

SAF DAY COMBINED REDEDICATION CEREMONY 2026 (ZONE 3)

SPEECH BY SCCC I PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG

1 JULY 2026

SCCCI BUILDING

Mr Chan Chun Sing, Coordinating Minister for Public Services & Minister for Defence,

Vice Admiral Aaron Beng, Chief of Defence Force, Singapore Armed Forces,

Major-General Cai Dexian, Chief of Army, Singapore Army,

SAF Representatives,

SCCCI Council Members,

Trade Association and Corporate Members,

Distinguished Guests,

Good morning!

1. It is a great honour to join all of you at the SAF Day Combined Rededication Ceremony 2026 (Zone 3). On behalf of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), I extend a warm welcome to all. At the same time, we also express our utmost respect to all Full-time National Servicemen (NSFs) and Operationally Ready National Servicemen (NSmen), who have dedicated themselves to protecting our homeland!
2. The year 2026 is especially significant for Singapore. This year marks the 60th anniversary of our National Pledge, which embodies our nation's founding ideals, as well as the 59th year since the introduction of National Service. In addition, SCCCI is celebrating the significant milestone of its 120th anniversary.

3. In the National Pledge, our pioneers made the solemn commitment that we “pledge ourselves as one united people, regardless of race, language or religion”. This unwavering conviction has enabled our small island state, despite its limited land and natural resources, to overcome the challenges and work together to build a nation that is prosperous, just, secure and happy.
4. Since Singapore's early years of independence, SCCCI has always upheld the firm belief we must “have a country to have a home”, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our country. From raising funds for the National Defence Fund and encouraging eligible male citizens to serve NS, to uniting businesses in supporting NSmen to attend their in-camp training, SCCCI is committed to building a stronger nation through both economic development and national defence.
5. We are deeply grateful that generation after generation of Singaporeans have stepped forward, dedicating their youth and commitment to building Singapore's strongest shield of security. Through this annual ceremony jointly organised by SCCCI and the SAF, we reaffirm our shared commitment to defending our nation, while demonstrating the longstanding partnership between the SAF, the business community and employers.
6. We would also like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the companies and employers present today. Your understanding, support and close cooperation in enabling NSmen to fulfil their National Service obligations and attend their in-camp training have allowed businesses to play a meaningful and important role in strengthening Singapore's national defence, demonstrating a strong spirit of patriotism.
7. As we look around the world today, geopolitical tensions and conflicts continue to intensify, creating growing uncertainties for the

global economy. At the same time, cyberspace and technologies such as AI are double-edged swords that could also be exploited to undermine national unity.

8. The situation in the Middle East this year has disrupted the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical energy shipping routes. The resulting inflationary pressures have affected people around the world, including Singaporeans. This has reinforced the importance of supply chain stability and energy resilience, while reminding us once again of the need to remain vigilant and to be well prepared for the future.
9. Fortunately, Singapore has long adopted the forward-looking concept of Total Defence, which encompasses six pillars: Military, Civil, Economic, Social, Psychological, and Digital Defence. Together, these pillars strengthen our national security, social cohesion and economic resilience in a comprehensive manner.
10. SCCCI has journeyed through 120 remarkable years. It is not only a story of pioneering Chinese entrepreneurs building businesses from humble beginnings, but also a story of standing together with Singapore throughout our nation-building journey. As we embark on a new chapter, SCCCI will continue to carry forward the spirit of dedication of our forefathers, harness the strength of the Chinese business community, and uphold the core beliefs of “patriotism, integrity, succession, innovation and uniting businesses”. We remain committed to contributing to Singapore's long-term peace, stability and prosperity through our continued efforts in economic development, national defence and education.
11. Once again, I sincerely thank Minister Chan Chun Sing for taking time out of his busy schedule to officiate today's ceremony. I also thank all of you for your strong support. Let us continue to work hand in hand to strengthen our national defence and protect our home.

12. Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to conclude briefly in English:
It is my great honour and privilege to welcome all of you to this year's SAF Day Combined Rededication Ceremony for Zone 3. As we mark the 60th anniversary of our National Pledge and the 59th year of National Service, we are constantly reminded that peace, security, and prosperity we enjoy in Singapore must not be taken for granted. Especially in a volatile and fragmented global environment and setting, a strong national defence relies heavily on the collective resilience and unity of our people and businesses. SCCCI has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the SAF since the early days of our independence. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to all participating companies and employers today for your unwavering support of our nation. Your commitment ensures that Singapore remains safe, secure, strong and continue to “shine”. Together, let us continue to move forward with trust, unity, and a shared purpose. Thank you!
