

LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION 2023
SPEECH BY SCCCI PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG
22 JANUARY 2023
SCCCI BUILDING

Honourable Madam Halimah Yacob, President of the Republic of Singapore,

Minister for Trade and Industry Mr Gan Kim Yong,

Minister for Sustainability and the Environment Ms Grace Fu,

Minister for Education Mr Chan Chun Sing,

Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng,

Senior Minister of State for National Development and Foreign Affairs Ms Sim Ann,

Senior Minister of State for Sustainability and the Environment and Manpower Dr Koh Poh Koon,

Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Culture, Community and Youth Ms Low Yen Ling,

Member of Parliament Ms Tin Pei Ling,

Business China Chairman Mr Lee Yi Shyan,

Senior Government Officials, Your Excellencies and Leaders of Community Organisations,

SCCCI Honorary Presidents, Senior Honorary Council Members, Honorary Council Members, Council Members and Members,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Happy New Year! On behalf of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), I sincerely thank President Halimah for your presence today. I also extend a warm welcome to everyone joining us today. I wish everyone a happy Lunar New Year and an auspicious year ahead! Selamat Tahun Baru Cina! Happy Lunar New Year!
2. The essence of Lunar New Year is reunion and harmony. As part of Singapore's business community and Chinese community, SCCCI places great importance on this tradition and organises the Lunar New Year Celebration every year.
3. This year is the Year of the Rabbit. The Rabbit is quick-witted and intelligent – a symbol of prosperity and peace. Singapore is like the Rabbit – small in size yet full of vitality.
4. With its unique historical background, Singapore has developed into the multiracial, multicultural, multilingual and religiously harmonious Garden City since its independence in 1965. Singaporeans stand united as we overcome challenges with resilience, from fulfilling the Singaporean vision of implementing the Home Ownership for the People Scheme, to emerging stronger from the COVID-19 pandemic today and exploring business opportunities amid the uncertain economy.
5. The key to Singapore's success lies in the people's unity forged over the years, regardless of race and religion. However, this requires more hard work, even more so in an uncertain world where he who does not advance loses ground. Therefore, we must be even more united, work harder and treasure what we have more than ever – to thrive, seek opportunities and achieve sustainable development!

6. Our ancestors left their homeland for Singapore to make a living here. The success of our forefathers did not come easy, we must be grateful and forge ahead. In the face of limited resources and a turbulent economy, Singapore must ensure its well-balanced development where the elderly are cared for and the young are nurtured; as well as plan and prepare for the Pioneer Generation, Merdeka Generation and our future generations, so that Singapore's firm foundation can be further strengthened, our country will continue to flourish and prosper!

7. Despite the uncertain global economic outlook, there are opportunities amid risks. This year, SCCCI looks forward to drive the business community and our members to facilitate economic development. The reconfiguration of global supply chains brings new opportunities to various industries. Economic activities resume as Singapore and many countries ease COVID-19 measures. The rainbow only comes after the storm. In this era where we are presented with both challenges and opportunities, if Singapore businesses can stay determined and uphold the spirit of resilience, diligence and innovation, we will definitely be able to scale new heights!

8. As a small country, only by breaking into bigger markets, remaining open to collaboration and welcoming talents, will Singapore be able to enlarge our economic pie! Although we encountered challenges in the past few years that arose from the pandemic and geopolitical tensions, globalisation and an interconnected open economy is the way to go. However, it is difficult to achieve anything without support. I encourage businesses from the different sectors to join SCCCI and the trade associations as members. As everyone works together hand in hand, complementing each other's resources, sharing risks, and pooling together our wisdom, we will definitely be able to achieve greater success.

9. In closing, I once again sincerely thank President Halimah for joining us today. I also sincerely thank Business China for co-organising this year's Lunar New Year Celebration. I wish everyone a fresh start in the Year of the Rabbit, where businesses will have new opportunities, our society demonstrating new vitality, and our people embarking on new endeavours. I wish all of you good health and success, I also wish Singapore solidarity, peace and prosperity. Thank you!
