

**SPEECH BY MR ANDREAS SOHMEN-PAO, CHAIRMAN,  
SINGAPORE MARITIME FOUNDATION AT THE SMF NEW YEAR COCKTAIL  
RECEPTION 2020, HELD AT FOUR SEASONS BALLROOM, LEVEL 2, FOUR  
SEASONS HOTEL, ON MONDAY, 13 JANUARY 2020, 7.10PM**

**Dr Lam Pin Min**, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Transport and Health

**Mr Niam Chiang Meng**, Chairman, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore  
(MPA)

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

**Introduction**

Good evening, and a warm welcome to the Singapore Maritime Foundation's 2020 New Year Reception.

It's heartwarming to have some traditions in the calendar, and the SMF New Year Reception has become a staple in the calendar. The Singapore Maritime Foundation was started in 2004, and the first of the New Year gatherings was in 2005, so this is now Year 15.

What a positive transformation Maritime Singapore has seen over that period. For all that has been achieved, we owe a debt of gratitude to our predecessors in the shipping community. I'd also like to thank all of you who are doing so much for Maritime Singapore today. And for those of you who have agreed to contribute in the future by joining the SMF board, a warm welcome.

The Singapore Maritime Foundation is not a large institution, but we have two important objectives.

- 1) Firstly, to strengthen connectivity for the maritime community here – attracting shipping companies, helping to build the ecosystem, and encouraging collaboration.
- 2) Secondly, to develop a talent pipeline that is critical to our industry's future success – by raising awareness about the maritime industry, by helping our learning institutes to build the right skills, and by connecting employers and job-seekers.

Looking back over 2019, just to share a few of the many activities conducted by the SMF team:

SMF and Informa Markets organised the 7<sup>th</sup> biennial Sea Asia Conference and Exhibition, drawing close to 15,000 participants across 80 countries.

On the education front, MaritimeONE awarded a total of 43 scholarships – the highest number so far. Please continue your generous support of this scholarship programme. Out of these scholars, 3 were from non-maritime backgrounds like IT, and we are delighted to see an increasing number of such students applying for the scholarship to support the industry's need for a diversified talent pool.

In the second half of the year, SMF produced a series of maritime videos featuring the exciting digitalisation efforts that are transforming the industry. Through these efforts, we are reaching out to young people to encourage them to explore our industry.

In November, the MPA and SMF launched the Circle of HR InnOvators network at the MSC Connexions Forum. The network aims to boost the role of HR as a strategic partner in driving workforce transformation.

## **Upcoming Initiatives**

In the year ahead, we will continue these activities, including the second run of the MSC Maritime Summit Case Challenge starting next month. This helps us to find bright undergraduates across all years and disciplines to solve real-world business challenges.

We are supporting Kidzania's first maritime-themed exhibition, to encourage children to experience various maritime careers through experiential learning.

And we will be working on decarbonisation as a theme, both as a pressing global issue and to stimulate new opportunities for Maritime Singapore.

All of this is possible because of the excellent public-private collaboration that is so unique here in Singapore. I'd like to thank our partners at the Ministry of Transport and MPA who underpin SMF's success and have always engaged with the industry in a constructive fashion.

## **SMF Board Appointments**

Lastly, I would like to welcome five new individuals to the SMF Board, all leaders in the industry here. Mr Simon Kuik from Sembcorp Marine, Mr Ong Kim Pong from PSA, Mr Hor Weng Yew from PCL, Mr Nick Potter from Shell and Ms Caroline Yang from SSA and Hong Lam. I look forward to working closely with all of you. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Board members, Tan Puay Hin, Lisa Teo and Abu Bakar Mohd Nor, for all their contributions over the years.

And in closing, I'd like to wish you all a very happy and prosperous new year ahead!