Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong,

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Mr Lawrence Wong,

Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr
Tan See Leng,

Senior Government Officials,

Your Excellencies,

SCCCI Honorary Presidents, Senior Honorary Council Members,
Honorary Council Members and Council Members,

Distinguished Guests,

1. Good morning everyone! I am deeply honoured to be here with everyone at Mid-Autumn Festival, to witness this important historical moment – the Opening Ceremony of the Renovated SCCCI Building. I sincerely thank everyone for attending today, especially PM Lee for taking time out of your busy schedule to officiate today's ceremony, and DPM Wong for delivering the Keynote Speech.
2. Looking back, the SCCCI Building was completed in 1964. At Mid-Autumn Festival that year, Founding Prime Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew officiated the opening of the Building. In his speech, Mr Lee Kuan Yew encouraged the Chinese community to settle down and make Singapore their home and actively integrate themselves into

the multiracial Southeast Asian society, reflecting the concerns and challenges in that era.

3. Time flies, the SCCCI Building has journeyed with our nation till today. Just as Mr Lee Kuan Yew said, “The history of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce is a reflection of the history of Singapore”. This Building has witnessed Singapore’s nation-building journey from independence to prosperity. Singapore’s 57 years of independence has taught us a few important lessons that guide SCCCI as the Chamber looks forward to the future.
4. From a small country with a lack of resources 57 years ago, Singapore has become a first-world economy in just a few decades, this is indeed a formidable achievement! Besides nurturing talent and unleashing their potential, Singapore has also reached new heights and become a benchmark in urban development. In terms of governance, Singapore adopts a pragmatic approach, progresses steadily, and is at the cutting edge. Through the pandemic, as we forge ahead – “Stronger Together, Majulah!” towards a new milestone, Singaporeans’ high levels of confidence in the Government has won praises from the international community!
5. Singaporeans can be proud of these achievements, which remind us that they did not come easy. On the road to these achievements, we witnessed the arduous journey of our forefathers, especially the blood, sweat and tears of the Pioneer and Merdeka generations. Although there were various challenges and obstacles in the early days of independence, the spirit of fairness, integrity, justice, and hard work remain at the core of the Government and the people, standing united as one. This is the key to the Singapore we have today!
6. Besides admiration and thankfulness, we must be grateful and continue to promote the selfless spirit of our forefathers, inspiring the next generation to forge ahead.

7. Thirdly, we must also remember the importance of preparing for crisis. Although Singapore is prosperous today, staying innovative and strengthening national defence are essential foundations for the nation's sustainable development. Especially in the face of the pandemic, war, rise of protectionism and geopolitical tensions, SCCCI will support the Government's efforts to stay open, embark on economic transformation and maintain good international connectivity. We also support the Government's efforts in strengthening Singapore's defence capabilities – Singaporeans must not take social stability for granted. Only when we stay resilient and forge ahead, will we be able to safeguard our lives, freedom, dignity and economy!

8. The key to Singapore's success lies in a united, highly effective, honest, non-corrupt, meritocratic government highly trusted by the people! We trust and support the Government, especially in the Forward Singapore exercise launched by the Government after the pandemic, to strengthen our social compact and national identity, build shared values and strong emotional bonds among the diverse groups in the society.

9. The front and back facade of the renovated SCCCI Building have taken on a refreshing look with a traditional and modern design respectively. The respect for tradition symbolises the patriotism and integrity of Chinese entrepreneurs; the innovation that keeps up with the times symbolises the core values of succession and innovation, both of which complement each other, forming the basis of SCCCI's important mission – creating value for our nation and “Uniting Businesses”!

10. The SCCCI Building showcases the SCCCI Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit, reflects the confidence of the Singaporean identity and is the home that creates value for the business community. Only when we unite Singaporeans and forge ahead

with the values of patriotism, integrity, succession, innovation, and uniting businesses, will we be able to envision the next 57 years.

11. As Singapore forges ahead – “Stronger Together, Majulah!”, we will definitely achieve greater heights!
12. In closing, I wish everyone a happy Mid-Autumn Festival and happiness in your families. Thank you!
