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**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR GWEE GUO DUAN, ORGANISATION CHAIR FOR
THE SMTF 10TH ANNIVERSARY HELD AT E2I, ON 3 MAY 2016**

Guest-of-Honour, Mr Lim Swee Say, Minister for Manpower

Mr Andrew Tan, Chief Executive of MPA

Mr. Ng Cher Pong, Chief Executive of WDA

Mr. Gilbert Tan, CEO of E2I

Ms Mary Liew, General Secretary of SMOU & President of NTUC

Capt Robin Foo, President of SMOU

Mr. Thomas Tay, Emeritus General Secretary of SMOU

Tripartite partners and friends from the shipping committee

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen,

A very good afternoon to everyone. It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the 10th anniversary celebration of the Singapore Maritime Training Fund. To mark this special occasion, and in line with the drive to improve productivity, we will concurrently be having the following programme on top of the 10th Anniversary celebration. First up, we have two investitures today – The first will be the pioneer cohort of the Tripartite Engineering Training Award and next we will have the 11th cohort of the Tripartite Nautical Training Award cadets, better known as TETA and TNTA respectively. We will also have the pre-sea graduation of TNTA 10th Cohort. Now that is definitely killing more than 2 birds with one stone. (in fact we are talking 4 birds)

10 years ago and I remember when we first started the SMTF it was really an uphill task. Everything was new and it took awhile to set everything in motion. We would not be celebrating these milestones today if it was not for the tremendous and unwavering support from our tripartite partners. Special thanks to shipping companies who believed and supported the idea of collective training. Your actions and efforts have laid a strong foundation for the maritime industry, paving the way for future generations to help make shipping easier, safer and smarter (In short ESS a phrase coined out by Bro Lim Swee Say) for Singapore and beyond. Your strong support and endorsement have encouraged SMTF to do

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more and there will definitely be exciting plans ahead. We aim to look into further improving current programmes, while introducing new measures to boost our efforts in strengthening the Singapore Maritime Manpower Core.

In terms of the Singapore Maritime Manpower Core, the TNTA and TETA programmes are testaments to SMOU's continuous efforts to add value and develop a strong presence of Singaporeans in the industry. Going into its 11th cohort, the TNTA programme has been positively received by both cadets and shipping companies. To date, over 250 cadets have been awarded the programme and employed by 20 different companies. Riding on the success of the TNTA and addressing the shortage of marine engineers in the industry, the TETA pilot project was conceived. On this note we would also like to thank WDA and E2I who has played a big part in building a strong Singapore Maritime Manpower Core.

We seek your support from our shipping companies on the development of the Singapore Maritime Manpower Core through more cadets training berth and employment opportunities for Singaporeans onboard your fleets.

This is important as we work together towards helping Singapore to strengthen her position as an International Maritime Centre.

To the graduating cadets, 6 months ago, you were in the same position as where the TNTA Cohort 11 and TETA Cohort 1 are today. And exactly 2 months ago on 3rd March, our investiture cadets were at the Job Fair, all looking smart and portraying their best side to secure a job placement with their prospective employers, just so they could pursue their dreams of a seafaring career. As long as you keep moving forward and never lose sight of your goals, you will be well on the way to making your dream a reality.

Even when your dream is within reach, I hope that you will not forget the people that have helped you along the way. Your family, your employer and the tripartite partners all have a part to play in your eventual success and you should pay it forward as well, when the opportunity arises.

On this note, I would like to end off by congratulating the graduating cadets and wish you well on your seafaring journey. To the cadets who are just starting in

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the programmes, congratulations on making the cut. Now give it your best shot and make it worthwhile.

Thank you Bro Lim Swee Say and to all for joining us this afternoon and hope you enjoy the evening ahead.