

OPENING ADDRESS BY
MS QUAH LEY HOON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE
AT THE OPENING OF 12TH COOPERATION FORUM
PO HOTEL, SEMARANG, INDONESIA
ON 30TH SEPTEMBER 2019

Mr Agus Purnomo, Director-General, Directorate General of Sea Transportation,
Indonesia,

Dato' Haji Baharin, Director-General, Marine Department, Malaysia,

Distinguished Delegates,

Selamat Pagi, Good Morning

On behalf of the Singapore delegation, I would like to express my appreciation to the Governor for Central Java, Bapak Ganjar Pranowo, for hosting all of us here in this beautiful and thriving city of Semarang. I also thank the Directorate General of Sea Transportation of Indonesia for the wonderful arrangements and organisation. Terimah Kasih.

Straits of Malacca and Singapore – Key Shipping Lane

2 The Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS) is one of the vital waterways in the world. One third of the world's traded goods pass through the SOMS. It also serves as a key channel for the transport of oil between the Middle East and East Asian economies.

3 The Cooperative Mechanism is a strong testament that we share a common objective in keeping the SOMS open, safe and clean. The Co-operative Mechanism, currently in its 11th year, is an effective platform in bringing the three littoral States, user States, the shipping industry, and international organisations such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), together. We look forward to closer co-operation with all stakeholders in the SOMS, especially when shipping is now at an inflection point.

Changing Environment: Challenges and Opportunities

4 Indeed, the maritime industry is entering into new waters in international shipping.

5 Digitalisation, disruption and call for sustainable shipping will shape future developments. This affects not just shipping, but ports, interaction between ships and ports, as well as production patterns and global supply chains. Such changes present challenges but also opportunities. Harnessing technology and leveraging on innovation can, and will, aid us in improving navigational safety, increasing efficiencies, and positively impact our marine environment.

Harnessing Digital Technology

6 Harnessing digitalisation and technology improvements can help improve navigational safety. There are two areas that Singapore is working on namely (i) e-navigation and (ii) safety at sea such as ferry safety.

7 On e-navigation, Singapore will share our implementation journey on e-navigation and the opportunities. We will also share what we are doing in using technology and innovation to improve ferry safety. For example, we have recently concluded our trials on the use of video analytics to prevent over-crowding on board ferries.

8 There is great potential in tapping on technology for SOMS. For a start, we have begun to do so by jointly organising the “IALA-MPA e-Navigation Workshop” in April 2019. Such learnings can be tapped on for SOMS – how do we tap on technological advancements for safety of navigation and the protection of our marine environment. The Co-operation Forum can be the platform for stakeholder of the SOMS to contribute so that we can all benefit from technology.

Protecting our Marine Environment

9 Growing environmental concerns on climate change have also sparked off demands for a low-carbon, energy-efficient and sustainable transportation system.

10 On IMO2020, many countries here are working to prepare for the start of the IMO sulphur limit for fuel oils on 1 January 2020. To prepare for its eventuality, Singapore actively engaged its stakeholders to understand the issues on the ground and how we can get everyone ready. We are happy to present our current effort at this front.

11 On GHG emissions, the IMO has also adopted the Initial Strategy on the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions from Ships. More needs to be done in terms of greater R&D so that industry can adopt low carbon technology moving forward. This is an area that the Cooperative Mechanism can also actively look at.

Vital Shipping Lanes must be Safe and Secure for Seafarers

12 The core of our collective effort here must be to enhance navigational safety, and protect the marine environment so that shipping in this region remains attractive and competitive. That is important to the economies in the region, and even globally. But if one aspect – that of security – deteriorates, it impacts the competitiveness of shipping in the SOMS. In 2006, we worked very hard to remove the high risk area designation and the accompanying increase in insurance premiums for ships to the SOMS. Our enforcement agencies work very closely on the ground with their counterparts in Indonesia and Malaysia. Industry plays its part too, to keep their seafarers safe. We must continue to commit efforts to ensure that the number of incidence rate in Asia and SOMS remain low so that we can continue to instill confidence.

Conclusion

13 To conclude, digitalization and technology advances can help us set new standards in ensuring that the SOMS continue to be secure, safe, open. This will enable us to continue to maintain the most efficient route for maritime commerce to and from Asia.

14 We join Malaysia in sending our regards to Indonesia for the earthquake in Ambon on 26 September and wish for speedy recovery process.

15 I look forward to the constructive dialogues with the various stakeholders over the next two days.

16 Thank You.