

SPEECH BY MR ANDREW NG, PRESIDENT OF THE SINGAPORE FURNITURE INDUSTRIES COUNCIL AND CHAIRMAN OF IFFS PTE LTD AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR SINGAPORE 2010/27th ASEAN FURNITURE SHOW AT 10.00AM, ON 9 MARCH 2010 AT THE SINGAPORE EXPO

Mr Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Members of the media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome to the official opening of the International Furniture Fair Singapore 2010, held in conjunction with the 27th ASEAN Furniture Show.

Show update

Today, we are glad to see some of the world's top international furniture companies gathered at our Fair with a distinctively wide range of furniture in terms of design and quality excellence. This is an encouraging sign. Through the enthusiastic participation by both exhibitors and registered visitors, we are heartened that IFFS/AFS has indeed remained an important event on the international furniture trade circuit with your strong support.

This year, you will find quality exhibits by 434 exhibitors from as many as 30 countries. It is truly the show in Asia with the highest number of participating countries, a clear testimony that Singapore has developed its capabilities as an important "one-stop shop" for the furniture trade. 35 per cent of our exhibitors have again displayed their confidence in our Fair by maintaining or taking up bigger space in this year's event. I am also glad to announce that 20 per cent of our exhibitors, coming from countries such as Iceland, Latvia and Lebanon, are participating in IFFS/AFS for the first time.

Design focus

In May 2009, the Singapore government devised a strategic game plan to make the most of our resources and future opportunities to achieve continued growth. In a recent report, the government identified 3Rs which will contribute to an exciting business environment in Singapore. They are – **R**etool, **R**&D and **R**evitalise. Under **R**evitalise, it stressed the importance of the arts, fashion, sports science and **design**.

In the furniture business, design has become the buzz word that is being embraced by some of world's leading furniture companies and creators. SFIC fully recognises that a design-centric philosophy and focus embraced by all furniture players in Singapore is the only way forward if we want to build a vibrant and competitive industry to cater to global customers' needs.

In line with this design focus, IFFS/AFS too will introduce a concentration of trend-leading and design-centric exhibits. This year, an overarching title 'D'Space', which stands for 'Designer Space', will be the iconic blanket for the Fair's design initiatives. Housed in Hall 3, visitors will be treated to designs of up-and-coming regional talents at PLATFORM, a selection of innovative displays by Design & Objects, a Thai Association that has been making waves on the international furniture scene in recent years, and also a collective showcase of international designers including John Kelly Furniture from USA and Sable Island from UK. Topping these off are the winning works from the Furniture Design Award at Foyer 1.

We are delighted to note that many design-centric furniture manufacturers are using IFFS/AFS 2010 as a launch pad to introduce their latest designs and collections to the world. This includes ambassadors of Singapore Mozaic, our local furniture industry brand.

Singapore Mozaic

Having exhibited at some of the world's most prestigious and respected furniture fairs such as imm Cologne, Salone Internazionale del Mobile in Milan, Index Dubai and our very own IFFS in Singapore, Singapore Mozaic has in the past two years established itself as a strong industry brand that encompasses the best business practices of Singapore furniture companies.

Hospitality Asia 2011

Now I have exciting news to share. IFFS is constantly evolving, growing and developing to serve more and more sectors within the furniture and furnishing industries and I'm happy to announce that we will be adding a brand new component to the next edition of IFFS/AFS. Next year, we will officially launch Hospitality Asia 2011, co-located with Deco Asia 2011, as a show-within-show with an estimated exhibition space of 10,000 gross square metres. A holistic approach, Hospitality Asia 2011 will provide the Fair with more comprehensive product lines and offerings as it will address the furniture and furnishing needs of the international hospitality industry. Similarly, Deco Asia 2011 will offer innovative products to

meet the rising demand for quality soft furnishings and home accessories. This is a timely decision based on the escalating growth of the hospitality and home accessories segment of the industry globally. We are confident that this new addition will attract a whole new set of visitors and give our exhibitors an alternative new market.

Thanks and conclusion

With the improving economy, we hope IFFS/AFS will be the Fair that enhances your journey to increasing success and better trading opportunities for all of you in the year ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our Guest of Honour for taking the time to grace our event today. Our appreciation also goes out to IE Singapore, SPRING Singapore, Singapore Tourism Board, Singapore Convention and Exhibition Bureau as well as the various embassies, government agencies and trade offices that have offered us invaluable advice and assistance.

Special thanks also to our friends in the media as well as partners in the ASEAN Furniture Industries Council and various international furniture associations, exhibitors, trade buyers, visitors and our business associates, for your confidence and continued support of the Fair.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr Tony Pang, Chairman of the IFFS/AFS 2010 Show Advisory Panel, members of the Show Advisory Panel, our Board of Directors as well as the staff of SFIC and IFFS Pte Ltd. Your determination and efforts has once again helped us put together a stellar Fair that we can all be proud of.

On behalf of SFIC and IFFS Pte Ltd, I wish everyone an enjoyable and fruitful experience at IFFS/AFS 2010.

Thank you.