

Annex B: Speech by MPA Chairman Mr Niam Chiang Meng

Distinguished colleagues and friends,

1. Thank you for joining us for today's Webinar. I am delighted to have with us international friends from IMO, port authorities, and distinguished industry players from the port, shipping and technology sectors.

Maritime Perspective Series

2. The global COVID-19 pandemic has compelled us to relook at how the maritime sector will change and initiate pertinent steps we must take now in order to be prepared for what lies ahead. As we focus our efforts for recovery amidst the headwinds caused by the pandemic, we should not lose sight of our broader goals in digitalisation and decarbonation. We will need to accelerate our digitalisation efforts and push harder on our decarbonisation drive, to better equip ourselves for the new normal.
3. This webinar today is part of the Maritime Perspectives Series where MPA seeks to engage and bring you views from experts and industry leaders to share their insights on digitalisation, decarbonisation and trade in a disrupted world. Details of the upcoming sessions will be shared with you in time to come.

International Efforts On Interoperability

4. In the area of digitalisation, even before COVID-19, there was already growing international consensus on the importance of common data standards to ensure that systems are interoperable.
 - i) First, the IMO Facilitation Convention has made the electronic exchange of information for port clearance processes mandatory from April 2019. This has enabled port authorities to develop their maritime single windows.
 - ii) Concurrently, we are seeing more progress and traction for maritime digital platforms. For example, CALISTA, developed by PSA International and Global eTrade Services (GeTS), onboarded Pacific International Lines to expand their shipper and freight forwarder footprint. TradeLens, developed by IBM and Maersk, has further integrated their cargo tracking function with industry players and government agencies.

MoU on Interoperability

5. For today, this webinar is a cumulation of efforts that Singapore has engendered to bring together international partners to collaborate on interoperability. For this, I am happy to announce that we will witness the inking of a multilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU) with our partners to work on interoperability to enable further digitalisation.
6. The MoU today focuses on common data standards set out by IMO and enabling data exchange through development of Application Programming Interfaces, or API, specifications. The signatories are: Solution provider for the Global Shipping Business Network, CargoSmart; TradeLens represented by GTD Solutions; CALISTA represented by PSA as port operator and GeTS as solution provider; Port of Rotterdam Authority and Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore.
7. The MoU marks a strong commitment by these partners to collaborate on making concrete steps towards interoperability. After today, we will commence a series of technical workshops to design, test and implement the API specifications.

Singapore's digitalOCEANS aspirations

8. This vision of seamless interoperability is what pushes Singapore to galvanise like-minded partners including international port authorities, platform providers and ports to work together. We call this vision: digitalOCEANS, which stands for Digital Open/Common Exchange And Network Standardisation. Using common set of APIs, we aspire to connect individual databases of platforms and port authorities, which we call "data lakes", into an interlinked "digital ocean". This allows different systems to be interoperable, without the need to adopt a common software or data platform.
9. Our friends in different ports, shipping networks, business platforms are already pursuing digitalisation at different cadence. We need to move beyond, the digitalisation of single nodes in the maritime supply chain as the nature of our trade is one that is truly transnational. The MoU today is our first step; tomorrow, we aspire for more partners to join us in realising the digital 'bridge' between ships, port authorities and platform providers and to facilitate seamless port-to-port connectivity, enabling effective information exchange and efficient transactions across the globe.
10. Thank you for joining us today, and I wish you a fruitful session ahead.