

**SPEECH BY MR ANDREAS SOHMEN-PAO, CHAIRMAN,
SINGAPORE MARITIME FOUNDATION AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF
SEA ASIA 2019, ON 9TH APRIL, TUESDAY, 9.15 AM,
EXHIBITION HALL B, LEVEL 1, SANDS EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTRE,
MARINA BAY SANDS**

Dr Janil Puthucheary, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Transport & Ministry of Communications and Information,

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning. On behalf of the Singapore Maritime Foundation (SMF), I would like to thank you all for being here, with a special thank you to our Guest-of-Honour Dr Puthucheary.

Why is Sea Asia relevant? It is because we need to get together in order to share ideas and find solutions to the numerous challenges ahead. It is because the centre of global trade is shifting to Asia, and Asia needs to express itself on maritime matters. It is because amidst a plethora of conferences, some are uniquely placed to bring together members of the local and international shipping community.

Sea Asia offers all these things. It provides a thought-provoking conference segment. It provides a comprehensive exhibition which this year includes a record 13 national pavilions. And it is embedded in a maritime week full of other interesting events, acting as a magnet for shipping executives from around the globe.

Innovation is a global theme, and a highly relevant one for the maritime sector. How do we tackle desulphurization and decarbonization? How do we apply digital strategies to improve our service to customers? How do we handle the massive shifts taking place in the energy system, with the growth of renewables and electrification? If you want to hear some of the answers to these questions, you are in the right place.

Singapore has an important role to play in this, as a leading maritime centre, and as a wonderful gathering place for talent and ideas. You all know what a responsive government we have here, channeling efforts to support business success. Those of you from overseas might be amazed to see how much innovation is happening here. This year we have the Innovation Arena at SeaAsia, which will showcase 8 start-ups. As some jurisdictions around the world become less friendly to business, you may wish to consider beefing up your presence here.

On behalf of the Singapore Maritime Foundation, I would like to thank our co-hosts UBM (Seatrade) for helping to put this event together, our sponsors for supporting this seventh edition of Sea Asia, and all of you for joining us here.

Welcome to Sea Asia.