



Elsewhere, Singapore jointly hosted (with IMO) the second World Maritime Day "Parallel" Event, on 25 September, the first occasion on which an IMO World Maritime Day celebration had been held in Asia. The celebration began with the World Maritime Day@Singapore Forum in the afternoon and culminated in a grand evening reception at the Asian Civilisations Museum. The Secretary-General of the IMO was represented on the occasion by Mr David Edwards, Director of the IMO Secretariat's Technical Co operation Division. The Evening Reception was jointly hosted by Mr Raymond Lim, Singapore's Minister for Transport, Mr Johan Franson, Chairman of the IMO Council, and Mr David Edwards.

The reception also raised the curtain for Singapore's inaugural Maritime Week that took place from 25-29 September 2006. Maritime Week 2006 was an umbrella of events which, in addition to the IMO World Maritime Day Parallel Event, also included the Women's International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA) Annual Conference, the 3rd Singapore International Maritime Awards, the 3rd International Conference & Exhibition on Ballast Water Management, the 14th Singapore International Bunkering Conference 2006, as well as a host of seminars on topics from ship financing to maritime security.



Mr David Edwards, Mr Johan Franson and Minister Raymond Lim welcoming guests to the Evening Reception



Minister Lim delivering his speech on World Maritime Day

Previously, in a message ahead of World Maritime Day, the Pope had praised IMO for its work in promoting the alleviation of poverty and hunger. At the end of his weekly Angelus address at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, Pope Benedict XVI told the crowds in English: "Next Thursday is World Maritime Day and I would like to invite all of you to pray for the men and women involved in seafaring, and for their families."

He continued: "I welcome particularly the recent initiatives taken by the International Maritime Organization to contribute to the fight against poverty and hunger. May Our Lady, Star of the Sea, look down in love upon seafarers and their families and upon all those who care for their human and spiritual needs."



Mr Edwards delivering a speech based on the IMO Secretary-General's 2006 World Maritime Day Message



Minister Lim, Mr David Edwards, Mr Johan Franson and Minister-of-State Lim Hwee Hwa at the Evening Reception.



The Pope, seen here on a cruise ship on the River Rhine, praised IMO for its work in promoting the alleviation of poverty and hunger