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**SPEECH BY MR MICHAEL CHIA, OUTGOING CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE
MARITIME FOUNDATION AT THE SMF NEW YEAR COCKTAIL RECEPTION
2016, HELD AT PARKROYAL ON PICKERING SINGAPORE HOTEL ON
WEDNESDAY, 13 JANUARY 2016, 7.30PM**

Mr Khaw Boon Wan
Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Transport

Mrs Josephine Teo
Senior Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
Ministry of Transport

Mr Pang Kin Keong
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

1. Good evening and a very warm welcome to this year's Singapore Maritime Foundation's New Year Cocktail Reception. We are honoured to have with us Mr Khaw Boon Wan, Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Transport, as our Guest-of-Honour for this occasion. Thank you, Minister, that despite your hectic schedule, you have specially taken time off to honour us with your presence here this evening.
2. This cocktail reception is an annual event where the maritime fraternity comes together to usher in the new year and at the same time reflects on what has happened in the past year. For all of us in Singapore, 2015 stands out as a memorable one when Singapore celebrated its Golden Jubilee. During the

year, SMF continued to pursue the various initiatives to promote Singapore as an International Maritime Centre, and grow the maritime manpower pipeline.

3. One key event last year was the biennial Sea Asia conference and exhibition co-organised by SMF and our partner Seatrade, where international thought leaders came together to debate on key trends and discuss opportunities and challenges facing the maritime industry. The fifth edition of the show last April attracted a record number of over 16,000 participants from 85 countries¹. The nett exhibition space² also tripled compared to the inaugural edition in 2007.
4. In June last year, SMF and the Association of Singapore Marine Industries also led 13 maritime-related companies to Oslo, Norway to showcase Singapore's maritime services and expertise at Nor-Shipping. It was also during this period of time that Singapore was named³ the top maritime capital based on the results of a global survey benchmarking 15 maritime cities. Such an achievement was only possible because of the strong partnership between the Government and the maritime community on various initiatives to increase Singapore's overall competitiveness and attractiveness on the global front.
5. On the international front, SMF played an instrumental role in the rewriting of the New York Produce Exchange (NYPE) time charterparty form. This is the first international shipping form that is a global collective effort involving the Association of Ship Brokers and Agents (ASBA), the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO) and SMF. Besides contributing valuable inputs as a result of extensive industry stakeholder consultation, SMF played a key role to bridge the differences between parties to arrive at this new form which we believe better meets user needs and will see quick acceptance and adoption.

¹ **2015** – 16,185 participants; **2013** – 13,167 participants; **2011** – 12,167 participants; **2009** – 10,187 participants; **2007** - >7,000 participants

² **2015** – 8,674 sqm; **2013** – 6,585 sqm; **2011** – 5,665 sqm; **2009** – 4,600 sqm; **2007** – 3,552 sqm

³ Singapore retained top spot as the most important maritime capital in a report released by Norwegian consulting firm, Menon. Singapore emerged first among 15 cities that were benchmarked in five categories: shipping centres, finance & law, technology, ports & logistics, and attractiveness & competitiveness. The report, released in June 2015, consisted of responses from 196 maritime professionals from 33 countries. The inaugural Menon report three years ago also ranked Singapore in first place.

6. Closer to home, SMF has been working closely with various partners on the maritime manpower development front. To encourage the take up of maritime diploma courses, SMF ran a social media campaign in January to target students receiving their “O” level results. Our publicity and outreach efforts continued through various channels throughout the year, including cinema advertising and a Maritime Special Feature that was bundled with copies of the TODAY paper and 8 Days magazine in conjunction with World Maritime Day.
7. We are also thankful for the support from our partners for the MaritimeONE Scholarship Programme that SMF administers. Last year, we awarded 38 MaritimeONE Scholarships with the support of 20 companies. This brings it to 238 MaritimeONE Scholarships to date, worth more than S\$6.5 million, for students to pursue maritime-related courses both locally and overseas.
8. We have come a long way since 2007, when we started the MaritimeONE Scholarship programme with just three awards, and it has been a great joy to see how this programme has grown over the years, as with other SMF initiatives. As part of the renewal process, I will be stepping down from the SMF Board after a decade of service, including six years as Chairman. It has been an enriching and memorable journey for me, and a real honour to serve in this position. I want to thank all SMF’s partners for supporting our efforts to further Singapore’s aspirations in the global maritime arena, as well as the development of manpower for the industry.
9. I would also like to express my gratitude to my fellow Board members, past ones and present, including Mr Goh Teik Poh, Mr Patrick Phoon and Mr Wong Weng Sun, who are also stepping down after six years of service. It has been a pleasure working with all of you, and I have no doubt that you will continue to contribute to Maritime Singapore in your various fields.
10. As I hand over the Chairmanship to Mr Andreas Sohmen-Pao, Chairman of BW Group, I have every confidence that SMF will continue to grow under his capable leadership. Andreas, being a stalwart in the maritime scene, is no stranger to all of us and Andreas has been on the SMF Board since 2014. I also wish to thank the SMF Secretariat led by Executive Director, Mr David Chin for the good work that they have done.

11. In closing, let me once again thank Minister, as well as all of you, for your presence here this evening. I hope you enjoy the dinner reception and time of networking with friends in the maritime community.

12. Thank you.