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**SPEECH BY MR ANDREAS SOHMEN-PAO
CHAIRMAN OF MARITIMEONE AND SINGAPORE MARITIME FOUNDATION
AT THE MARITIMEONE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY,
17 AUGUST 2016, 7.00PM AT CARLTON HOTEL SINGAPORE**

**EMBARGOED TILL DATE OF DELIVERY, 17 AUGUST 2016, 7.00PM
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Mr Andrew Tan, Chief Executive of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore,
Mr Esben Poulsen, President of the Singapore Shipping Association,
Mr Ong Poh Kwee, Vice President of the Association of Singapore Marine Industries,
Distinguished guests,
Award recipients and parents,
A warm welcome to you all.

Congratulating the Scholars and their Parents

1 Tonight is a special occasion for all of you scholarship recipients, who will be embarking on a new chapter of your lives. You have chosen one of the most exciting industries in the world, you are going to learn a lot, and you are going to have a lot of fun. Congratulations on your choice.

2 Tonight is a special night for all of you parents of the awardees. Your child is entering one of the most important industries in the global economy, an industry which keeps our world supplied with goods, energy, and raw materials. Almost everything we see and touch has been on a ship at some point. This is also one of the most important industries in Singapore, contributing 7% of our GDP, employing over 170,000 people, and contributing to our position as a global trading hub.

3 And tonight is a special night for the companies sponsoring these awards. Not only are you helping to launch the careers of these bright young students, but you are also supporting the global pipeline of talent and Singapore's position as a leading maritime centre. What you are doing is invaluable to our future success as an industry.

4 On behalf of MaritimeONE and the Singapore Maritime Foundation (SMF), many congratulations to the scholars and welcome to the maritime industry.

5 I can throw out all sorts of statistics about what an important industry this is, but I also want to share with you some factors which don't appear in numbers. First of all, this is one of the friendliest and most collegiate of businesses. It is one of the most global of businesses, where our assets are positioned in every corner of the earth and where we are closely connected to world events.

6 And for those of you who may wonder whether this is a old-fashioned industry, let me assure you that there are numerous technological developments happening as we speak. New I.T. mining data to track ships and make good commercial decisions. New engineering technology to tap into deeper waters for offshore energy. New performance monitoring tools to improve energy efficiency on board. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong officially launched Phases 3 and 4 of the Pasir Panjang Terminals in June last year, and work has started on the Tuas mega-port. These will adopt greater automation, intelligent systems, smart sensors and data analytics to enhance our efficiency and productivity. You scholars will be playing a part in this future.

7 Whether we are talking about hard statistics or soft factors, people who come into this business often choose to stay with it for their whole career. That's because it is a fun industry to work in, and it is one which offers a lot of excitement and different career paths. So don't be distracted by people who talk about the industry going through a tough patch now – we've seen plenty of these cycles before, and the industry always comes out stronger the other side. The government and industry players are continuing to invest in talent through the cycle to ensure our future capabilities are strong, with many recent initiatives such as the Singapore Maritime Ambassador Programme and the recently established Maritime Singapore Connect Office¹.

¹ The Maritime Singapore Connect (MSC) Office is part of a SkillsFuture initiative by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore. Started in 2016, the unit under the Singapore Maritime Foundation serves to help connect maritime employers, industry associations, the government and schools with students, jobseekers and the general public. As a central access point for target audience of varied profiles, the MSC Office seeks to elevate existing profiling efforts of the maritime industry and provide Singaporeans with easy access to maritime education, training and job opportunities.

Scholars: Cassandra Keh & Jasper Lee & Raphael Tay

8 Before I close, let me highlight a few of our scholarship recipients this year.

9 **Ms Cassandra Keh** has completed her Diploma in Maritime Business at the Singapore Maritime Academy (SMA) at Singapore Polytechnic. She will now be continuing on to the Maritime Studies degree programme at the NTU with the SMA – MaritimeONE Scholarship.

10 Cassandra successfully encouraged her younger brother to join the industry by sharing her stories and insights with him. Keane is now in his third year of studies at SMA's Diploma in Marine Engineering course, and he is also here tonight to show support for his sister. And at her graduation ceremony, Cassandra even found another two pairs of siblings who were distant cousins of hers who graduated with a Diploma in Nautical Studies at SMA. So once Cassandra's brother has completed his diploma, there will be a total of six maritime graduates in their family!

11 I hope you scholars will follow Cassandra's example to encourage your friends and family to consider the maritime industry as you start to learn and experience all it has to offer.

12 I'm also pleased to highlight **Mr Jasper Lee**, who is our first scholar from a computing background. Demonstrating how the diverse maritime industry has something to offer to everyone, Jasper is a student from the Bachelor of Computing course at the National University of Singapore and will be receiving his PSA – MaritimeONE scholarship award tonight.

13 Jasper feels that joining the maritime industry is a direct way to contribute to Singapore's development, and he is inspired by Singapore's vision to be an innovative and future-ready maritime hub.

14 From our seafaring scholars, **Mr Raphael Tay** is receiving his Tripartite Maritime Scholarship co-sponsored by NYK Shipmanagement. Showing again that there are multiple pathways to join the maritime industry, after completing his N-Level studies, Raphael went on to the Singapore Polytechnic (SP) Foundation Programme, then decided to pursue the Diploma in Marine Engineering at SMA. He shared with us that he was looking forward to training onboard as an engine cadet and eventually becoming a Chief Engineer one day. We wish you all the best with your career Raphael.

Conclusion

15 So here we are, in a country that was ranked number one in a survey² benchmarking 15 maritime centres around the world, that is the world's largest transshipment hub, and which is a world leader in ship repair, conversion and rig building.

16 All of you will be playing a role in this special industry which is important to Singapore, and where Singapore is a world leader.

17 This year, we are presenting a total of 53 awards: 37 MaritimeONE Scholarships, 16 Tripartite Maritime Scholarships, and more than \$2 million that the industry is investing in you.

18 To our scholarship sponsors, I want to say thank you again for your partnership in grooming the next generation of maritime manpower. I am sure these scholars will do you proud.

19 To our scholars – congratulations, good luck, and don't forget to pay it forward by introducing those around you to the industry.

20 Thank you and have a wonderful evening.

² Singapore retained top spot as the most important maritime capital in a recent report released by Norwegian consulting firm, Menon in June 2015. Singapore emerged first among 15 cities that were benchmarked in five categories: shipping centres, finance & law, technology, ports & logistics, and attractiveness & competitiveness. The report consisted of responses from 196 maritime professionals from 33 countries. The inaugural Menon report four years ago also ranked Singapore in first place.