Slide 1/Cover **Official Visitor Speech**

/2Hi everyone, I am Tina Wei-Kang Pan, the SIA President. I am honored to be invited by \_\_\_\_\_\_ Region to come here and meet our Soroptimist members.

There is a Chinese saying, “Fate brings people together no matter how far apart they may be.” In 2019 the world population was 7.7 billion, and the average life expectancy was at 72 years, which is equal to more than twenty-six thousand days. Based on this stat the chance of two people who are not acquainted to meet each other is three point four thousandths (0.0034). This shows how precious it is when we meet each other. Soroptimist is a global organization with members coming from many different countries, different cultural backgrounds, and speaking different languages. For us Soroptimists to have the chance to meet each other through this organization, the connection is truly very valuable.

/3But what exactly is the fate that brings us together? That is Soroptimist's mission and vision. No matter where you are, what kind of society or cultural background you are in, all Soroptimists have the same belief, that is, we believe that women helping women, women supporting women, and women empowering women will make the world work better and make society fair, just, and secure.

/4It wasn't until the late 18th century that people began to really advocate equal rights for women, who are half of the population under the sun. The progress of women's power, from education to political participation, seems to be rapid. In fact, it took more than two hundred years for women in developed countries to gain access to education, to have the right to vote, and to hold executive positions in corporations. It has been a long journey, and each step has been arduous.

/5Is equal rights for women really achieved in reality? Since the Beijing Declaration was adopted in 1995 during the Fourth World Conference on Women, it will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary in 2020. At this important conference, Hillary Clinton stated that "Women’s rights are human rights" and the UN General Assembly adopted a platform for action. However, the pace for equal rights for women remains slow.

/6The proportion of female members in national-level Parliaments has grown from 11.3% to 24.3% since 1995. It represents an increase of 13% over 25 years. However, globally one in every three women has experienced gender-based violence. There are six hundred fifty million underage girls becoming victims to child marriage, and approximately fifteen million adolescent girls (aged 15 to 19) worldwide have experienced forced sex at some point in her life.

There are two hundred million women suffering female genital mutilation. Given current rates of progress, we won’t be able to completely eliminate gender inequality until 2095.

/7And there is one thing these official figures do not tell us, that is, there is crisis lurking. Women and girls fall victim to revenge types of pornography, sexual bullying, and even sexual abuse on the Internet. The global exploitation of women as victims of human trafficking escalates from the real world to the online world. When facing such new threats to women and girls, is there something we can do instead of just being worried and sad?

/8Currently the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations is the blueprint designed to achieve gender equality by 2030. As a global women's volunteer organization, Soroptimist’s next Big Goal in 2021-2031 is dedicated to helping women in the most direct way and as such we are also striving to achieve the goal by 2030 and to be a global force to solve gender inequality.

/9Our next big goal is to invest in the dreasm of half a million women and girls through access to education. The goal of our Dream Programs is to empower women and girls economically through access to education. Education is the most effective instrument for advancing women's rights. Through education, women not only improve the quality of their lives, but also change their social status. Our most important belief is education, education, and education. The youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala has said, "Let's pick up our books and our pens, they are the most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world."

/10I would like to share my motto with you, "Giving people happiness is an angel, and saving people from suffering is a Buddha." I believe that Soroptimist members are angels and Buddha, because we all contribute our time, talent, and efforts to Soroptimist, and the number of women we have helped and supported is innumerable. Soroptimist’s philanthropy makes our next Big Goal possible - to invest in the dreams of half a million of women and girls through access to education. We Soroptimists will be able to follow the UN's Sustainable Development Goals plan and deliver a great achievement.

/11My dear Soroptimist fellows, I would like to invite every one of you to join me in achieving our next Big Goal. Although half a million women and girls may seem far-fetched, as long as we work together, just like the ancient Chinese saying, "When brothers are of one mind, their strength can break through any barrier as hard as metal." In our case we should say, "When Soroptimists are of one mind, we can cut through metal." It is not enough for us to work alone. We need to work as one with a common goal and put efforts together to increase our collective impact.

/12Such a collective impact will raise public awareness for Soroptimist. With raised public awareness we can find the next generation of women who will spread our female power. These next generation women can learn from Soroptimist members, can seek advice from seasoned members like you, find the power of charitable support, learn to give and to help, and work together to achieve our next Big Goal.

/13Take one club in Taiwan Region as an example. In 2018, I helped to charter a club with a group of young women. The club is called SI/Girl Power. By its name, you can tell the club is mostly composed of younger generation members. Most of these members are the daughters of our Soroptimist members, with an average age under 40. At the beginning, the members did not have a good grasp of Soroptimist’s mission. However, with teaching and guidance from seasoned Soroptimists, and with their ability to use social media and new media, they were able to attract a famous fashion magazine, Vogue, to write an article about them and to promote the spirit of women's volunteer work with Soroptimist. After the article was published, many young women wanted to join them to help serve other women.

/14This kind of energy is the reason why I actively helped charter a club with members of the younger generation.. Life is limited. In order to live the dream of gender equality, we must continue to amass our efforts, and pass on Soroptimist’s legacy, generation after generation.

/15When I was a legislator, my mentor was Ling-Lan Tsai, who is also the founding Governor of our Taiwan Region. Mrs. Tsai saw me, a young female politician, fighting for the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, the Sexual Assault Prevention Act, and the Sexual Harassment Prevention Act. She told me that I needed an organization that consists of people with like minds who would work with me to fight for women's rights. Her answer was Soroptimist. So with her as my guide, I share the spirit of doing our part for women with all the women who are willing to work together. Because of Soroptimist members, the spirit of women helping women is passed on and amplified.

/16Throughout the history of human rights, the gain of every right is always the outcome of efforts put in by a group of people. Women's rights are making progress day by day because of the efforts of all women. One day all women will be able to choose things of their interest and the profession they desire, and freely express themselves and fully exert their talents, and become glowing heroes in their own fields.

/17However, to be a true hero, you must not only make yourself well known, but also be trustworthy, and make others willing to work with you and to contribute to a common goal. Each of us is a Soroptimist hero, and we are also the people who create heroes. We heroes must work as one. I hope you will join me in putting in our efforts to fight for women’s rights, and for a better world!