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**International Women's Day
Breaking Boundaries, Challenging Confines
Speech by SCCC President Thomas Chua
Date: March 5 2016
Venue: Grand Copthorne Hotel, 4th floor, Grand Ballroom**

Honourable Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu

Council members and members

Distinguished guests

Good afternoon to everyone! Firstly, let me wish all the beautiful ladies here a very happy International Women's Day!

I really like the theme that has been adopted today – Breaking Boundaries, Challenging Confines. This appropriate theme clearly points to the attitude that the new generation of women should assume in their work and life. It is impossible to control the external environment. But we can make timely changes, upgrade ourselves, and look for ways to connect with the world, in order to realise the value of life. Signs usually loom even before changes occur, and in this respect women are always more astute and detailed; they have the knack of latching on to clues more easily. These assets can be optimally utilised during a company's restructuring process. Indeed, this is something I am fully cognisant of, having worked alongside my wife for so many years.

Two days ago, I learnt from a newspaper report that the percentage of women directors on the boards of SGX-listed companies has risen from 8% in 2012 to 9.5% currently. It is often said that behind every successful man is a woman who has laboured hard behind the scenes. Now, an increasing number of talented and capable women are willing to step into the limelight, and assume greater responsibilities in society. Our guest of honour today is the finest example. Minister Grace Fu has already graced this International Women's Day event organised by our Chamber's Career Women's Group, for four consecutive years. On behalf of

the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry, allow me to express my sincere appreciation to Minister Grace Fu for her tremendous support!

More women have made their way to managerial positions in companies, bringing a well-rounded diversity of views in strategic planning, and helping enterprises to swiftly adapt to a continually changing business environment. Whenever we encounter changes, we can make subjective predictions on the future, or we can also examine all the signals rationally to anticipate forthcoming changes, and then take appropriate actions. Since change is already a norm, we need to master change by getting accustomed to adjust and alter strategies, plans and business models, especially in learning how to adapt and identify new opportunities.

Our four speakers today are exemplary in this regard. These four eminent career women represent traditional industries as well as newly emerging industries. Despite having vastly different backgrounds, they have all made remarkable and commendable achievements in their respective business fields. A special word of thanks to Ms Quek Soo Boon, Chairperson of the Chamber's Career Women's Group, together with her entire committee, for their perpetual hard work and efforts in inviting these excellent speakers from China, Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore to share their views and stories with us. The Career Women's Group has always succeeded in putting together a most interesting and lively celebratory programme for the annual International Women's Day function, complete with a forum, dialogue, and even a lucky draw! I hope everyone would find today's event fruitful and rewarding.

In closing, I thank all distinguished guests for your attendance today. I also extend my sincere appreciation to all our sponsors and partners for their generosity and kind support. Last but certainly not least I wish all women present today good health and radiant beauty. And may you all remain forever young!

Thank you.