

**SAF DAY COMBINED REDEDICATION CEREMONY 2022  
(WEST ZONE)**

**SPEECH BY PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG**

**1 JULY 2022**

**TRADE ASSOCIATION HUB AUDITORIUM**

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

Rear-Admiral Aaron Beng, Chief of Navy,

Mr Tan Boon Khai, Chief Executive Officer of JTC Corporation,

SAF Representatives,

Trade Association and Corporate Members,

Distinguished Guests,

1. Good morning everyone.
2. The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) is very happy to be a part of today's SAF Day Combined Rededication Ceremony. Together with army officers and over 90 company representatives, SCCCI reaffirms its commitment towards National Defence. The Chamber also expresses its utmost respect for our national servicemen.
3. This year also marks the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Service (NS55). The theme for NS55, "Generations of Strength", symbolises the spirit of Singapore's national defence across generations, and inspires the new generation of Singaporeans to

contribute selflessly with perseverance and unity. This is a formidable achievement!

4. Since 55 years ago, Singaporean male youths from different races, religions and education backgrounds go through thick and thin together as they serve their full-time NS. Besides building a disciplined military, NS also promotes multiracial unity, cohesion, and trust. These are the key pillars that helped to lay the foundations for Singapore's prosperity and stability.
5. SCCCI has also witnessed the NS journey – from its early days, developing years to passing down its legacy. In 1966, the first year of nation-building since independence, Singapore's Founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew delivered a speech at SCCCI to representatives of 400 trade associations. He affirmed the business community's efforts in nurturing talents, but beyond business acumen, the courage and determination to build a fair and just society are of greater importance.
6. Inspired by Founding Prime Minister Lee's speech, SCCCI understands the importance of national defence and firmly believes that you must "have a country to have a home". Full-time NS was introduced in 1967. In 1968, the Government set up the National Defence Foundation and started a fundraising exercise. In the same year, SCCCI raised more than \$1 million for the Foundation.
7. Today, SCCCI continues to uphold the core belief of patriotism, ranking this at the top of the SCCCI Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit. As the Chamber helps businesses to innovate, it also hopes that they will contribute to the nation's prosperity. At the same time, SCCCI will serve with gratitude and forge ahead, leading our members to support the strengthening of national defence, especially in encouraging employers to support their NSmen employees to attend their in-camp training.

8. The Russia-Ukraine war and geopolitical tensions serve as a stark reminder that peace cannot be taken for granted. Staying resilient is the only way to safeguard our health and safety, possessions, dignity, and economy.
  
9. With its relocation to the Trade Association Hub in 2017, SCCCI has been supporting MINDEF in organising the SAF Day Combined Rededication Ceremony (West Zone). This year marks the sixth year of SCCCI organising the SAF Day Ceremony with the support of MINDEF.
  
10. Today, as we witness over 90 companies receiving national accreditation for their support towards NS and Total Defence, I would like to thank everyone. I also urge the business community to continue supporting NS and truly live out “Generations of Strength” by conveying the importance of NS and Total Defence to their younger employees, building the new generation of Singaporeans with great character, resilience and courage that will benefit the nation and businesses greatly!
  
11. In closing, I sincerely thank Minister Tan See Leng for personally officiating today’s ceremony. I also thank everyone for attending today’s ceremony. Let us continue to work together to strengthen our national defence as we prepare for the future!

\*\*\*\*\*