

SCWO CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2017

4TH SINGAPORE WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME GALA DINNER

Speech by Dr June Goh

Preside, Singapore Council of Women's Organisations

Our Guest of Honour, Patron of SCWO, Mrs Mary Tan, Parliamentarians, Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners, Singapore Women's Hall of Fame honourees, sponsors and supporters, members of SCWO and friends.

Thank you all for joining us tonight for the 4th Singapore Women's Hall of Fame Gala Dinner.

SCWO launched the Hall of Fame in 2014 to recognise and salute outstanding women of Singapore. We hold the induction ceremony in the month of March every year as part of our celebration of International Women's Day.

For the many countries around the world that observe International Women's Day it is a day for celebration and to commemorate the many achievements women have accomplished. That having been said, it is also an occasion on which we reflect on the changes that still stand in the way of an equal society, the progress we have made in that direction, and how much further remains.

I was very happy to read, in today's Straits Times, about the recommendation made to MAS by PAP women's wing and board agenda, one of SCWO's initiative to increase women on boards; as of now the number stands only at 9.7%, a number that stands to see improvement.

But as we strive for equal representation and other advancements we cannot forget about the other end of the spectrum. Domestic violence is still a serious problem and it is with distress I felt when I read a few days ago, about yet another abused wife murdered by her husband.

The third issue that must be mentioned is our ageing population. SCWO is focusing on the social and economic protection of ageing women. These are women who have generously and graciously dedicated their lives to others as caregivers, even giving up their jobs to care for their children and family. Women who have a higher life expectancy yet little or no savings, leaving their situation a conundrum that SCWO is working on and engaging our 58 member organisations in.

Women are left behind even as progress is being made-- the uneducated and even those educated but still victims of violence, of prejudice, of trafficking. My biggest wish is for us to stand united in our goals of achieving equality and in the protection of the most vulnerable women in our society.

Surrounded tonight by our blessings, friends and our loving families, take a few seconds to consider these issues. Helping women in Singapore is within our reach.

Bringing us back to the point of our gala tonight; a key aim of the Hall of Fame is to acknowledge, document and share the stories of the women who have helped to shape our country and to better it. We share their stories so as to inspire others, especially young Singaporeans, to dare to dream. To be bold, to chart their own path in life. To tell them that they too can do amazing things.

The seven women we are honouring tonight have each contributed much to Singapore. They have shown courage and determination, talent and imagination. We are delighted to welcome them to the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame, where their accomplishments will be given due recognition and will be remembered.

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I would like to thank the members of the Resource Panel and those of the Selection Panel, which is chaired by Professor Tommy Koh, for their work in identifying the women to be honoured. To the women being inducted tonight, and those who are already in the Hall of Fame, thank you for being such an inspiration to us. Thank you for showing that with passion, courage and commitment, dreams can become reality. We salute you all!

With that, I would like to thank everyone for taking time to be here with us. Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you a pleasant evening.