

## **SCCCI Mid-Autumn Gathering & Inter-Chamber**

### **Networking Night 2019**

### **Speech by SCCCI President Roland Ng**

**Date: 6 September 2019**

**Venue: Auditorium on 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Trade Association Hub**

Minister in Prime Minister's Office cum Second Minister for Ministry  
of Finance and Ministry of Education Ms Indranee Rajah

Your Excellencies

Senior Government Officials

Mr Farid Khan, President of Singapore Malay Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry

Dr T. Chandroo, President of Singapore Indian Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry

Tan Sri Ter Leong Yap, President of the Associated Chinese  
Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia

Friends from the business and education communities

SCCCI Honorary Council Members, Council Members and Members  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening to all of you.

On this beautiful moonlit night, Singaporeans of different ethnic groups, business association leaders, members of the diplomatic corps, and friends from abroad come together at the Trade Association Hub to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival. On behalf of SCCCI, I extend my warm welcome to all of you.

This year SCCCI is the organiser of the Inter-Chamber Networking Night. Racial harmony is one of Singapore's cornerstones in nation-building. This common stance forms the basis of the Inter-Chamber Networking Night, which the SCCCI, the Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry take turns to organise. It has been held annually without fail over the previous eight years. The event has not only helped to promote business opportunities, but more importantly enhanced cultural understanding among the racial groups. This year SCCCI invited our counterparts from the Malay as well as the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival together. This confers a deeper meaning on the Festival. While we propagate the traditional Chinese culture, we also promote cross-ethnic, cross-culture and cross-domain business interactions.

Tonight, we also have among us senior representatives from the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia, who have come from afar. I am very happy that they have come to Singapore to be with us for the Festival. Let cultural and business interactions cross all barriers is also the key message which tonight's theme – "the beauty of the moon is shared by friends despite great distances" – wants to convey.

Determining the date of a festival by the look of the moon is not unique to the Chinese. Chinese people celebrate reunion during the Mid-Autumn Festival when the moon is full. Muslims break the Ramadan fast when they spot a new moon. Indians celebrate the victory of light over darkness during the festival of Deepavali. Although the customs are different, the various forms of practices are based on the people's infinite love for life and hope for a great future.

Today's business environment is full of uncertainties. Global economic growth is being threatened by the US-China trade war, the technology war, Brexit, and global terrorism. Protectionism is on the rise, adversely affecting many economies. Regional economies are also experiencing rapid downturns. Changes are always looming while the risks are huge. We all face the same challenges. I hope that enterprises of every sector and region would continue to interact, communicate and exchange ideas to synergise efforts to jointly create a good business environment, safeguard harmonious neighbouring relations, maintain regional peace and stability, and resolve the challenges before us.

For more than a hundred years, SCCCI has always been a venue of social activities all year round. SCCCI is not only a platform to strengthen friendships and facilitate contacts between government and businesses but also among businesses themselves, among business partners, among business groups as well as ethnic groups. It is also one of the important catalysts in bonding all classes of the Singapore society and in promoting social, cultural and educational developments.

The spirit of giving back to society is an unwavering belief of SCCCI. Since Singapore gained independence, Chamber has actively helped spur the development of culture and education in Singapore. In 1967 SCCCI gave out its first scholarships to help students who had demonstrated excellence in their studies and conduct to complete their education, regardless of race and background. In 2004, SCCCI further introduced the SCCCF-Yayasan MENDAKI Scholarship for Malay/Muslim undergraduates. On top of these, we added the SCCCI-Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) joint university scholarship in 2015 for ethnic Indian undergraduates to help nurture the future pillars of Singapore.

We firmly believe that helping students who are exceptional in academic performance and conduct to receive a good education would not only nurture talents for the society, but also promote harmony and unity among different ethnic groups. In more than fifty years SCCCI has helped groom 2,000 talents who became part of the society's core workforce. They have done exceedingly well in government departments, industrial and commercial sectors, as well as the educational and cultural fields. Tonight, outstanding Chinese, Malay and Indian students from five universities in Singapore will receive scholarships which would take them closer to their dreams and life goals.

Being multiracial, multilingual, multireligious and multicultural is a distinct characteristic of Singapore. Tonight, we have specially prepared performances with unique Singapore flavours. I hope you would all enjoy.

In closing, on behalf of the SCCCI, I would like to thank Minister Indranee for attending tonight's Mid-Autumn Festival. I also thank our excellencies as well as guests and friends from various sectors for their zealous support. I wish all of you a happy evening!

Thank you everyone!