



SPEECH BY MR THOMAS TAY, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE SINGAPORE MARITIME OFFICERS' UNION (SMOU), CHAIRMAN OF WAVELINK CO-OPERATIVE LTD AT THE SMOU QINGDAO NIGHT & WAVELINK CADETSPLUS GRADUATION, HELD IN QINGDAO (CHINA), ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2007.

Guest-of-Honour Mr Matthias Yao, Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Mayor Singapore South-East District and Advisor to SMOU & Wavelink, our special guest Mr Wang Shaoyun, Vice-President, Qingdao Port Corporation, Mdm Liu Ying-Hua President, Qingdao Harbour Vocational Technical College, Ms Wang He, General Secretary of the China Coordination Council for Overseas Seaman Employment (COSE), Mr Ma Ji, Chairman of the China Seamens' Union (CSU) - Shandong, distinguished guests from Singapore, the PRC and the regional maritime community, SMOU members and families, ladies and gentlemen, a very good evening and welcome to the SMOU Qingdao Night & Wavelink CadetsPlus Graduation here in Qingdao, China.

This is a historical event for 2 reasons:

1. It is the first dinner that SMOU has organised in China for our PRC members, as well as our shipping partners from overseas and the PRC, and I am honoured to be part of this very historic and inaugural occasion.
2. Secondly, we are also witnessing the first graduation of the pioneer batch of cadet graduates under the Wavelink CadetsPlus programme.

SMOU is a global union representing 15,000 seafaring officers of which there are more than 1,200 PRC members. This evening, being amongst our very own PRC SMOU members certainly brings me great joy and it is **a dream come true**.

SMOU is a union that dares to be different, dares to do what is good for our members and our shipping partners. We are a union that believes in cooperation, collaboration and strong relationships, adopting win-win partnerships with all concern parties. Regardless of nationality, countries and maritime organisations.

We are a union that will do our utmost to ensure the employment and the employability of our members working onboard vessels. This will be in their working conditions, welfare benefits and schemes which includes the Singapore Provident Fund (SPF), Singapore Maritime Training Fund (SMTF) and other insurance schemes protecting and covering our members.

We want our members to be of high quality so that they can be professional, productive and contribute to the growth and profitability of their shipping employers, in order that members can have better jobs and better wages for a better life for themselves and their family.

Wavelink CadetsPlus

SMOU is a union that believes in strong bipartism & tripartism. Wavelink CadetsPlus is an example of a tripartite and regional collaboration effort, and it took many months for the shipping companies, together with the Singapore Maritime Academy and Wavelink Academy, Qingdao Institutes and local coordinators to make CadetsPlus a reality.

Wavelink CadetsPlus is a customised programme that prepares cadets for their sea career thereby adding value to the shipping companies.

The Advisory Committee of the Singapore Maritime Training Fund (SMTF), comprising tripartite representatives, had great difficulty initially trying to conduct the first Wavelink CadetsPlus programme in China. They finally decided on QHVTC because of availability of dates, location of the institute and facilities, availability of resources and costs.

Wavelink is happy to collaborate with partners here in order that CadetsPlus be conducted in as many cities in China and the region as long as there is a demand by shipowners to train quality officers.

This evening, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the pioneer graduating class of 80 deck and engineering cadets who have successfully completed the inaugural Wavelink CadetsPlus programme.

And our gratitude and thanks to.....

Employers

Shipping Companies / Manning Companies in Singapore and China for being caring employers that provides training and jobs for our PRC members.

Affiliates & Partners

Qingdao Harbour Vocational Technical College and their staff,

Singapore Maritime Academy,

SinoStar & SinoCrew - Coordinator and staff

COSE

CSU

and the many partners who have contributed to the success of the Wavelink CadetsPlus programme.

Guest of Honour / Special Guest

For officiating at our historical occasion in spite of their busy schedules.

Dinner Guests

A big thank you to the staff and officials of SMOU and Wavelink Academy, and everyone else who has made this evening a success.

**Embargo until after delivery
Please check against delivery**

I would also like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all of you especially for those of you from overseas and across the PRC and many others who travelled many hours to join us to celebrate this wonderful evening's occasion.

Have a memorable and fun evening, a happy Mid-Autumn Festival and thank you very much.

- Ends -

For more information, please contact:

Wilfred Thiang
Corporate Communications
Tel: (65) 63901660 Fax: (65) 62951121
Mob: (65) 91117838
Email: wilfred@smou.org.sg