

**OPENING REMARKS BY MR NIAM CHIANG MENG, CHAIRMAN, MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE, AT THE MARITIMEONE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY, ON 8 AUGUST 2019, 7.00PM**

Chairman of SMF, Mr Andreas Sohmen-Pao  
President of SMOU, Mr Rahim Jaffar  
President of SOS, Mr Mohamad Bin Abu Bakar  
MaritimeONE and TMSS Scholars

Fellow colleagues and friends,

**Introduction**

1. Good evening. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to award recipients, their families, our union friends and participating companies to this year's MaritimeONE Scholarship Awards Ceremony.
2. Let me thank the 25 participating companies and unions who have generously contributed more than S\$2.3 million to support these scholarships. We welcome 3 new companies onboard this year: Fleet Ship Management, Swire Pacific Offshore and Asia Capital Reinsurance Group.
3. I would also like to congratulate the 59 young promising individuals who will be receiving the MaritimeONE and Tripartite Maritime Scholarships, or TMSS today. MaritimeONE scholars pursue diplomas and degrees in institutes of higher learning either locally or overseas, while TMSS scholars pursue a diploma in marine engineering or nautical studies until they achieve their higher Certificates of Competency Class 1.

**A Maritime career that connects Singapore to the world and brings the world to Singapore**

4. To our scholars, when you graduate you will be joining an exciting maritime industry which is the backbone of global trade. This year we are celebrating our bicentennial or 200 years of Singapore's founding by Sir Stamford Raffles. Our port and entrepot trade grew after he set foot here in 1819. Today, Singapore's trade value is worth more than three times

our gross domestic product, or GDP<sup>1</sup>. And the maritime industry contributes to about 7% of our GDP. Today we are also one of the busiest port in the world. Every 2 to 3 minutes, a vessel would come in and out of our port. And we are also highly connected to more than 600 ports around the world. And as a global hub port, we are home to more than 150 international shipping groups or more than 5000 maritime establishments.

### **Building a diversely-skilled, future-ready-pool of talent for the industry**

5. You will be joining us at a time when the industry is undergoing deep transformation. Let me just highlight 3 aspects. First, transformation due to technological changes and disruption. You are aware that many of our industries have been disrupted. Our retail sector has been disrupted by online e-commerce platforms like Amazon and Lazada. Our transport sector have been Uberised, and Grabbed if you like. Our hotel sectors are competing with Airbnb. Likewise, our maritime industry is undergoing change. It has started to embrace technologies, from something as small as IOT sensors or Internet of Things, to large autonomous vessels; and from AI-based predictive vessel monitoring to utilising block-chain for e-documentation. These changes will only accelerate.
6. Second, Port of Singapore is undergoing a major consolidation of our container terminals from Tanjong pagar, pasir panjang, keppel, and brani to eventually move to Tuas and to develop the next generation Tuas port with systems that will bring us beyond 2040s. We will incorporate higher levels of connectivity, efficiency and intelligence to ensure we remain relevant. For example, our Next Generation Vessel Traffic Management System will help detect hot spots early and advise the best route for vessels to reach berths safely without congesting the port. Sustainability and eco-friendliness will also be critical in the design of this next generation port.
7. Third, the sector is actively recruiting people with diverse skills, ranging from engineering to emerging skillsets such as data analytics, cybersecurity and digital skills. This year we are awarding our first Industrial and Systems Engineering undergraduate from NUS, Mr Neo

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<sup>1</sup> Source: World Bank national accounts data and OECD National Accounts data files. Singapore's trade is 326% of GDP in 2018.

Boon Hock, who is a Jurong Port - MaritimeONE scholar. Mr Neo is one of an increasing number of scholars with backgrounds outside maritime, and this contributes to the diverse and transformative nature of talent within the industry.

8. The maritime career that you are embarking provides both offshore and onshore opportunities. Those of you who are seafarers can look forward to a rewarding career should you eventually transit to shore-based roles where your seafaring experience would be highly valued. A Faststream Group research found 92 per cent of shore-based office employees rated that it is “quite important” or “vital” to have former seafarers in office. After a career at sea, seafarers with sufficient sea time and armed with a higher Certificate of Competency should have little trouble finding good-paying jobs such as maritime superintendents, marine insurers, shipbrokers and charterers.
9. For those who are in shore-based jobs, there is an oft-cited phrase that there is no typical day in shipping. For example, as a charterer, you could be responsible for booking cargoes that load from anywhere in the world today; and tomorrow you may be travelling to places such as Thailand, Norway and the USA to meet clients from all over the world. Such is the dynamism of the industry.
10. In line with diversifying our talent, I am heartened that say that we have seen an encouraging increase in the number of female MaritimeONE scholars – from 1 female scholar awarded in 2007 when the scholarship was first launched, to 15 female scholars today. We also have two female TMSS scholars this year who will train as marine engineers. They are Ms Tan Chee Sim and Ms Tan Li Jung, who will join PACC Ship Managers Pte Ltd and Synergy Marine Pte Ltd respectively.

## **Conclusion**

11. Let me conclude by once again congratulating our scholars and your families on your achievement and let me wish you all the best in your studies and your career.
12. To the participating companies, institutes of higher learning and unions, thank you once again for partnering with MPA and SMF to nurture a pool of talents for the maritime industry through this programme.

13. I wish everyone a pleasant evening ahead.