

What of the Singapore Spirit?

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Last year, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong spoke about the Singapore Spirit, based on shared experiences, values and a sense of commitment to the country. What does this entail when Singapore is both a global city and a nation? Extracts of what four speakers said:

IT HOLDS PROMISE

'This is fitting for a young nation. But it carries one major risk: resilience. What about the nation's ability to withstand a severe shock? On the upside, it has the distinct potential to create a bright future for Singapore, so much so that people from every background want to come here.'

Mr Ori Sasson, founder and CEO of Simulation Software & Technology. He became a Singapore citizen in 2007

SPIRIT TO DARE

'The Singapore Spirit is about our ability to constantly reinvent ourselves, to seize every opportunity that comes our way and to excel. It is a spirit of entrepreneurship, efficiency, tolerance, acceptance and diversity. It is the spirit to dare.'

Dr Woffles Wu, medical director and consultant aesthetic and plastic surgeon

STAYING TOGETHER

'The elite in Singapore - and the Government - must continue to look out for the least among us. If the division between your globally connected cosmopolitan elite and your locally restricted grassroots comes to coincide dramatically with a sharp income and wealth gap, Singapore is finished.'

Mr Janadas Devan, Straits Times associate editor

ENSURING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

'We have to be very careful, because income inequality is growing wider, and mobility through meritocracy is a lot more limited. The Singapore Spirit of looking out for the poor and disadvantaged - this is the challenge now. How can we ensure there are opportunities for the poor, the disabled, the disadvantaged?'

Dr Lai Ah Eng, senior research fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore