

**WELCOME REMARKS BY MR ANDREAS SOHMEN-PAO, CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE
MARITIME FOUNDATION AT THE MSC CONNEXIONS FORUM 2019, HELD AT
SANDS EXPO & CONVENTION CENTRE, SIMPOR JUNIOR BALLROOM, LEVEL 4, ON
WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2019, 2.00PM**

Good afternoon. Thank you all for coming.

Why are we all here this afternoon? We're here because we have a common interest in developing talent for our industry, an interest in building strong teams to tackle our business opportunities and challenges.

We're here because the industry is on the threshold of major changes, and we need to be shaping our teams for that. What changes will technology bring to how we run organisations? Are we ready for the disruption of IMO2020? What fuels will power our ships in future?

In case this sounds a bit sensational, please remember that we are not just talking about the year ahead, but the next twenty years. If we need to acquire new capabilities, reskill existing teams, and equip youngsters with the skills they need, we are talking about a multi-year journey, and we have to be thinking about long term changes.

Even though all of you are working hard on these issues in your individual organisations, collective wisdom can help.

That is why we are here – to learn from each other, to develop new ideas, and to establish connections for future collaboration.

The Maritime Singapore Connect Office was established to help make that happen. Earlier this year, we organized the first MSC Maritime Summit Case Challenge with APL, Jurong Port and Shell. Tertiary students were tasked with real-world business challenges and networked with Senior Maritime figures over dinner. Learning, developing ideas, establishing connections.

Today we have as our keynote speaker Ms Elsie Ng, Head of Talent Solutions at LinkedIn. Elsie kindly spoke at our first MSC Connexions Forum in 2016, where she shared insights on maritime hiring and talent trends. Since then, we have seen further changes in the maritime industry – decarbonisation and digitalization being obvious themes – and it is timely that we get an update on factors that have had an impact on our workforce and demand for talent.

As trends like digitalisation take hold, what type of people will our organisations need in future? What will make them want to come to the maritime industry? How will we develop these individuals? How will we integrate these new skills to help us innovate and find solutions? And how will we retain the talent that is in high demand across industry sectors?

At SMF, we are working to make it easier to find the right talent – industry profiling and marketing campaigns, outreach events, scholarships – but the challenge for all of you as HR professionals will be to build the right teams and skills to match the evolving demands of the industry.

Establishment of Circle of HR InnOvators (CHRO) Network

To help us with ideas and connections, I am pleased to announce the formation of a Circle of HR InnOvators, or CHRO network. This is a joint initiative between the MPA and SMF. As the maritime industry transforms, this network will serve as a platform for maritime HR leaders to exchange views on best practices, and to partner one another to drive innovation and transformation.

Response has been encouraging and we have 18 companies on board so far. The first group of CHRO representatives met two weeks ago and one of the key ideas raised is how this network can facilitate discussions on common HR challenges faced by maritime employers, and learn from each other.

The new CHRO network complements the Circle of Digital InnOvators (CDO) network launched by MPA in April this year to bring together digital innovators to catalyse ground-up innovation. MPA and SMF will co-organise activities for both the CHRO and CDO networks to come together to drive changes in the maritime sector - including the hiring and development of digital talent - and to deliver better employee experiences through adoption of HR technologies.

We will hear later from a panel of C-suite professionals who will share insights into how they drive transformation within their companies, the challenges they face, and how they are addressing them. I encourage you to ask lots of questions.

I wish you all a productive afternoon of learning, ideas, and connections.