

**REMARKS BY MR TEO ENG DIH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE, AT
THE 14th CO-OPERATION FORUM, 31 JULY 2023
(MONDAY), AT PARADOX MERCHANT COURT SINGAPORE
BALLROOM**

Mr Chee Hong Tat, Acting Minister for Transport,

Professor Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-large, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs, Singapore,

Pak Hartanto, Director of Marine Safety and Seafarers,
Directorate-General of Sea Transportation, Ministry of
Transportation, Indonesia,

Captain Mohamad Halim Bin Ahmed, Director General, Marine
Department, Malaysia,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good morning, and a very warm welcome to everyone – especially to our friends from overseas who have joined us today.

2. It has been half a decade since we last hosted the Co-operation Forum in 2018, and I am very delighted to welcome everyone once again to the sunny island of Singapore.

Global Developments Affecting the Maritime Industry

3. A lot has happened and changed over the past few years.

a. We witnessed a global pandemic that strained our healthcare systems, and disrupted literally all aspects of our lives as we knew it.

b. Developments in the Black Sea have also impeded the post-pandemic economic recovery and affected food and energy security.

c. Geopolitical tensions have also adversely impacted the global economy and have the potential to impact supply chains.

4. The impact of these events has perhaps been most acutely felt by the maritime industry – which was already managing various challenges, including having to facilitate crew change amidst the pandemic, disruptions to shipping routes, as well as the uncertainty of commodity and freight rates – just to name a few.

5. Thankfully, not all changes have been undesirable and there has been many opportunities.

- a. Measures addressing the few years of pandemic had helped to provide greater impetus for digitalisation and automation – exploring new possibilities for shipping such as maritime drone deliveries and remote inspections, which offer substantial efficiency gains.

- b. There have also been great strides made in the area of maritime decarbonisation. Earlier this month, the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee adopted the revised Greenhouse Gas Strategy to strengthen the 2050 level of ambition to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050, as well as establish indicative checkpoints for 2030 to 2040 to guide progress. This was a huge achievement as all 175 Member States adopted the revised Strategy by consensus, with no reservations, reflecting the importance and continued relevance of multilateralism in addressing the most urgent challenges facing the global community.

c. Key industry players have also begun adapting their business strategies to increase the uptake of alternative fuels and embrace cleaner technologies. Just last week, the first ship-to-container ship methanol bunkering was conducted in the Port of Singapore. This marked a key milestone in the decarbonisation journey for the global maritime community.

Collaboration Amongst Stakeholders Required to Future-proof the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS)

6. Amidst the developments and changes that have occurred over the past few years, two key anchors remained unchanged – the importance of maritime transport, and the strategic and economic importance of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (or “SOMS” in short). However, we cannot take this for granted. Littoral States must continue working closely with each other to enhance the relevance, safety and environmental protection of

the SOMS which we have had the fortune of being situated along.

7. In addition, the littoral States must partner user States and industry – who also share a huge interest in this critical waterway – to ensure it remains safe and open for world trade. In this regard, I am glad that this Forum has brought together the relevant stakeholders to discuss issues of common interests that would affect the SOMS. The six topics which we will discuss over the next two days are:

- a. Initiatives to Enhance Safety of Navigation in SOMS;
- b. Technology to Enhance Navigational Safety;
- c. Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships;
- d. Maritime Decarbonisation;
- e. Ballast Water Management; and
- f. Oil Spill Management.

8. There will be about 20 presentations on these topics.

- a. Apart from the littoral States, industry associations and organisations such as the Malacca Straits Council, INTERTANKO and the Nautical Institute will be exchanging their ideas on how we can enhance navigational safety in the SOMS.
- b. The American Bureau of Shipping will be updating on the readiness of the MASS technology and the concept of operations; the China Classification Society will talk about the operational and implementational challenges for the ballast water management convention; and the Institute of High Performance Computing from A*STAR and Centre of Maritime Safety from Singapore Polytechnic will be speaking on the uses of AI and technology in the maritime space.
- c. Seatrium and Oil Spill Response Limited will also highlight the latest technologies and solutions for ballast

water management and oil spill management respectively.

9. I thank all of you for your ready contribution and steadfast commitment in enhancing the relevance, navigational safety and environmental protection of the SOMS. I look forward to your presentations and the healthy cross pollination of ideas.

Conclusion

10. Ladies and gentlemen, if there is one thing to learn from the past few years, it is how quickly the winds of change can quickly alter and throw us off-course from time to time. Nonetheless, what has remained unchanged is the good collaboration among the littoral States, user States and industry partners, and I encourage us to stay the course. I am glad to hear Professor Tommy Koh's timely reminder that we share a priceless gift of the Cooperative Mechanism, and we should work closely to

ensure the SOMS remains safe, environmentally-sustainable, and open for all, and for the benefit of the global community.

11. I wish everyone a fruitful meeting, including those attending the Tripartite Technical Experts Group and Project Coordination Committee meetings later this week. To our friends from overseas, I hope you manage to find some time to enjoy some *makan* with our Singapore hosts and explore the various places of interest in Singapore.

12. Thank you.