

Xiamen and Singapore Strengthen Maritime Management and Arbitration Ties

Joining Forces to Build a New Legal Hub for the Maritime Silk Road.



Singapore, Singapore Jun 19, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - On June 17th, in active response to the State Council's "Work Plan for Accelerating the Comprehensive Pilot Program for Expanding Opening-up in the Service Industry," the "Signing Ceremony of Tripartite Memorandum of Cooperation and Forum on Xiamen-Singapore Maritime Dispute Resolution and Management" was successfully held in Xiamen.

Xiamen and Singapore share geographical proximity, cultural affinity, and close cooperation. As a crucial node along the Maritime Silk Road, Singapore has long maintained a leading position in global maritime arbitration and port governance. The State Council's "Work Plan for Accelerating the Comprehensive Pilot Program for Expanding Opening-up in the Service Industry" has newly designated Xiamen as one of the new pilot cities. In terms of improving institutional guarantees, the Plan calls for strengthening legal protections and orderly conducting foreign-related legal business in areas including foreign-related arbitration, legal practice, international judicial cooperation, labor protection and supervision enforcement, and talent cultivation and training. It supports enterprises registered within pilot free trade zones (ports) to agree on arbitrating foreign-related disputes at designated locations, under specific rules, and by agreed personnel. Moreover, it supports foreign arbitration institutions in partnering with local arbitration institutions in designated areas to jointly carry out cross-border arbitration services.

Against this background, the Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration (SCMA) has officially partnered with the Management Committee of the Xiamen Area of China (Fujian) Pilot Free Trade Zone and the Maritime Silk Road International Arbitration Promotion Center. The three parties signed a memorandum of strategic cooperation, establishing the cooperation principles of "mutual benefit and win-win outcomes, resource sharing, and mechanism innovation" to comprehensively advance the internationalization of the maritime dispute resolution system.

Ms. Foo Li Theng, Deputy Director of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, and her delegation engaged in discussions with the Xiamen Maritime Safety Administration on Singapore's shipping development and policies, aiming to strengthen maritime trade and promote regional cooperation. Ms. Yang Shuyi, Executive Director of SCMA, noted that this collaboration marks a milestone in the collaborative partnership between SCMA and the Xiamen Free Trade Zone. It will offer Chinese enterprises more efficient, neutral, and high-quality legal support for dispute resolution as they participate in the Belt and Road Initiative.

According to introductions, Xiamen is accelerating its pilot program for expanding opening-up in the service industry, strengthening efforts to attract internationally renowned arbitration institutions for exchanges and cooperation in Xiamen, and building a preferred destination for foreign-related commercial and maritime dispute resolution. In March this year, Xiamen approved the establishment of the Maritime Silk Road International Arbitration Promotion Center to enhance its capacity for international arbitration exchanges and cooperation. This introduction of SCMA for cooperation will help strengthen regional collaboration between Xiamen and Singapore in maritime arbitration, while providing diversified options for commercial entities around the world.

The Management Committee of Xiamen Area in China (Fujian) Pilot Free Trade Zone, the Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration (SCMA), and the Maritime Silk Road International Arbitration Promotion Center signed the "Tripartite Memorandum of Strategic Cooperation." The three parties will adhere to the principles of "mutual benefit and win-win, resource sharing, and mechanism innovation," focusing on deep cooperation in three major areas: alignment of international maritime arbitration rules, facilitation of cross-border dispute resolution, and talent cultivation in the fields of shipping and ESG. They agreed to enhance the internationalization and professionalization of maritime arbitration and the shipping rule of law between Xiamen and Singapore, creating an arbitration service network that radiates throughout the Maritime Silk Road. According to the cooperation agreement, the three parties will jointly establish an arbitration promotion platform to advance the development of both ad hoc and institutional arbitration, offering businesses more flexible and efficient solutions for cross-border dispute resolution.

During the Forum, participants engaged in discussions centered on "Challenges and Opportunities in International Maritime Arbitration." Ms. Foo Li Theng, Deputy Director of the International Maritime Centre at Singapore's Maritime and Port Authority, shared insights on Singapore's maritime management. Ms. Jane Hu Wen Zhen, Business Development Manager at SCMA, presented on "Dispute Resolution Solutions in the International Maritime and Trade Sectors". Mr. Lin Jianliang, a member of the SCMA Advisory Board, focused on innovations in international maritime arbitration practices and analyzed the application strategies of SCMA rules in practice. Dr. An Shouzhi, Co-founder of the Maritime Silk Road International Arbitration Promotion Center, introduced the "Development and Cooperation in Maritime Silk Road International Maritime Arbitration" to the attendees.

This event was jointly organized by the Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration (SCMA) and the Xiamen Maritime Silk Road International Arbitration Promotion Center, with support from over 20 domestic and international organizations, including the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA),

the Maritime Silk Road Central Legal District Free Trade Pilot Area, the Xiamen Chamber of International Commerce, the Xiamen Free Trade Zone and Special Customs Supervision Area Association, the Xiamen Arbitration Commission, the International Commercial Dispute Prevention and Settlement Organization (Xiamen), the CMAC Maritime Silk Road Arbitration Center, and various professional committees of the Xiamen Lawyers Association including those for Arbitration and Mediation, Foreign Affairs, and Maritime and Admiralty Law, among others.

In the context of deep integration of global industrial chains and the evolution of international legal frameworks, this collaboration between Xiamen and Singapore not only contributes to the creation of a high-level foreign-related legal business environment but also provides strong arbitration and legal safeguard support for the joint construction of the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road.



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