

**SPEECH BY MR NG CHEE MENG, ACTING MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (SCHOOLS) AND SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, AT THE SINGAPORE MARITIME OFFICERS' UNION (SMOU) 65<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY FAMILY DAY – NITE OUT @ UNIVERSAL STUDIOS SINGAPORE, 28 MAY 2016, 6.45PM**

Sister Mary Liew, President of NTUC and General Secretary of SMOU

Captain Robin Foo, President of SMOU

Brother Thomas Tay, Emeritus General Secretary of SMOU

Leaders and members of SMOU

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening. Thank you for inviting me to celebrate SMOU's Family Day with you. Tonight is the first 'Nite Out' organised and a great way to commemorate the Union's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

2. Over the years, SMOU has played a pivotal role in engaging industry partners and the Government to protect the welfare and safety of our seafarers. It has come a long way, starting with just 18 members 65 years ago to about 30,000 members today.

3. Apart from the welfare of our own members, it warms my heart to see SMOU staying true to its core values of "Caring and Sharing" and has invited residents and children from WeCARE for Mums, Jamiyah Singapore, Hope Community Services Centre, Henderson Home, residents from Jalan Kukoh, and Bright Hill Evergreen Home to join in the celebrations as well. When we make it a point to remember others, life is more meaningful.

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4. In today's fast-paced society, we may be very technologically connected, but we tend to lose the human connection and get caught up in our own issues. I have seen many families eating together at the same table but their eyes are all glued to their smart phones. So we have to make it a point to talk and listen to each other and a day like today is a good reminder to do just that.

5. This evening, many of you are here with your family members, and I hope you will enjoy a wonderful evening creating new and priceless memories together. Whilst we might not know everyone here, we are all here as a member of the SMOU family. So let's celebrate the spirit of solidarity this evening and work towards building a stronger Maritime Singapore in the future.

6. On this note, I wish all members a Happy Family Day and a Happy 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday to SMOU.

7. Thank you.

- End -

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