

ERC/PR/2015

EMBARGOED TILL DELIVERY – 致辞前禁止发表
PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY – 以现场致辞内容为准

SPEECH BY SCCC PRESIDENT THOMAS CHUA
AT THE
SG50 OUTSTANDING CHINESE BUSINESS PIONEERS AWARDS
PRESENTATION CEREMONY AND DINNER
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6 2015
THE GRAND BALLROOM, RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL, MILLENIA SINGAPORE

Your Excellency Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, President of the Republic of Singapore

Excellencies, Ministers, Members of Parliament, Government Officials

Honorary Presidents

Council Members, Distinguished guests

Good evening!

Today's Awards Presentation Ceremony is a most special and meaningful one. A total of 28 business pioneers representing a diversity of trades and industries, will be presented with the "SG50 Outstanding Chinese Business Pioneers Awards". Firstly, let us give a hearty round of applause to pay our tribute to all the award recipients.

In keeping with the Chinese tradition of thrift and prudence, tonight's awards ceremony is grand yet understated. The décor is not lavish, but the stature of the award recipients is impressive enough to light up the entire ballroom! These 28 entrepreneurs who are receiving the awards tonight straddle a great number of business sectors, including finance, trade, real estate, energy, manufacturing, chemicals, shipping, port operations, the legal profession, cinema operations, tourism, garments, food, architecture, urban planning, transport & logistics, heavy machinery, environmental engineering, manufacturing of electrical equipment, healthcare, etc. They are captains of industry who have contributed to economic development; they are also community leaders, actively giving back to society.

In the early years of Singapore's independence, most business sectors are in their early stage of development. When Singapore was forced into independence, these Chinese business pioneers chose to remain here and be a part of our nation's destiny. I believe our younger generation could never imagine just how difficult the early years of nation-building were, nor envisage the challenges during those turbulent periods. Within just half a century, Singapore has transformed from a small trading post with no resources and an uncertain future into a thriving metropolis. Singapore could only have achieved such economic prosperity owing to the hard work and perseverance of the pioneer generation.

The most notable of all is that these entrepreneurs are not only preoccupied with the success of their business. They also devote time, energy and resources into society, culture, education and charitable projects, are active in community organisations, and lead the way in industry development, working hard to promote Chinese culture and personally put into practice traditional values, and helping the less privileged among us. They are like a powerful engine, revving up to encourage more people to serve the community. They are role models of society and pillars of our nation!

These 28 outstanding Chinese business pioneers are the example of our pioneer generation. There are also many other entrepreneurs like themselves who share the same values of resilience and ardour in building our Singapore economy. The Chamber has initiated these awards to promote and pay tribute to the Chinese entrepreneurial spirit, uphold the pursuit of excellence and the virtues of giving back to society, sharing the fruits of prosperity with the community.

We wish to thank the award recipients for being willing to share their experiences and stories with us, providing us with real-life cases and role models in our endeavour to pass on the Chinese entrepreneurial spirit to the younger generation. At the same time, we also thank the members of the Judging Panel, with special thanks to Mr Stephen Lee! Mr Lee completely qualifies for the criteria set for the Awards. However, being the Chairman of the Judging Panel, he graciously declined to accept.

Besides, although there are only two ladies among the award recipients, we have not forgotten to acknowledge the sacrifices and contributions of all ladies during the period of nation-building. Some are the capable business partners of their husbands. Even more are home-makers devoted to looking after their husbands and raising their children. Their contributions enabled their husbands to devote their efforts fully in business and community services. As the saying goes, behind every successful man is a woman of substance. Hence I propose giving these women of substance a big applause!

Singapore is an immigrant society, and the Chinese business pioneers are either immigrants or the descendants of immigrants. Whether we have arrived in Singapore in the early days or later, we have sunk our roots and hearts here, to make this our home. Regardless of race, religion or culture, we are common stakeholders who live together in this island nation. While there may be occasional differences in opinion, we eventually overcome this to live together in peace and harmony, and in unity of purpose for the progress of our nation. The pioneer generation deserves our every respect because they use concrete actions to promote the fine tradition of “giving back to society”. I sincerely hope that the new immigrants could follow the footsteps of their elders, to make the same contributions to the nation and society and create prosperity for our future generations.

From 1965 till 2015, Singapore has been sailing in the vast oceans amidst rolling waves; at times threatening clouds gather above, and sometimes there are clear skies far into the horizon. While we cannot expect the future to be smooth-sailing all the time, if we can adhere to the entrepreneurial spirit of the Chinese business pioneers, we can certainly look forward to embracing an even better future.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to President Tony Tan for personally presenting the awards tonight. I also wish to thank Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong for giving his affirmation through his video message. At the same time, I thank all members of the diplomatic corps, ministers, Members of Parliament, senior government officials, and the many business and community leaders, for your support to the SCCCI. Let us once again



give the heartiest round of applause to congratulate every single one of the recipients of the SG50 Outstanding Chinese Business Pioneers Awards!

Thank you.