

**ADDRESS BY DR AMY KHOR, MINISTER OF STATE  
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES,  
AT THE SCIC ANNUAL DINNER 2011  
AND RESPONSIBLE CARE AWARDS 2010 PRESENTATION  
HELD AT THE REGENT SINGAPORE  
ON 31 MAR 2011 AT 7.00 PM**

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Dr Tay Kin Bee,  
Chairman of the Singapore Chemical Industry Council

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening. It gives me great pleasure to join you here this evening at the Singapore Chemical Industry Council's Annual Dinner and Responsible Care awards presentation ceremony.

**Responsible Care Awards**

2 I would like to congratulate SCIC for having successfully organised 10 years of Responsible Care (RC) Awards. I understand that a total of 108 Awards will be given this year, the highest since its inauguration. I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to all award winners.

## **The Chemical Industry Sector**

3 The Chemical Industry remains one of the key pillars of the Singapore Economy, being the second largest industry cluster in terms of manufacturing output for the past 2 years.

4 In 2010, the Chemical Industry contributed to S\$80.5 billion, accounting for nearly 30 per cent of Singapore's total manufacturing output. While there are mixed sentiments about the overall business outlook in 2011, the mood at home is generally positive as Singapore continues to attract strong investment interests on the back of the recovering economy and as testament to the growing interest in using Singapore as a base for business operations of MNCs in Asia.

5 To continue tapping into the vast global opportunities offered in this field, our city-state needs to continue strengthening our lead as a global chemical hub.

## **Partnership with NEA**

6 However, measuring the growth and progress of our economy should also take into account effects on our environment and society. The government therefore seeks strong partnership with industry players and encourages self-regulation and shared responsibility in environmental sustainability. The strong working relationship between SCIC and the National Environment Agency (NEA) is a case in point.

7 For instance, NEA gathers industry feedback through SCIC on government initiatives such as the Code of Practice on Pollution Control and control of chemicals. Regular updates are also shared between SCIC and NEA through Dialogue Sessions.

8 NEA is also one of the key member agencies in the National GHS (Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals) Task Force co-chaired by MOM and SCIC.

The strong partnership established between SCIC and NEA is also illustrated in SCIC's involvement in contributing speakers and lecturers to Management of Hazardous Substances (MHS) Courses being conducted by NEA's Singapore Environment Institute for chemical companies

### **Responsible Care Programme**

9 Growth of the chemical industry will bring with it larger quantities of hazardous chemicals being handled, transported and used. To deal with the increased risks, it is important that everyone works together to put in place comprehensive chemical safety programmes. The RC programme fits in very well here.

10 As a voluntary initiative by the industry, RC has six codes of management practice that cover Process Safety, Pollution Prevention, Distribution, Community Awareness & Emergency Response, Employee Health and Safety and Product Stewardship. In compliance with these codes, chemical companies undertake the responsibility to ensure that chemicals are handled safely and in an environmentally sound manner from production to disposal. This ensures that public health and the environment are safeguarded.

11 Twenty one years have passed since the RC programme was adopted in Singapore in 1990. In Singapore, a person of 21 years old is deemed to have reached adulthood, and is responsible enough to be given the right to vote. Likewise, I believe the RC programme has matured under SCIC and is ready to stand on its own.

12 NEA will be working with SCIC to see how we can together move from co-regulation to self-regulation by the industry itself.

### **Conclusion**

13 It is also heartening to learn that besides NEA, other key government agencies such as SCDF and MOM are actively supporting this Chemical Industry's Responsible Care Initiative. Although a voluntary initiative, half of SCIC members have opted to be Responsible Care signatories, which I believe reflects a strong commitment to work towards a higher quality of Environment, Health and Safety standards.

On that note, I strongly encourage the remaining half of SCIC members to join their counterparts in this initiative by being Responsible Care signatories as well.

14 Once again, I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to all award winners. You have distinguished yourselves in your respective fields and are fine examples for others to follow.

15 On this note, I wish all of you an enjoyable evening.

Thank you.