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IAPH Regional Forum for South - East Asia and Oceania Opens in Sydney, Australia

The International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) today opened its Regional Forum for South-East Asia and Oceania in Sydney, bringing together port leaders, maritime executives, and development partners from across the region to identify priority issues and shape the association's future work program.

Hosted in collaboration with NSW Ports, the forum is structured around three key workshop themes: Decarbonisation & Climate Change; Technology, Digitalisation & Cyber; and Resilience and Productivity.

In his keynote address, Jens Meier, President of IAPH and CEO of Hamburg Port Authority, emphasised that ports are "gateways to opportunity, engines of economic growth, and in many island nations, the very lifeline that connects communities to the world."

He highlighted decarbonisation as "perhaps the most urgent challenge of our time," noting that for Pacific Island members "this is not an abstract debate — it is an existential one." On digitalisation, he warned that "cyber threats are real and growing."

The forum welcomes participation from port authorities and organisations from across South-East Asia, Oceania, and beyond, representing countries including Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tonga, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, USA, and Japan.

Tonga was represented by a delegation led by Hon. Siaosi 'Ofa ki Vahafolau Sovaleni, Minister of Public Enterprises, together with Mr. Alo Ki Hakau Maileseni, CEO of the Ports Authority of Tonga (PAT) and Mr Michael A. Bloomfield, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Ports Authority of Tonga.

In his remarks, the Hon. Minister highlighted Tonga's commitment to sustainable and resilient critical infrastructure, stating:

"Tonga supports the development of sustainable critical infrastructure and to ensure Tonga's essential transport assets are resilient, responsibly managed and equipped to meet future challenges."

The International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) is a global alliance of ports, representing some 180 ports and 140 port-related businesses in 90 countries.

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