

**SPEECH BY MR MICHAEL CHIA, CHAIRMAN, SINGAPORE MARITIME
FOUNDATION AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF SEA ASIA 2013, ON 9 APRIL,
TUESDAY, MELATI BALLROOM, LEVEL 4, SANDS EXPO AND CONVENTION
CENTRE**

Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance

Mr Lui Tuck Yew

Minister of Transport

Your Excellencies

Friends and colleagues from overseas and Singapore,

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Good morning and a very warm welcome to this opening ceremony of *Sea Asia 2013*. I am delighted to see such a strong turn-up and I would like to thank our maritime partners for your ardent support. For some of you who have travelled specially to Singapore to be a part of *Sea Asia 2013*, welcome and we hope that you would have a fruitful and enjoyable stay in Singapore.
2. I would like to thank Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance for gracing this occasion as our Guest-of-Honour. Also, a big thank you to Mr Lui Teck Yew, our Minister of Transport, for supporting us with your presence. We are indeed honoured by the kind presence of our two ministers here this morning.

3. The last three decades has seen a remarkable period of growth for Asia shipping and Asia' s importance on the global maritime scene. Despite the cyclical downturn that we are facing now in shipping, the long term prospects of the maritime business in this region are certainly optimistic. We hope that Singapore can be one of the key international maritime centres in this region to spearhead new initiatives and developments to facilitate and boost the growth of the industry. *Sea Asia* was first organised in 2007 in line with the Singapore's vision to make this show an iconic maritime show of Singapore, one that would serve as a strategic forum for global maritime leaders to congregate and share insightful perspectives on pertinent issues in Asia and in the global maritime scene. Our co-organiser, Seatrade has been instrumental in the development of the *Sea Asia* show, making it known to the global maritime community and expanding the show in depth and magnitude with every edition. We are grateful for this partnership and we look forward to many successful editions to come.

4. This year, *Sea Asia 2013* is staged as one of the anchor events of the Singapore Maritime Week, organised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA). The tripartite partnership between the government, trade associations and maritime players is a unique strength of the Singapore maritime community and it is this strong tradition of tripartism that has allowed *Sea Asia* to evolve and grow. Many maritime leaders have generously shared their time and expertise as Chairmen and committee members in various committees and speakers to ensure the smooth planning and execution of the *Sea Asia* conference and events

5. Through *Sea Asia*, we hope that the varied discussions would shape developments and ignite milestone initiatives that would benefit *the global* maritime community and propel the maritime industry forward. In the long run, we hope that *Sea Asia* would project the voice of Asia in a more concerted manner and cement Singapore's standing as a key thought-leader in maritime issues.

6. The theme for *Sea Asia 2013* is The Asian Voice in World Shipping. A stellar group of maritime luminaries has been lined up to explore pertinent maritime issues during the conferences. This morning, the opening conference would examine the liner business and in the afternoon, we would look at the key factors that are affecting the bulk business and some of the upcoming trends. Day Two is dedicated to two parallel sessions, one on ship finance and the other on offshore. The third day, which we coined as the Technical Day, will focus on Technology at Shipyards in the morning session and in the afternoon; there would be two parallel sessions, one on green technology and the other on project cargo and heavy lift.
7. With the strong line-up of maritime experts, I am sure that the three-day conference will ignite lively debates and discussions that would be beneficial to the participants. In closing, let me wish you all a very fruitful and enriching time at *Sea Asia*.
8. Thank you.

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