

**WELCOME ADDRESS
BY MS JANET ANG
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, SBF FOUNDATION
AT
ONBOARDING SESSION FOR INDUSTRY-LED COMPASSION FUND
14 October 2019, 12PM-1PM**

A very good afternoon to:

1. **Mr Ng Chee Meng**, Secretary General NTUC
2. Valued partners and industry leaders of Trade Associations
3. Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

1. As the saying goes: Charity begins at home. Today, we are witnessing “Charity beginning at home within industries”. Notwithstanding the current difficult challenges faced by the business community , our valued partners have come onboard toward a common goal to help the workers in their industries who are in need of support.

2. I am very encouraged and grateful to the 7 Trade Associations who are leading the way and partnering with SBF Foundation to initiate and drive this Industry-Led Compassion Fund. It is amazing that within a very short period of time, we have collectively raised \$1.9mil. This is projected to help more than 3,000 employees in need from the various sectors of our trade associations.

INDUSTRY-LED COMPASSION FUND

3. Now that the Compassion Fund is set up, we need to create awareness amongst the targeted employees and to ensure proper governance of the Fund. It is important that we encourage our employees who are faced with personal or family challenges, to step forward and seek help from caring employers within the industry. To this, the role of the Association is very important.

4. Today, we organised this session to learn how we can better reach out and support employees in need. On the Governance of the Fund, there will be other in-depth sessions that SBF Foundation will be running with each Association, to guide the panel on assessment and documentation for each application.
5. This afternoon, we are very pleased and grateful to have two distinguished speakers who are no strangers to all of us. **Dr William Wan**, Secretary General of Singapore Kindness Movement and **Ms Ang Bee Lian**, Director-General of Social Welfare, MSF will share with us their wisdom and insights on
 - a. how we can collectively build a more compassionate workplace
 - b. encourage employees in need to seek help at an early onset of crisis, and
 - c. why referral support is critical besides the financial help.

We look forward to hearing and learning from Dr Wan and Bee Lian in a little while.

CATALYTIC ROLE OF SBF FOUNDATION

6. Allow me to use this opportunity to share with you a bit more about SBF Foundation and what we are about. At SBF Foundation, we believe that people are at the heart of businesses and that a compassionate and proactive business community can lead to a more sustainable and resilient socio-economic landscape in Singapore. As the social impact arm of Singapore Business Federation, we will work to catalyse and rally SBF members and industry leaders in their endeavour to give meaningfully, caring for employees and the community at large. We will do this through creating impact platforms (such as the Industry-Led Compassion Fund) to enable and empower businesses to play their part. We collaborate with partners to synergise action and build resilience. We look to amplify inclusion and impact for a resilient Singapore.
7. Besides the Industry-led Compassion Fund, the SBF Foundation is also looking to better support essential workers through the “Lighthouse Project”, and in this particular project, we are starting and piloting with the workers in the Estate and Facilities Management space. And besides the essential workers through the

“Lighthouse Project”, we are also looking to better support mature workers through the “Reverse Mentoring Programme”.

8. There are also the disadvantaged in our society who need help with better access and support as they enter and/or re-enter our workforce. SBF Foundation plans to kick start “**Empower Circles**” as a platform to bridge the business community who have jobs to offer, with the social service agencies who support and nurture such targeted pool of resources; and together help these persons transition from their challenging circumstances to become a part of the productive workforce. We are also working on an “**Employability Fund**” which will support programmes that outreach to the vulnerable workers. This will be expanded in later phases to include other groups such as persons with mental health issues, out-of-school youths and caregivers.

9. Alone we can only achieve so much but together as a community we can achieve much more. I would like to express my appreciation to our collaborators for the Employability Fund and Empower Circles, e2i and ToteBoard who are present today. And, for the Industry-led Compassion Fund, my appreciation goes to the SBF who have made a donation, as well as the European Chamber of Commerce and American Chamber of Commerce who have helped outreach to their members as part of our fund raising efforts.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

10. And of course, we want to thank again, my deepest gratitude to the 7 Trade Association leaders for pioneering and being with us to kickstart and show our pioneering spirit and the generosity in setting up the Industry-led Compassion Fund. We hope that many more TACs and business leaders will join us in our efforts to be in solidarity with our workforce and our community, especially during these trying times.

11. Once again thank you very much for joining us for this session.