

**SAF DAY COMBINED REDEDICATION CEREMONY 2024
(CBD, SOUTH ZONE)
SPEECH BY SCCCI PRESIDENT KHO CHOON KENG
1 JULY 2024
SCCCI BUILDING**

Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for National Development and Minister-in-Charge of Social Services Integration,
Rear-Admiral Sean Wat, Chief of Navy,
SAF Representatives,
Trade Association and Corporate Members,
Distinguished Guests,

1. A very good morning to all of you.
2. I am very happy to join all of you today at the annual SAF Day Combined Rededication Ceremony. It is of special significance to reaffirm our commitment towards National Defence together with our army officers and over 70 company representatives. On behalf of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), I extend a warm welcome to all. The Chamber also expresses its utmost respect for our national servicemen!
3. National Service (NS) was introduced in 1967 as the cornerstone of Singapore's forward-looking defence strategy. Over the years, Singaporeans have lived out this collective and deep commitment to uphold NS. Young men from different races, religions and backgrounds serve two years of NS, not just to train and acquire military skills, but also to develop mutual trust, teamwork and patriotism as they safeguard Singapore's national security together.
4. In these turbulent times, besides the wars in Europe and the Middle East, there are also many ongoing "silent wars", such as trade war, information war on social media and psychological war. We are reminded that peace should never be taken for granted. We must remain vigilant and steadfast in defending our national interests and upholding our principles.

5. This year also marks 40 years of Total Defence. The six pillars of Total Defence: Military, Civil, Economic, Social, Psychological and Digital Defence, are areas where everyone can contribute. For a small island state like Singapore to keep thriving and maintain our high international reputation to attract investments, Singaporeans must step up to keep our country safe.

6. At SCCCI, we actively support local enterprises in innovating and expanding overseas. Strengthening enterprise capabilities is also part of Economic Defence. For example, during the pandemic, companies with overseas production capabilities could prioritise supplying food and essentials to Singapore. Over the years, SCCCI has been promoting close cooperation between MINDEF and businesses, supporting NSmen employees to attend their in-camp training. Today, as we witness the strong support from many companies towards NS and Total Defence, I would like to express my gratitude to all. I also urge the business community to continue supporting NS by conveying the importance of NS and Total Defence to the younger generation of employees and their families.

7. In closing, I sincerely thank Minister Desmond Lee for personally officiating today's ceremony. I also thank our friends and company representatives for attending today. Let us continue to work together to strengthen our national defence to build a more prosperous nation. Thank you!
