

**SCCCI INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CONFERENCE 2023**

**HER LEADERSHIP:**

**NEW HORIZONS, EXPECTATIONS, RESOLVE.**

**SPEECH BY SCCCI PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG**

**TIME: 5 MARCH 2023 (SUNDAY) 6PM**

**ISLAND BALLROOM, SHANGRI-LA HOTEL**

Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Sustainability and the Environment,  
Members of Parliament,  
Your Excellencies,  
SCCCI Council Members,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening everyone!

1. On behalf of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), I sincerely thank Minister Grace Fu for your presence today. I also thank all the guests from Singapore and abroad for actively participating in this year's International Women's Day Conference!
2. The SCCCI Career Women's Group (CWG) has been organising this conference since 2004, inviting outstanding career women to gather together to celebrate, connect, share their life and career journeys, encourage and inspire one another.

3. Besides shining in their careers and working hard for their families, women today also serve and give generously to the needy in society. With this spirit of resilience and sense of responsibility, coupled with the qualities of being a good listener, being understanding and accepting, women have become the backbone of the family, workplace and society. Not only are they admirable, they will also have greater influence.
4. With “HER Leadership” as the theme, this year’s conference will discuss women’s role and what they can offer in shaping the world of the future, which are both forward-looking and what society eagerly looks forward to. Over the past decades, globalisation has led to unprecedented prosperity. With the foundation laid by Founding Prime Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew and the Government’s hard work across generations, Singapore has made remarkable achievements as Singaporeans’ standard of living continues to improve. However, the world is now at the crossroads. Challenges such as climate change, ageing population, widening income gap and geopolitical conflicts have caused many countries to stagnate. We also deeply understand that today’s economic success would not be sustainable if there are no successors or if most people do not benefit from it.
5. In view of this, there has been a reconfiguration and recalibration in Singapore and the world’s view on development. Besides competition and economic interconnectedness, there has been greater emphasis on family cohesiveness, social unity, environment restoration to build a more balanced, sustainable and people-centric society. In this transformation journey, women play an irreplaceable role; only when men and women work hand in hand, complementing each other’s perspectives, strengths while building a more inclusive economy and society, passing down important values to the next generation, will we achieve sustainable development!
6. Just last year, SCCCI launched a new sustainability alliance with the Sustainable Energy Association of Singapore (SEAS) and SGTech to drive local businesses’ sustainable development. To all the women leaders here today, we welcome you to join us to build the future green economy together!

7. As we celebrate International Women's Day today, we must also thank our Government for promoting gender equality over the years, benefitting women across the different sectors. For example, in the early childhood sector where most teachers are women, the Government announced last year that early childhood educators will be getting a pay raise, to affirm their efforts in nurturing the next generation. As we fought the pandemic over the past three years, many of our frontline healthcare workers are also women who protected our lives in the crisis, and we express our utmost respect to them.
8. In the Budget 2023 that was announced recently, the extension of Government-paid paternity leave and additional assistance to lower-income families to facilitate their children's pre-school enrolment are great news for women and families which we need to be grateful for. SCCCI will definitely work more closely with the Government and businesses to promote gender equality, to make our economy and society better and more vibrant!
9. It has been 29 years since the establishment of SCCCI's CWG. I am very happy to see CWG's dedication, growth and vitality over the years, making contributions to the country and society. I encourage everyone to continue inspiring one another and scale greater heights!
10. In closing, I sincerely thank Adj. A/Prof Hwang Yee Cheau, Chairperson of CWG; Cindy Goh, Chairperson of the Conference's organising committee and the team for their hard work and meticulous planning to make this event a success. I sincerely thank DBS Bank and CIMB Bank for their sponsorship. I also thank all the panellists for their strong support and hope that today will be a fruitful session for everyone. To all my sisters, I wish you great health, happiness and Happy International Women's Day!

Thank you.

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