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**SPEECH BY MR MICHAEL CHIA, CHAIRMAN OF MARITIMEONE AND  
SINGAPORE MARITIME FOUNDATION AT THE MARITIMEONE SCHOLARSHIP  
AWARDS CEREMONY,  
14 AUGUST 2013, 6.30PM AT SHERATON TOWERS SINGAPORE**

Mr Lucien Wong, Chairman of MPA  
Mr Lam Yi Young, Chief Executive of MPA  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Good evening and a very warm welcome.

1 Today, we will be presenting a total of 52 awards for the MaritimeONE Scholarships, and Tripartite Maritime Scholarship Scheme, or TMSS. It is a special day for many of us – whether you are a student receiving your scholarship, a proud parent, or a scholarship sponsor doing your part to groom the next generation of leaders for the maritime industry.

**Welcoming & Encouraging the Scholars**

2 On behalf of the Singapore Maritime Foundation and our maritime partners, I want to extend my heartiest congratulations to our young scholars. Welcome to the maritime industry! As scholars, you have been given a head start in an industry which is a key pillar of Singapore's economy, contributing about 7 per cent to our nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). For you, tonight is the first of many milestones to come, and I hope that you will find it a fulfilling, and even fun, journey as you explore the many opportunities that abound in our shipping, port, maritime services, and offshore engineering sectors.

3 Personally, I feel that I've been fortunate to have chosen the maritime industry, and I've never regretted spending more than 30 years with the industry. And to sum it up, there has never

been a dull moment. The work has been challenging but rewarding, and I've also made many friends over the years as this is a closely knit community. I hope that you could also say the same for yourself in the years to come.

4 To our 42 new MaritimeONE scholars today, you can look forward to opportunities to be exposed to the maritime community, beyond your classroom learning. As the Secretariat for MaritimeONE, SMF works closely with its partners, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), the Association of Singapore Marine Industries (ASMI), the Singapore Shipping Association (SSA), and the maritime community to synergise efforts to grow the pool of maritime talent in Singapore. This includes sending MaritimeONE scholars like yourselves to maritime conferences and networking sessions, organising experiential learning programmes, and creating opportunities to interact with maritime professionals from various specialisations. These would help you to build your maritime knowledge and also expand your network of contacts even before you leave school.

5 To the 10 new TMSS scholars, congratulations! Your choice of a seafaring career has set you apart from your peers. MPA, together with the Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU), the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS), and shipping companies have come together since 2002 to provide the TMSS scholarship, because there is a real need for talent in this area. As you progress from your diploma studies to professional certifications, you can look towards your seniors for inspiration and support. To date, 15 scholars have already obtained their Certificate of Competency Class 2, and are now working towards their Class 1 certificate, bringing them one step closer to their dreams of becoming Captains and Chief Engineers on board merchant ships.

### **Assuring the Parents about Prospects in the Maritime Industry**

6 To the proud parents, I want to assure you that your children have made the right decision, and I want to thank you for your support. As you know, ships move 90 per cent of world trade, so almost everything we use in our daily lives would have been shipped in. Hence, this is an industry which is here to stay.

7 Moreover, Asian shipowners today control and command about 50 per cent of the world's merchant fleet. You can expect maritime activities and transactions to continue to grow in this region as more international maritime companies establish their regional offices in Singapore to gain better access to the fast-growing Asian economies. Today, Singapore is home to more than

5,000 maritime companies employing over 170,000 people. And we've also established several world champions like our port and ship yards. Against such a backdrop, demand for maritime professionals will only continue to grow, and your children can look forward to abundant career advancement opportunities.

### **Thanking the Sponsors & Overview of MaritimeONE Scholarships**

8 To our scholarship sponsors, I want to say thank you for sharing our vision in developing future maritime manpower, and pledging your support to this meaningful endeavour. You have been involved in the selection process culminating to this day, and I hope that the scholars would do you proud as they pursue their studies and career in the maritime industry.

9 This is the 7<sup>th</sup> year that we are presenting the MaritimeONE Scholarships. We started with just three scholarships, but today, we are presenting 42 MaritimeONE scholarships. This is a record-high since we started in 2007 and it is all thanks to the strong support from the Singapore maritime community. Over the years, our maritime industry partners have contributed a total of 160 MaritimeONE scholarships, worth more than \$4.3 million dollars, for students to pursue maritime-related courses in Singapore and overseas. The number of courses supported by the MaritimeONE scholarships has also grown – from just one course (the Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies at NTU), to now some 22 courses covering the spread of business, law and engineering degree courses, and maritime-related diplomas. This also reflects the diversity of needs and career options for our young people in this industry.

10 I would also like to take this opportunity to thank MPA, the shipping employers and the seafaring unions for their continuous support in the TMSS programme. The event this evening is a reflection of how the public and private sectors of the maritime community are committed to attract the best talents to steer the Singapore maritime sector forward. The fact that 22 companies have come together this evening to give out \$1.7 million in scholarships tonight is testament to our commitment to the future of Maritime Singapore. Going forward, we hope that more maritime partners would come forth to support us in our scholarships and talent development efforts.

11 To conclude, I would like to once again extend my heartiest congratulations to our scholars. I wish you every success in your studies and an exciting maritime journey ahead.

12 Thank you.