

REMARKS BY ANDREW TAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 9th CO-OPERATION FORUM ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2016, AT ROYAL AMBARRUKMO HOTEL YOGYAKARTA, YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA

Mr Gatot Saptadi, Deputy for Economic and Development, Secretariat for Special Region of Yogyakarta

Mr Sugihardjo, Secretary-General, Ministry of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia

Mr Antonius Tonny Budiono, Director General for Sea Transportation, Ministry of Transportation, Indonesia

Mr Rossid Bin Musa, Deputy Director General, Marine Department Malaysia

Mr Hiroyuki Yamada, Senior Deputy Director, Maritime Safety Division, IMO

Dr Marsetio, Chairman of Committee of Public Policy

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and gentlemen

1 *Selamat pagi.* I am delighted to join you for the 9th Co-operation Forum in the lovely historical city of Yogyakarta.

Significance of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) as a major waterway for international shipping

2 Many of us would be familiar with the challenges facing the shipping and marine industry due to sluggish trade growth, low oil prices and excess tonnage. Globally, we have seen an overall decline in Asia-Europe volumes, compounded by developments such as the rebalancing of volumes across alliance agreements, and an increase in direct sailings due to lower bunker prices.

3 Despite these trying times, the usage of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, or SOMS for short, remains high, and it continues to be a key shipping lane for trade to and from Asia. It therefore is imperative for the three littoral States of the Straits – Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore – to renew and reinvigorate efforts to ensure that safe, efficient, and sustainable shipping in the SOMS remain a top priority. We should continue to fortify regional cooperation to tackle safety of navigation and environmental concerns in the SOMS, given its strategic importance for regional and global trade.

4 It was with the precise aim to enhance safety of navigation and environmental protection of the SOMS that the three littoral States established, in 2007, the Co-operative Mechanism on Safety of Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, or Co-operative Mechanism for short.

Importance of the Co-operative Mechanism

5 The Co-operative Mechanism has made much headway in the nine years since its inception in 2007. When it was launched, the Co-operative Mechanism set a historic milestone for the international maritime community. It was the first co-operative framework in the world that provided a platform for littoral States, user States and other stakeholders in a strait used for international navigation, to jointly work on maintaining and enhancing the safety of navigation and marine environmental protection. The framework respects the sovereignty of the littoral States, takes into account the legitimate interests of the international community, and is also in accordance with international law.

The Co-operation Forum as an engagement platform

6 The Co-operation Forum – which starts today – is one of the three components of the Co-operative Mechanism. The Forum is a crucial contributor to the success of the Co-operative Mechanism – it is an important engagement platform that brings together all the relevant stakeholders and end users of the SOMS to discuss issues of common concern as well as to promote cooperation in mutually beneficial areas.

Presentations and discussions at this Forum have led to meaningful initiatives. One example is the presentation on under keel clearances in the SOMs which led to the test-bed project on under keel clearance monitoring using the automatic identification system (AIS). Testing the use of AIS for under keel clearance monitoring may enable a better and more cost-effective method for ships to better monitor their under keel clearances, and also for use by shore-based systems. Singapore looks forward to this and other updates on the new projects that were adopted in October last year, as well as other new presentations.

7 Another initiative that I would like to highlight is the “Safe Passage in the Singapore Strait” training resource package that Singapore will be sharing at this 9th Co-operation Forum. As some of you may be aware, back in 2014, the three littoral States worked with the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO) to jointly produce the SOMS Safe Passage Pamphlet. The pamphlet provided concise information on the applicable rules for safe navigation in the SOMS. We have since further expanded on that idea and, together with Indonesia and Malaysia, produced a three-part training package comprising two full-length videos and an interactive computer-based training module.

8 The training videos will offer valuable navigational guidelines as well as highlight precautionary areas for ships transiting the Singapore Strait from east to west and vice versa. The videos also emphasise the importance of adhering to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) and is part of the littoral States' effort to educate and create awareness among the international maritime community on navigational safety in the SOMS. I am pleased to note that our efforts have been well-received and would like to thank BIMCO, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the National Maritime Safety at Sea Council of Singapore for endorsing this training package.

Safety Culture in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore

9 The initiatives on safe passage planning in the Co-operation Forum leads me to mention the importance of instilling a safety culture in the maritime community. Safety is something that Singapore firmly believes in, and is very much aligned with a core pillar of the Co-operative Mechanism - namely, the enhancement of the safety of navigation in the SOMS.

10 In 2014, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore launched the Safety @ Sea campaign, which was a concerted effort by us to increase

industry awareness of safe practices, and inculcate a safety-first culture at sea. This year, we held the inaugural International Safety @ Sea Conference in August, which saw 30 international speakers and industry experts from different sectors of the maritime industry coming together to share best safety at sea practices with more than 350 local and international participants.

11 During the Conference, it was also announced that MPA would form a “Community of Practice (COP)”. This COP will allow for international maritime administrations, national safety councils, and classification societies to share best practices and collaborate on promoting safety at sea. MPA will convene regular safety conferences and workshops to promote a safety-first culture throughout the global shipping community, and we look forward to your participation.

Conclusion

12 Going forward, we must not rest on our laurels. Despite the trying international maritime climate, the SOMS will continue to be an important shipping lane. Further, global and regional issues on shipping will arise from time to time and we must be prepared to tackle these issues. Therefore, it is important to ensure that platforms like the Co-

operation Forum remain useful and relevant in the longer term, so that constructive dialogue can continue among the stakeholders to address new challenges.

13 I understand that Yogyakarta means a city that will flourish. Likewise, I hope that the Co-operation Forum will continue to flourish and achieve greater success. As a close neighbour of both Indonesia and Malaysia, Singapore stands ready to work closely with you and ensure safe, efficient and secure passage in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. *Terima Kasih*, my sincere thanks to the host country of Indonesia for its gracious hospitality and wonderful organisation of this event, and I look forward to a fruitful discussion over the next two days.