

53rd NATIONAL DAY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
SPEECH BY SINGAPORE CONSUL-GENERAL TO SHANGHAI
LOH TUCK WAI
17 AUGUST 2018

Executive Vice Mayor of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government, Mr Zhou Bo

Vice Chairperson of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress' Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr Zhou Hong

Vice Chairperson of the Shanghai Political Consultative Congress' Proposal Committee, Mr Zhu Gang

Deputy Director-General of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government's Foreign Affairs Office Mr Fu Ji Hong

Senior Representatives from the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui

Fellow Consul-Generals, Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon!

1 A very warm welcome to our 53rd Singapore National Day Reception.

2 Last week, in his National Day message, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong addressed some key issues facing Singapore. PM Lee spoke about the changing global conditions that Singapore had to adapt to and emphasised the need for Singaporeans to be bold and creative in reimagining our future landscape.

This re-imagination extends beyond borders. Singapore has to continue to pursue a forward-looking foreign policy and maintain our relevance in the global arena. Singapore was therefore honoured to host the Summit Meeting between US President Donald Trump and DPRK Chairman Kim Jong-un in June this year. We are grateful for the trust given to us by the international community to host this historical meeting. Singapore will continue to work with all countries to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the region.

3 The progressive nature of our relations with China is also another example of our foreign policy which continually seeks relevance in our relations with other countries. Singapore and China share a warm and longstanding friendship. This year, we mark the 40th anniversary of Mr Deng Xiaoping's visit to Singapore in 1978, which also coincides with China's 40th anniversary for reform and opening up. Mr Deng's visit 40 years ago and his close relationship with then-Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew laid the foundation for cooperation between both countries and the deep personal ties between successive generations of leaders. Our close ties continue to be reflected in the frequent high-level exchanges between our leaders. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong visited China twice in the past year, in September 2017 and April 2018. Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean just visited China in July 2017. Just two weeks ago, Singapore welcomed State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi where he also attended the various ASEAN-related ministerial meetings. Later this year, Singapore looks forward to welcoming the first official visits by Premier Li Keqiang and Executive Vice Premier Han Zheng.

4 Singapore-China relations are currently strong. All our three Government-to-Government projects are doing well. The Suzhou Industrial Park will celebrate its 25th anniversary next year. The Suzhou Industrial Park is a fine

example of China's successful shift from high economic growth to high quality growth. The Tianjin Eco-City just commemorated its 10th anniversary. It is now a model for sustainable and green development across China. The Chongqing Connectivity Initiative has also made good progress in promoting connectivity in finance, transport and logistics between Western China and Southeast Asia. In particular, the Chongqing Connectivity Initiative's Southern Transport Corridor has made great strides in connecting the New Silk Road Economic Belt to the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road by establishing a land and sea-based cargo link. This has reduced transport time between Chongqing and Singapore from three weeks to one week and cut down logistical costs. 10 provinces in China's Western region are now a part of the Southern Transport Corridor. We welcome more provinces and countries to be a part of the Southern Transport Corridor, and contribute to the improved connectivity in the region.

5 Singapore and China have identified the Belt and Road Initiative as a highlight of our current and future cooperation. Singapore has been the largest foreign investor in China for five consecutive years. More than a quarter of China's investments into the Belt and Road currently flows through Singapore's financial system. Singapore and China have established various platforms to step up cooperation under the Belt and Road initiative: they are financial services, infrastructure development, and third-country cooperation in Belt and Road countries. We are also promoting greater cooperation in the provision of legal services to support Belt and Road commercial dispute resolution.

Ladies and Gentlemen

6 The robust Singapore-China relations at the national level has also fostered close ties and cooperation between Singapore and the cities and provinces in the Yangtze River Delta. When Prime Minister Lee visited Shanghai

in April, he had a good meeting with Shanghai Party Secretary Li Qiang. Both leaders affirmed Shanghai's role in China's reform and opening up, agreed to explore greater cooperation between Singapore and Shanghai given our similar economic outlook and open economies, especially in finance, urban management, promoting a business-friendly environment, and port cooperation. Finance Minister and Co-Chair of the Singapore-Jiangsu Cooperation Council Heng Swee Keat spent five days in Nanjing in June to re-acquaint himself with the most recent developments in Jiangsu province like its push for AI and had good meetings with Jiangsu leaders. The 13th Singapore-Zhejiang Economic and Trade Council meeting was also successfully concluded in April under co-chairs Senior Minister of State Ms Sim Ann and Vice Governor Zhu Congjiu. Both sides agreed to further cooperation in the areas of port management, trade of oil products, finance, and urban management. We also look forward to the upcoming visits of Zhejiang Governor Mr Yuan Jiajun and Jiangsu Governor Mr Wu Zhenglong to Singapore later this year. With Yangtze River Delta integration proceeding apace, Singapore seeks to play a bigger role in contributing to the dynamism and competitiveness of this region. Given our close friendship and commercial ties with Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui, we are optimistic that we can work together to realise this goal.

Dear Friends,

7 Thank you for your long-standing support for Singapore and Singapore-China relations. Looking ahead, I hope that we will continue working together to bring bilateral relations to new heights. We have prepared a delicious buffet spread of Singapore cuisine for you today! Please enjoy. Thank you!

.