

**SPEECH BY MR ERNIE KOH**  
**SINGAPORE FURNITURE INDUSTRIES COUNCIL INCOMING PRESIDENT**  
**2 NOVEMBER 2012, 8.20PM**  
**RAFFLES CITY CONVENTION CENTRE**

---

Mr Teo Ser Luck, Minister of State for Trade and Industry

Fellow Committee Members

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. A very good evening.
  
2. This year marks SFIC's 31 years serving the Singapore furniture industry. The theme for this year's D&D is "Into The Future". A very apt one as we all gear up to chart our next milestone, going forward stronger into the future.
  
3. At our AGM this afternoon, 17 ExcOs have been elected to serve the industry for the next 2 years. 60% of them are strategic 'offshoots' from our Youth Furniture Committee [or YFC in short]. This YFC, which comprises the 2<sup>nd</sup> echelon leaders, is a leadership succession plan that SFIC has embarked on, since 1999. I strongly believe that together, we will be able to continually reinforce SFIC's growth strategy and carry the Singapore flag further and higher in the global market space.

Tonight, the torch is being passed on. As the incoming SFIC President, I am truly grateful for the Council's acknowledgement of my capabilities and your trust in me and my fellow Exco team.

4. James Goh and all our previous Presidents leave behind pretty big shoes to fill. Collectively, they have laid a solid foundation for the industry – one that comprises of over 1,800 companies, engages in over

18,000 workforce, trades with 81 countries worldwide and churns a S\$5.6 billion output or 1% of the world market share.

Together with my fellow ExcOs, I will certainly carry on the good work that our Presidential Advisors have done.

5. The pathway to lead the industry “Into The Future” will, no doubt, be a challenging one. We’ll need to :
  - think globally, tap opportunities amidst the challenges; and concurrently
  - act locally, develop capabilities within our industry.
  
6. Over the next two years, we will focus on building and enhancing the industry and enterprises’ competitive advantages through five key areas:
  - marketing
  - design
  - green
  - branding and
  - learning

I hope you can all join us in making this happen.

Integrating social media into our roadmap is definitely in our pipeline within the next two years. I am thus starting a facebook [[www.facebook.com/sficpresident](http://www.facebook.com/sficpresident)] and I welcome suggestions from everyone.

Together, with the collective talent of the new exco team, and the diverse capabilities of all our staff, I have no doubt we can all chart new milestones for the Singapore furniture industry.

7. And finally, a BIG thank you to all of you:

- our members, government and related trade agencies, as well as
- media and business associates

Your knowledge, expertise and support will be an asset to the continued growth of the industry.

## **About Singapore Furniture Industries Council**

Singapore Furniture Industries Council was established in 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture industry. It currently represents 95% of established furniture manufacturers in Singapore, of whom 65% have subsidiary manufacturing plants in the region including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. Its primary role is to promote the interests of its members and the Singapore furniture industry, aiming to facilitate members' and Singapore's exposure to the world market, develop local talent and encourage entrepreneurship.

To ensure the industry's growth and viability, SFIC continues to forge close partnerships with the government and trade-related agencies to harness technology, knowledge and information advancement.

### **Our Vision**

To establish Singapore as a premier furniture hub providing total solutions to the global market.

### **Our Mission**

1. Proactively identify and acquire key industry capabilities that strengthen Singapore's position as Asia's furniture hub
2. Aggressively drive a full spectrum of targeted initiatives to meet industry needs
3. Leverage on SFIC's resources, networks and industry knowledge to be the captain and voice of the industry

### **Our Values**

1. Integrity
2. Innovation
3. Customer-Focus

### **Our Key Growth Drivers:**

For over 30 years, SFIC has been in the forefront to pave the way for its members on their business development path. SFIC has identified five key pillars to build and enhance the industry and enterprises' competitive advantages:

- Marketing
- Design
- Green
- Branding
- Learning

Through diverse programmes such as furniture fairs, design competitions, trade forums, among others, SFIC has achieved continuous success in marketing, design,

and branding of the Singapore furniture industry. In recent years, to keep abreast of international standards, SFIC has also identified green and learning as key areas to ensure sustainability of the business and industry in terms of maintaining both a sustainable environment and a sustainable talent pool.

SFIC initiates and collaborates through partnerships with government and trade agencies on a myriad of programmes for the purposes of the five key pillars mentioned above.

### **SFIC Initiatives**

Major initiatives introduced by SFIC include:

#### **A. International Trade Development Programmes**

**Objective:** To establish Singapore as the centre of Asian furniture design innovation and international furniture trade

1. International Furniture Fair Singapore / ASEAN Furniture Show, The Deco Show and The Hospitality Show (IFFS)
  - a. Held annually in March, internationally acclaimed and well regarded by industry experts as Asia's most prestigious trade show
  - b. Provides an effective marketing platform for SFIC members and global industry players to find new markets and alliances
  - c. Endorsed by the Singapore government as an "Approved International Fair" since 1992
  - d. First Asian-based international furniture fair accepted as a member of the elite "Union des Foires Internationales" (UFI), a Paris-based international authority on trade fairs, since 1998
  - e. Continually innovates to stay ahead of industry trends – Launched Hospitality.Design.Furniture CONVERGE Asia Conference and SingaPlural, a week-long design event, in conjunction with IFFS
  
2. Participation in Overseas Programmes
  - a. Helps members develop and expand their export business at international trade fairs
  - b. Organises business missions to established and emerging markets in search of new market potentials and business opportunities
  - c. Facilitate members to form new partnerships through inbound and outbound business-matching activities
  - d. Through international trade shows and exhibitions, promotes Singapore Mozaic – a B2B collection of Singapore furniture's finest that offers a diverse portfolio of consumer, business and specially crafted products

3. International Furniture Centre (IFC) / International Furniture Park (IFP)
  - a. Works in close partnership with government agencies to develop Sungei Kadut into an International Furniture Park (“IFP”), to provide local and global furniture players a one-stop, year-round platform for export business, furniture procurement, design, learning and innovations.
  - b. Manages the IFC, a one-stop solution catering to the global furniture market and facilitating businesses multilaterally

**B. Talent Development**

**Objective:** Develop a knowledge-driven environment to ensure the industry's long-term viability and sustainability in human resource and talent development

1. Initiated SFIC Institute [formerly known as Furniture Learning Institute] to address industry's needs in design, professional and skills development
2. Spearheads design-led business paradigm with design exchanges, work collaborations and learning programmes between local and international design institutions to nurture design talents
3. Recruits second-generation leaders and young furniture managerial talents into the Youth Furniture Committee to groom new talents for the industry to enable a smooth succession planning process
4. Organises regular CEO Learning Circles and industry networking events to create added opportunities for members and their business associates to establish closer rapport and business relations

**C. Design DNA**

**Objective:** Develop design capability, Nurture local design talents and Accelerate business growth of local furniture companies and designers and ultimately establishing Singapore as the Asian hub for furniture and design excellence.

1. Organise local design seminars, workshops, forums and overseas design immersion programmes
2. Facilitate overseas design study missions to countries renowned for best practices
3. Establish an interactive e-platform for design promotion and outreach to actively engage designers and enterprises
4. Profile the capabilities of the furniture industry and give recognition to good practices
5. Annual activities include:
  - a. SingaPlural, a week-long design event promoting local design via exhibitions, symposiums, competitions and exclusive curated design spaces
  - b. Furniture Design Award
  - c. Furniture Design Platform
  - d. Furniture Design Forum as well as the provision of facilities for designers to gather and network with industry players

#### **D. Green Initiatives**

**Objectives:** To strengthen the awareness of internationally recognised best standards; encourage more companies to embrace Green; and strengthen public awareness of green products and consumer health and safety

1. Organises the annual Green Pavilion during IFFS, invites international/local experts to share knowledge and showcase members' unique and practical approaches towards sustainable practices
2. Publish SFIC's E-Guide: *Embracing a Greener Furniture Industry* to promote best practices in sustainability among companies and also to commemorate the launch of Green Pavilion
3. Form working relationships with experts in the green industry to promote green issues to Singapore companies and encourage them to adopt green certifications

#### **IV. E-commerce**

**Objective:** To encourage companies and furniture retailers to take on an online presence so as to grow new growth opportunities beyond Singapore

Launch e-initiatives including:

1. [www.singaporefurniture.com](http://www.singaporefurniture.com),
2. [www.iffs.com.sg](http://www.iffs.com.sg),
3. [www.ifcsingapore.com](http://www.ifcsingapore.com),
4. [www.furnituredesigndna.com](http://www.furnituredesigndna.com),
5. [www.singaporemozaic.com](http://www.singaporemozaic.com) and
6. [www.sficinstitute.com](http://www.sficinstitute.com)

#### **V. Collaborative Initiatives and Partnerships**

SFIC continuously seeks strategic partnerships with government agencies and other domestic and international trade-related entities, ensuring the industry's views being heard when legislations are formed and acts as the captain for the Singapore furniture industry.

Major collaborative initiatives and partnerships include:

1. Manages IFC, administrates the Good Furniture Retailers Scheme, and develops overseas industry clusters such as the Singapore Furniture Industry Park – Kunshan in China
2. Represented in the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises, DesignS, Enterprise Development Advisory Council, Singapore Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers, Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Singapore Manufacturing Federation, Specialists Trade Alliance of Singapore. On the regional level,

SFIC continues to represent Singapore in the ASEAN Furniture Industries Council

3. Organises industry networking activities for industry players to foster business relationships with other industry players, designers, business associates, government and media representatives