

**OPENING REMARKS BY DR LAM PIN MIN, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR
TRANSPORT AND HEALTH, AT ASIA PACIFIC MARITIME 2018, 14 MARCH
2018 (WEDNESDAY), 10.30AM, AT MARINA BAY SANDS EXPO &
CONVENTION CENTRE**

I am pleased to be here at the opening of the 15th Asia Pacific Maritime (APM).

Appreciation for the international community's attendance at APM

2. The APM is a key event that Maritime Singapore plays host to. It is an important platform for the international maritime community to exchange views and gather new insights. I am told that some 60 speakers, 1,500 exhibitors and 15,000 visitors will gather here over the next three days.

3. The strong turnout is testament to the scale, significance and value of the APM, and that is why APM has become one of Asia's leading maritime exhibition and conference events.

Singapore's maritime industry – today and ahead; against the global outlook

4. Maritime Singapore has done well. It is home to the world's busiest transshipment port, and where some 140 international shipping groups and 5,000 maritime establishments are based. Together, our hub port and international maritime centre contribute over 170,000 jobs and 7% of our GDP.

5. However, we are not immune to fundamental shifts taking shape in our region and beyond. For instance, in the coming years, we are likely to see supply chains being disrupted by further shifts in world trade patterns and manufacturing cycles. Traditional players also face the risk of dis-intermediation arising from technological change.

6. It is therefore befitting that this year's APM has adopted the theme "*Navigating New Frontiers to Discover the New Wave of Business Opportunities*".

7. Against this backdrop, it is essential for all of us in Maritime Singapore to collectively seek out new growth opportunities for the future, in order to stay relevant and competitive. To support this effort, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) recently launched the Sea Transport Industry Transformation Map (ITM) to develop Singapore as the "*Global Maritime Hub for Connectivity, Innovation and Talent*".

Singapore as the “Global Maritime Hub”

Connectivity

8. First, connectivity. We will strengthen Singapore’s global position as an attractive hub for international maritime businesses and activities. We will do this by improving the physical and non-physical connectivity of our maritime hub.

9. To capture physical flows, we will continue to invest in our port infrastructure to support the industry’s long-term needs. In the near term, we will complete the expansion of Pasir Panjang Terminal to raise our port’s capacity to 50 million TEUs. In the longer term, we will consolidate port operations into a new container terminal that can handle up to 65 million TEU in the western end of Singapore.

10. To capture non-physical flows, we aim to create a more interconnected maritime ecosystem. Locally, we will grow the maritime industry in Singapore, increase the diversity of players – both traditional and non-traditional, and strengthen cross-sector linkages with the logistics and commodity trading communities.

11. Globally, we will strengthen our cooperation with other maritime clusters. For instance, Singapore initiated and founded in 2015 the Port Authorities Roundtable to forge closer collaboration between port authorities based on mutual interests. At its last meeting in 2017, members of the Roundtable discussed issues relating to the optimal allocation of resources to improve the efficiency of port operations. Singapore also see our participation in international fora, such as the APM today, as key in furthering conversations with the maritime community on solutions to challenges faced by the industry.

Innovation

12. Next, innovation. We are stepping up our efforts to build a more enabling innovation ecosystem that supports the transformation of Maritime Singapore.

13. We will continue to invest in the industry’s digitalisation efforts. MPA has over the years, through the Maritime Cluster Fund (MCF), supported a growing number of maritime enterprises that develop in-house customised productivity solutions. These include cloud-based enterprise resource planning as well as digital vessel monitoring systems. Moving ahead, we hope to support more of such digitalisation initiatives.

14. We will also strengthen the pool of local maritime technology start-ups. Through the new Maritime Technology Acceleration Programme (MTAP) which MPA and NUS Enterprise will launch later this year, will help nurture these start-ups through tailored mentorships and exposure to potential investors. This will give them a leg-up in turning innovative prototypes into commercial solutions.

15. MPA will also be setting up the Singapore Maritime Data Hub (SG-MDH) to facilitate the public sharing of real-time port and shipping data. The SG-MDH will serve as a common-repository to allow the research and technology communities to co-develop innovative digital services and applications for the maritime industry.

Talent

16. Finally, talent. We will continue to invest in our maritime workforce to ensure that they are well-equipped with the relevant skills and mindset to meet the future needs of the industry.

17. Currently, MPA works closely with commercial training service providers and Institutes of Higher Learning to offer a wide range of education and training programmes. It also provides co-funding support for maritime enterprises that wish to conduct management associate programmes as well as local industry attachments. Just last year, over 6,000 individuals benefitted from programmes under the MCF.

18. MPA will also be introducing a new Global Talent Programme to offer maritime employees opportunities to experience structured rotations across local as well as international offices. This will complement the existing MPA-Global Internship Award, which offers local undergraduates a chance to intern with Singapore-based international maritime companies locally and abroad.

Conclusion

19. To conclude, Maritime Singapore is where we are today because of the support of and partnership with friends like yourselves. As we meet the coming waves of disruption, the Sea Transport ITM will serve as a beacon to help us navigate on this transformation journey. I look forward to working with the local maritime community and welcoming new partners to join us in this new chapter of development for Maritime Singapore.

20. On this note, I declare the 15th APM open. I wish you a fruitful conference and successful exhibition. Thank you.

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