Ms. Claire Chiang, Senior Vice President, Banyan Tree Holdings, is a co-founder of Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts, a leading developer and manager of premium resorts, urban hotels and destination spas around the world. She pioneered the group’s retail business in 1996 and has since overseen the launch of more than 60 retail outlets worldwide.

As part of Banyan Tree’s strategic focus on human capital development, Ms. Chiang assumed two new roles in 2010 – chairperson for China Business Development, where she primarily focuses on the acquisition of new management contracts, and chairperson of the Human Capital Development Task Force, where she guides key strategic issues in organisational and human capital capability.

Ms. Chiang is also the chairperson of Banyan Tree Global Foundation which was established in early 2009 by Banyan Tree Holdings. Her role involves directing and guiding the evolving process of the group’s commitment to corporate social responsibility and its mission to “Embrace the Environment, Empower the People”.

Ms. Chiang was an Arts and Social Sciences graduate (Honours) at the University of Singapore (1971-74), the present day National University of Singapore. During 1978-81, Ms. Chiang worked at the Faculty of Medicine at The University of Hong Kong (presently the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong), while conducting intensive sociological fieldwork on factory workers and industrial relations in Hong Kong and completing her Master of Philosophy (Sociology) degree. From 1982-1990, she lectured in the Sociology Department of the National University of Singapore and continued research work in the Centre for Advanced Studies from 1990 to 1994.

She co-authored the book “Stepping Out: The Making of Chinese Entrepreneurs” with Professor Chen Guo Ben which was published in 1994 by Simon and Schuster and translated into Chinese and Japanese. The publication garnered a National Council Book Award and spawned a 30-chapter Chinese-language television drama in Singapore that won five broadcast awards.

Ms. Chiang was one of the first two women in 89 years to be elected to the Board of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry and was awarded in 1999 as a “Woman of the Year” for her contribution to the community. She served as a Singapore Nominated Member of Parliament for two terms (1997-2001) where she
raised many policy issues related to the social service sector, women, family, education and the disadvantaged. In 2009, she was recognised by The International Alliance for Women "World of Difference 100" Awards for championing village-based entrepreneurship.

Ms. Chiang sits on many boards, including ACCORD (Family & Community Council), and Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP). She is also a member of the Board of Governors of Raffles Girls' Secondary School. She serves as a volunteer with Help Every Lone Parent (HELP), Rotary Club of Suntec City and also serves as a mentor for the Young Women’s Leadership Connection mentorship programme.

She was also appointed Director and Non-Executive Chairperson of Wildlife Reserves Singapore, and chairperson of Wildlife Reserves Singapore Conservation Fund. Wildlife Reserves Singapore under Temasek Holdings is the parent company of Jurong Bird Park, Night Safari, Singapore Zoo and the River Safari.

In 2008, Ms. Chiang was awarded a Pingat Bakti Masyarakat (Public Service Medal) during Singapore’s National Day Awards and was the inaugural Singapore Innovation Park Fellow Award. In the same year, she was formally appointed as a Justice of the Peace by Singapore President SR Nathan to exercise such powers and to perform such duties as may be conferred on them by any law. This was followed by her appointment to the Board of Visiting Justices in 2010.

In April 2009, Ms. Chiang, together with Mr. Ho Kwon Ping, was a joint recipient of the Hospitality Lifetime Achievement Award at the annual China Hotel Investment Summit. The award was presented to honour outstanding individuals for a lifetime of extraordinary leadership, accomplishments and contributions to the hospitality industry.

In 2011, Ms. Chiang introduced her biography, “My Journey and After,” a 768-page book in Chinese that profiles her journey as a woman from childhood through adulthood, marriage, motherhood, community engagement, politics and business. Written with notable Singaporean journalist Poon Sing Wah, “My Journey” is peppered with black-and-white and colour photography and Chinese calligraphy, and is an engaging, instructive read on Asian values, Singaporean history, and one woman’s passage through various seminal phases of her life.

On 31 July 2014, she was elected as the Chairperson of Executive Committee, National Book Development Council of Singapore. In Aug 2014, she was awarded the Public Service Star BBM for her contribution in implementing work-life integration, as part of Singapore’s commitment to create fair, responsible and progressive work environment. Most recently on 27 Aug 2014, Ms. Chiang was elected as a Pioneering Member for the Diversity Action Committee to build up the representation of women directors on boards of companies.