



SPEECH BY CAPTAIN ROBIN FOO, PRESIDENT OF THE SINGAPORE MARITIME OFFICERS' UNION (SMOU) AT THE LUNAR NEW YEAR HONG BAO PRESENTATION LUNCHEON 2008, HELD AT THE RAFFLES CITY CONVENTION CENTRE, ON 14 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 12.00PM

Guest-of-Honour Mr Gan Kim Yong – Minister of State for Manpower and Education, Minister of State for Health and NTUC Deputy Secretary General Mr Heng Chee How, Mr Teo Siong Seng – Chairman of the Singapore Shipping Association, Capt Francis Joseph – Singapore Maritime Employers Federation Chairman, NTUC Central Committee members, Capt Khong Shen Ping – Director of Shipping Division of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, SMOU Executive Committee, friends & partners in the shipping community, unions, Wavelink business associates, distinguished guests, members, senior citizens, ladies and gentlemen, a very good afternoon.

On behalf of both the Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) and Wavelink, I would like to welcome you to our 2008 Annual Lunar New Year Hong Bao Presentation Luncheon.

We're glad to have amongst us this afternoon, more than 350 senior citizen members from SMOU. Also in our midst joining us in these celebrations, senior citizens and volunteers from our adopted charity, the Henderson Senior Citizens Home.

At SMOU, we have always believed in caring and sharing with those around us, especially the elderly who are the Silver Collar in our membership. Together with our tripartite maritime community this afternoon, SMOU is privileged to be presenting Hong Baos to our elderly friends and senior members present here as we celebrate the Lunar New Year festivities. We appreciate them being here with us.

Today's Hong Bao presentation is just one of SMOU's Lunar New Year celebratory activities this coming week of caring and sharing with the community. SMOU will also be hosting at our Lighthouse Bistro on 19th February 2008, the senior citizens from the

Jalan Besar Constituency. We have also hosted the senior citizens from Care Community Services and Hope Community Services. In all, SMOU will be handing out more than S\$20,000 in Hong Baos to senior citizens.

On this auspicious occasion, we would also like to share with you our new contribution to SMOU members and the maritime community. We have formed a new training arm Wavelink Maritime International (WMI), a premier and professional organisation dedicated to providing quality maritime education, training and consultancy services for both the local and international maritime community.

WMI offers a wide spectrum of more than 45 seafarer training and education programs encompassing the career and development phase, upgrading and enhancement training phase and a career transition training phase that prepares seafarers for a lifelong career.

In such a short spell, WMI has ventured into training collaborations as an education partner with maritime institutions in China, Myanmar and Vietnam. I'm also pleased to share that training has commenced, and we would like to thank our shipping partners for your invaluable support in recent months for WMI's CadetsPlus programs. The program has been successfully nurturing young quality seafaring officers from across the region for Singapore-flagged vessels.

In line with the MaritimeOne initiative of raising the profile and attracting quality manpower to the maritime industry, WMI has been working together with shipping partners, tertiary and vocational institutions to attract and train young Singaporeans for career opportunities in the maritime sector both at sea and ashore.

We are also happy to share that WMI has also been certified ISO 9001:2000. With a core team of experienced industry professionals in place, WMI is poised to value-add to the industry, strengthen the competencies of seafarers, enabling the maritime community to meet the ever-changing demands of the maritime industry

Shipping is faced with a shortage of qualified and quality Officers. SMOU is happy with the formation of WMI, to be able to collaborate with our shipping partners, through

value-added maritime training, providing quality and qualified Officers for our shipping partners.

Together with our tripartite maritime partners, SMOU and Wavelink are thankful for this opportunity to not only contribute to the industry, but also to care, share and make a difference in people's lives and contribute to the community.

We would like to extend our thanks and gratitude to our Guest of Honour Mr Gan Kim Yong, for joining us in celebrating this traditional Chinese custom of presenting red packets as a symbol of good luck and well wishes to all our elderly guests here in this ball room.

We would also like to thank all our other guests from the NTUC, unions, co-operatives, shipping community and our associates for joining us on this joyous occasion in celebration of the Lunar New Year.

On this note, I would like to wish everyone here good health and an auspicious and prosperous Lunar New Year.

Gong Xi Fa Cai, Shen Ti Jian Kang, Wan Shi Ru Yi.

Enjoy yourselves and have a pleasant lunch

Thank you.

- Ends -

For more information, please contact:

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