

Report:

## The Future of Ports and Their Relationship with Cities

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## The Future of Ports and Their Relationship with Cities

By Leong Wen Shan

Many cities grew up with ports that brought commerce and created thriving centres. Today, these ports are increasingly moving out of sight.

At a forum attended by 150 maritime professionals and students, examples from Singapore, Antwerp and Yokohama fleshed out innovative efforts aimed at redeveloping port cities.

Mr Andrew Tan, Chief Executive of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, described how Singapore developed into one of the world's largest transshipment hubs. Aside from the physical port, Singapore has emerged as a leading International Maritime Centre with a core group of shipowners and operators and a maritime eco-system comprising a wide range of maritime services. Today, Maritime Singapore is home to over 5,000 maritime-based companies with more than 130 international shipping groups and contributes about 7% to Singapore's GDP.



To support further growth, a new mega port is being developed in Tuas in the western part of Singapore. This will consolidate Singapore's container facilities in a single location and free up prime land in the city area for other uses. Tuas Port will provide the opportunity to leverage on digital and automation technologies and new land-use ideas to increase efficiencies, productivity, safety and security in a more sustainable and community-oriented environment.

Also presenting at the forum were the Mayor of Antwerp and Deputy Mayor of Yokohama. Both cities have developed innovative solutions to balance port growth and urban liveability.

“Moving ports away from the city centre leaves you with zones that are literally abandoned. And re-engineering the port areas or industrial areas into new areas of opportunities — that’s a big task.”

— Bart de Wever, Mayor, Antwerp

Mayor Bart de Wever described how Antwerp has transformed old port areas into new public spaces, while retaining its maritime character. For example, Het Eilandje, Antwerp’s oldest port area, has several attractions for local and international visitors. Last month, the city also opened the Kieldrecht Lock, now the world’s largest lock for raising and lowering commercial shipping vessels.



In Yokohama, a close collaboration between the private and public sectors has revitalised the liveability of the city’s waterfront district, known as Minato Mirai 21. Deputy Mayor Toshihide Hirahara described how the city tapped corporate bonds and revenue from land sales to fund the A¥5.2 billion development. The success of Minato Mirai 21 was recognised with a Special Mention in the 2014 Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize.

“With an excellent city design, even the heavy industrial area is now accessible to residents.... Access to Tokyo was improved with a private rail connecting to Tokyo’s CDB... around 200,000 riders use this line every morning.”

— Toshihide Hirahara, Deputy Mayor, Yokohama

The question-and-answer session raised a number of themes, including the rise of “disruptive technologies” and the opportunities these bring for the maritime industry; getting buy-in from stakeholders with seemingly conflicting interests; and the growing trend of housing technology hubs in disused ports.



In closing, Mr Tan noted, “Every city wants to be a smart city, every city wants to be a port city... and all cities are putting more money to make their ports more intelligent. It’s certainly going to be more exciting, more challenging.”

Concluding the event, co-organiser CLC unveiled the Centre’s latest addition its Urban Systems Studies series, titled Port and the City: Balancing Growth and Liveability, detailing the Singapore port’s evolution since 1819. Read the USS [here](#).

# About the Speakers

*Speaker:*



**Mr Bart de Wever**  
Mayor, Antwerp

Bart De Wever is the mayor of Antwerp, the largest city in Flanders, Belgium. He has been general chairman of the New Flemish Alliance (N-VA) since 2004 and has served as a representative in several of the country's parliaments. De Wever attended the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL). He graduated with a Masters in History and worked as an assistant at the University of Leuven. His Latin expressions are a trademark. One example: 'Nil Volentibus Arduum': 'Nothing is impossible for the willing', also subtly refers to his party's name.

*Speaker:*



**Mr Toshihide Hirahara**  
Deputy Mayor, Yokohama

Toshihide Hirahara joined the Yokohama city government as a civil engineer in 1981, serving in a range of social infrastructure development projects including rivers, sewers, waste processing and urban redevelopment. After being closely involved in Yokohama's hosting of the 2002 FIFA World Cup final, he worked in the city planning and urban development sectors to develop/redevelop Yokohama's central and suburban areas.

Hirahara has particularly contributed to the city's development by focusing on producing value through economic stimulation, environmental consideration/disaster prevention, regional partnership and creation of art and culture. As one of the key players in Yokohama's development, he was integral to it receiving special mention in the 2014 Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize for its long-term vision to revitalize the central waterfront area.

As Director General of the Urban Development Bureau, he was awarded the Ishikawa Prize for his significant contribution to city planning progress and development through the City Planning Institute of Japan's creative and awareness-raising activities in the local development efforts of the Yokohama Citizen's Community Building Project. Currently serving as Deputy Mayor of Yokohama, Hirahara demonstrates his leadership in developing and maintaining the city's social infrastructure and pursuing sustainable development by promoting the environmental FutureCity and Smart City initiatives.

*Speaker:*



**Mr Andrew Tan**  
Chief Executive,  
Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore

Mr Andrew Tan was appointed as Chief Executive of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) on 1 January 2014. The MPA is responsible for regulating, developing and promoting Singapore as a premier global hub port and an international maritime centre, and to advance and safeguard Singapore's strategic maritime interests.

Mr Tan joined the Singapore Administrative Service in 1991. He has worked in various government agencies from the Ministry of Information and the Arts, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, to the Ministry of Transport. He was also the Chief Executive Officer of the National Environment Agency from 2009-2013 and the Founding Director of the Centre for Liveable Cities from 2008 to 2010, where he remains a Fellow.

Mr Tan graduated with a First Class Honours Degree in History from King's College, University of London, in 1989. He attended the Edward S Mason Programme at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government where he obtained his Masters in Public Administration in 2002. He also attended the Advanced Management Programme at INSEAD Business School at Fontainebleau in July 2013.

#### About CLC

The Centre for Liveable Cities was set up in 2008 by the Ministry of National Development and the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, based on a strategic blueprint developed by Singapore's Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development. Guided by its mission to distil, create and share knowledge on liveable and sustainable cities, the Centre's work spans three main areas - Research, Capability Development, and Knowledge Platforms. The CLC Lecture Series is a platform for urban experts to share their knowledge with other practitioners. For more information, please visit: <http://www.clc.gov.sg>

#### About MPA Academy

As the training arm of MPA, the MPA was repositioned in 2014 to be a full-fledged academy with a dedicated premise with a focus on global maritime leadership training. The academy's vision is to be a global learning centre for maritime and port administration. The academy's mission is to enhance the specialist skills and knowledge of MPA officers and to conduct flagship training programmes for overseas port and maritime officials, including supporting the training needs of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a Council member.