



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

**OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Ms. SONIA B. MALALUAN**

**Administrator, Maritime Industry Authority**

**DAY OF THE FILIPINO SEAFARER 2024**

**Oath Taking of Harbor Pilots and Merchant Marine Officers**

**25 June 2024, Midas Hotel and Casino**

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To the Department of Transportation Undersecretary Atty. Reinier Paul Yebra;  
To our Deputy Administrator for Operations Engr. Nannette Villamor-Dinopol;

To STCW Office Executive Director Samuel Batalla, Deputy Executive Director

Capt. Vicente Navarro,

To the Chair of the Board of Marine Engineer Officers C/E Reynaldo S. Rabino,  
To the Chair of the Board of Marine Deck Officers Capt. Danilo G. Arevalo,

To all our guests today, government officials, fellow workers in MARINA, and most specially, to all our seafarers, this is your day. Good afternoon to all.

Today, we are gathered to recognize and celebrate a significant milestone in the lives of our harbor pilots and merchant marine officers—their Oath Taking ceremony. Taking this oath is not merely ceremonial but a solemn commitment to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and dedication. By taking this oath, our harbor pilots and officers pledge to serve with unwavering devotion, ensuring the safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment. This commitment to excellence is paramount in sustaining the reputation of Filipino seafarers as one of the finest in the world.

You've probably heard the phrase, very common, "With great power comes great responsibility." These six words resonate deeply with those in leadership positions. But how does this reflect on all of us?

As officers, you must be capable of ensuring and promoting the safety of life at sea as well as the protection of the marine environment. Safety is utmost important due to the inherent risks and complexities of navigating at sea. This is emphasized by this year's theme for the Day of the Seafarer: "Navigating the Future: Safety First!" The IMO Secretary-General stated in his message, "No one knows your work better than you do. Your experience is



absolutely vital for the future of shipping and a safe maritime sector!" As new harbor pilots and marine deck and engine officers, you are at the forefront of ensuring that safety is a top priority.

Maintaining a harmonious relationship among your colleagues aboard is also one of your responsibilities as officers of the vessel. You may be each other's support during times of homesickness, and effective communication is crucial as you work as a team. It is innate for us, as Filipinos, to extend our hands to others by sharing knowledge, guidance, and opportunities for the improvement of our subordinates. To the management level officers, it is expected that you continually mold the character of your juniors and impress upon them the importance of command responsibility. All of you, as merchant marine officers and role models of leadership, have the power to influence the next generation of seafarers by embodying the right attitudes, skills, and competence. You will become the epitome of Filipino resilience and workmanship that supports the global shipping industry.

We, at the MARINA, are proud and grateful to witness this commemorative day marking your success in fulfilling your dreams and aspirations. You have all earned this through your dedication and desire to become what you have always aspired to be. I salute you all for the milestones you have accomplished.

To your families and loved ones who are here today, I thank you for all your support and sacrifices. I know that having a partner, children, or siblings who are seafarers is not always easy because there are many special occasions and events that you celebrate without them physically. But I know that all these hardships pay off. I encourage you to remain steadfast and committed to maintaining good communication with them, as this helps in promoting their well-being and better dealing with the challenges of life on board.

Once again, thank you for gracing this momentous occasion. May this Day of the Filipino Seafarers be a source of inspiration, pride, and renewed dedication for all of us. Let us continue to work hand in hand to elevate the standards of our maritime industry and ensure a prosperous future for our seafarers. Thank you and Mabuhay!

But in closing, it is now my honor to introduce a remarkable individual who will deliver an inspirational message on behalf of the Honorable Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Sec. Jaime J. Bautista, and representing the secretary with utmost

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dedication and expertise, we have the privilege of welcoming Undersecretary Atty. Reinier Paul Yebra who is consistently shown unwavering support to the maritime industry and in particular, for our sailing ambassadors, the Filipino seafarers.

His invaluable contributions and profound understanding of the industry will undoubtedly inspire and motivate us as we continue to advance and uplift the welfare of Filipino seafarers.

Again, thank you and let us all welcome Usec. Rainier Paul Yebra. Thank you. Mabuhay ang Marinong Pilipino. Mabuhay ang Bagong Pilipinas.

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