

**SPRING RECEPTION 2026**  
**SPEECH BY SCCCI PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG**  
**17 FEBRUARY 2026**  
**SCCCI BUILDING**

Mr Gan Kim Yong, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister for Trade and Industry,

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

Mrs Josephine Teo, Minister for Digital Development and Information,

Mr Chee Hong Tat, Minister for National Development,

Mr Jeffrey Siow, Acting Minister for Transport and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Finance,

Senior Ministers of State, Ministers of State and Members of Parliament,

Mr Lee Yi Shyan, Chairman of Business China,

Senior Government Officials,

Your Excellencies,

SCCCI Council Members,

Leaders of Trade Associations and Chambers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very happy Lunar New Year to all of you!

1. Today is the first day of the Lunar New Year – a time of new beginnings as Spring returns to the earth. On behalf of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), I extend my warmest festive greetings to all our distinguished guests! In this Year of the Horse, may success come swiftly, like a horse at full gallop. May the year ahead bring you good health and happiness!

2. We are grateful and encouraged that despite ongoing geopolitical uncertainties and trade tensions in recent years, Singapore's economy has continued to demonstrate strong resilience and vitality. According to the latest figures released by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, our economy recorded an impressive growth of 5% last year, supported by robust investments in artificial intelligence, resilient global trade activity and a more accommodative financial environment. The Government has also raised Singapore's 2026 GDP growth forecast to 2% to 4%.
  
3. As Prime Minister Lawrence Wong shared in his Chinese New Year Message, we live in a world "where geopolitical currents are shifting, and technology is reshaping our lives". Singapore's strength, however, lies in our harmonious multicultural society, where people of different cultures, traditions and faiths live together in mutual respect, trust and understanding. At the same time, the Year of the Fire Horse symbolises drive and resilience. Together, "we can turn challenges into opportunities, and continue moving forward as one people"!
  
4. Therefore, we are most grateful that when the Prime Minister unveiled Budget 2026 last week, he introduced a suite of pro-business and forward-looking measures that will position Singapore well for the future amid today's volatile global environment. These include sustained investments in artificial intelligence, corporate tax rebates, enhanced support for internationalisation and financing, as well as salary support for lower-wage workers. Together, they reflect the Government's determination to address both the immediate and long-term challenges faced by businesses and workers, while driving sustainable economic growth. SCCCI will also continue to work closely with the Government and all of you to forge an even brighter path ahead!
  
5. As we all know, last year marked the significant milestone of Singapore's 60<sup>th</sup> year of independence. For SCCCI, 2026 is

likewise a momentous year as we officially commemorate our 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

6. Looking back over the past 120 years, our forefathers arrived in Nanyang in search of survival and opportunity. From sinking their roots here and making Singapore their home to flourishing and thriving, these achievements did not come easy. More importantly, they left behind not just material wealth, but also a rich legacy of Singapore's Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit and culture.
  
7. The core beliefs of the Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit have run through SCCCI's 120-year history:
  - First, **Integrity** – building and growing businesses on trust and credibility. With steadfast commitment and a pioneering spirit, our forefathers established many enduring enterprises and reputable brands.
  
  - Second, **Uniting Businesses** – bringing together businessmen across dialect groups and industries. In 1906, our pioneers set aside differences to establish SCCCI, working hand in hand to build a vibrant and resilient business ecosystem.
  
  - Third, **Patriotism** – contributing to nation-building with the belief that we must “have a country to have a home”. From defence and economic development to social, cultural and educational causes, generations of Chinese entrepreneurs have played their part.
  
  - Fourth, **Innovation** – embracing globalisation and rapid technological change with an adaptive and forward-looking mindset. SCCCI has continuously supported our members in enhancing competitiveness, exploring new growth areas and adopting new business models amid economic transformation.
  
  - Finally, **Succession** – upholding the belief of “Benefitting from Society, Giving Back to Society”. Through establishing

scholarships, educational institutions and community initiatives, Chinese entrepreneurs have translated personal success into broader social good and equal opportunities for all. In his Chinese New Year Message, PM Wong also emphasised the importance of giving every child a good start in life and supporting families at every stage of their journey. This resonates with the spirit of “Harmony in Diversity” advocated by our founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew at the first World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention in 1991. It reflects our shared aspiration that as our economy grows and prospers, people of all races and social backgrounds will share in the fruits of progress. Only then can our nation achieve prosperity and stability.

8. Ladies and Gentlemen, the SCCCI today not only represents the remarkable achievements of local Chinese enterprises, but also embodies the enduring spirit of Chinese entrepreneurship. Guided by the wisdom that “it takes ten years to grow trees, but a hundred years to nurture people”, we will continue to stay aligned with national priorities as we chart our path forward.
9. Some may think that success comes from seizing the right opportunities at the right time. But sustainable, long-term growth requires more – it requires culture, shared values, unity of purpose, inclusiveness and mutual trust. It demands perseverance, patience and resilience. Moving forward, SCCCI will continue striving for the good of our nation and our fellow Singaporeans, while nurturing the next generation through these enduring values, igniting in them the spirit of service and solidarity. As SCCCI embarks on this new chapter, this is a mission that carries great responsibility for the road ahead.
10. On this auspicious day, we are proud to unveil the official logo for SCCCI’s 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, marking the start of our year-long celebration. This logo was selected through a Logo Design Competition which was open to the public, adding greater community participation and engagement to this historic milestone.

11. Throughout the year, SCCCI will continue to uphold the core beliefs of “patriotism, integrity, succession, innovation and uniting businesses” in our series of celebratory activities, with the objective of connecting people across industries and generations, engaging partners from abroad to witness and participate in this historic milestone, to experience first-hand the depth and wisdom of Singapore’s Chinese Entrepreneurial Spirit. We warmly invite all to take part in these celebrations. Let us honour the selfless dedication of our forefathers and work hard to build a better Singapore for our children and generations to come!

12. In closing, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to DPM Gan and all our distinguished guests for your presence today, and to Business China for co-organsing this Spring Reception with us. I wish you and your families peace, success and great fortune in the Year of the Horse. I also wish Singapore solidarity, peace and prosperity! Thank you.

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