

FG Targets \$10 Billion to Resuscitate National Shipping Line Through Public Private Partnership Arrangement

The Federal Government is targeting \$10 billion to resuscitate the National Shipping Line through the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement.

The Honorable Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, His Excellency, Adegboyega Oyetola, stated this at the maiden Stakeholders' Roundtable Engagement on "Advancing Sustainable Development in Nigeria's Marine and Blue Economy" held at Lagos Continental Hotel.

He said this was borne out of the Ministry's desire to capture a substantial share of the estimated \$10 billion annual ship charter market.

"This initiative is not to impede the growth of local players but to provide an avenue for them to create and extract more value from the sector, especially through ship construction, maintenance and repairs.

"This will enable our local businesses to better leverage the Cabotage Act, which gives Nigerians the exclusive right to control locally generated seaborne trade," he said.

Oyetola who admitted that he was aware of the sector's vast unique challenges assured his commitment to turn the sector around.

"Our ministry though new, is not resting on its oars and has continued to foster interagency collaborations and implement initiatives to promote port

Oyetola who admitted that

efficiency, cargo shipment, maritime security and tap into the resources of the seabed.

"The stakeholders' engagement will be the first in its series since it is important that we normalize this harmonious synergy and work together to ensure that our industry is safe, reliable and sustainable.

"It will also bring together players in the sector to discuss and chart a roadmap/direction that will advance the industry's potential, promote sustainable blue economy investments and ensure global competitiveness within the sector," he said.

Oyetola said the roundtable would harvest ideas to form a roadmap and policy direction in areas such as blue governance, transforming port operations, enhancing port infrastructure and promoting blue economy investments.

"This roadmap is designed to enable our ministry fulfil its mission of formulating and implementing policies, programs and initiatives that will facilitate the development of an inclusive Marine and Blue Economy Ecosystem.

"This ecosystem will be driven by an operating environment that meets global best standards as well as fulfil its vision of positioning Nigeria as a premier maritime nation," he said.

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Also speaking, Dr. Magdalene Ajani, the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, said the event was designed to showcase the policy direction of the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy.

Ajani added that it was organized to share the blueprint of operations of the new ministry to the stakeholders.

She noted that the event would develop the much-needed synergy between the private and the public sectors.

She went on to say, the maritime sector is a major source of revenue earnings for the country, an enabler of trade and a key engine of economic growth and sustainable development.

"Nigeria is blessed with so much aqua and has an extensive Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) making it a natural hub for shipping and international trade for most landlocked neighboring nations in West and Central African region.

"Our maritime industry is also blessed with many experts including indigenous ship owners, terminal operators, freight forwarders, shipping lines, barge operators, maritime lawyers, stevedoring companies, and others who have paid huge sacrifices," she said.

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"This is with a view to charting a roadmap for a maritime industry that is sustainable, technological advanced and innovative."

Dr. Magdalene Ajani, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation Addressing the gathering, the former Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC). Mr. Hassan Bello lauded the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy for coming up with the program, noting that the initiative would bring about good policy direction for the maritime sector.

The former NSC boss said the blue economy which cuts across maritime, agriculture and aquaculture can accrue substantial revenue for the government.

Speaking at a technical session on the topic "port efficiency", Director, Consumer Affairs Department of the Council, Chief Cajetan Agu, identified the economic impact of delays on the attainment of port efficiency.

Representing the Nigerian Ports Authority at the technical session, Mr. Ijawe

Seyi called for uninterrupted power supply on the roads leading to the ports.

Comptroller Dera Nnadi, Customs Area Comptroller, Tin-Can Island

Command, reiterated the need to tackle the security issue at the port access roads, as well as deplorable roads which are affecting port efficiency.

Other discussions include maritime governance, inland water ways,
maritime safety and security, as well as ship building and repairs.

Other discussions

maritime safety

Tinubu Advocates for Full Automation to Aid Competitiveness of African Ports in Global Maritime.

His Excellency, President Bola Tinubu has called on African leaders to embrace full automation of their ports in order to remain competitive in the global maritime sector.

Tinubu made the appeal at the 43rd Annual Council Meeting of the Port Management Association of West and Central African (PMAWCA) which took place in Lagos.

The meeting hosted by the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) had as its theme: 'The Role of Ports in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) maritime sector.'

The president who was represented at the event by Mr. Adegboyega Oyetola, Minister, Marine and Blue Economy said the Africa must embrace full automation to be competitive in the global maritime sector.

He noted that the continent had a shared destiny with robust human capital, natural resource endowments and largely is connected by the same developmental challenges.

Tinubu said the countries were duty bound by posterity to unite and deploy their resources together and solve issues affecting socio-economic progress and development.

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He pointed out that the ongoing discussions in Nigeria and in other African countries on the importance of investing in infrastructure and equipment would support trade facilitation.

Tinubu added that meetings such as this would put the issues in proper perspective and serve as an avenue for generating ideas that would aid national governments to formulate effective policies.

"My administration is especially interested in the maritime industry; this is why we created the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy in the first instance.

"Even though we have physical national boundaries that separate us, the waters are natural sources of connectivity and they seem like a subtle providential message and serve as an avenue for generating ideas that we must work together for the good of all our countries.

"This is why there could be no better time than now to hold this conference," he said.

He noted that the theme of the conference was a testament to the determination of the organizers to collectively seek sustainable solutions to the challenges affecting port operations on the continent.

"After the issues of adequate security and transparency, the one other important factor deciding the competitiveness of ports is the seamlessness and efficiency with which cargoes are evacuated.

"This, without doubt, is an area in which port operations in Africa needs a lot of intervention," he said.

"After the issues of adequate and

He also stressed the need for infusion of information technology into public management to aid transparency and to ease business processes.

Tinubu noted that his administration had given the Nigerian Ports Authority the necessary backing to fast track the operationalization of the Port Community System.

Mr. Mohammed Bello-Koko, the Managing Director, NPA, said the need to translate marine comparative advantages into opportunities for the collective prosperity of respective countries has never been more pressing.

According to Bello-Koko, the demonstrated global leadership of ports in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), shows that the sustainability of the world, especially Africa depends heavily on the sustainability of our ports.

"Thus, given the increasing realization of the leverage that economic cooperation confers in the international arena, we will be doing great disservice to ourselves if we fail to maximize this unity through the cooperation of our ports.

"I am convinced, this conference will equip us to safely midwife for the benefit of our respective national economies with domino effect on the economy of the sub-region if our ports cooperate.

"As an organization that appreciates the catalytic role of PMAWCA in promoting ports' cooperation, the NPA will continue to embrace partnerships and support policies and actions arising from the insightful policy-shaping meetings and technical sessions," he said.

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Also, Mr. Martin Boguikouma, the President, PMAWCA, said the meeting was aimed at improving strategies for 2024, stressing that results that would improve the various ports should come up from the meeting.

Barr. Pius Akutah, Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Council Boguikouma noted that PMAWCA was established in 1979 in Freetown, Sierra Leone, as a platform for exchange of ideas on ways to manage the ports.

"We need to work deeper for the development of our ports and I promise not to waste efforts to achieving the association's objectives," he said.

Capt. Sunday Umoren, the Secretary-General, Abuja Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control for West and Central African Region (Abuja MoU), encouraged port authorities to work in synergy with state control officers in their zones.

Umoren represented by Mr. Richard Owolabi noted that they would work with PMAWCA to grow the maritime industry to foster trade and investment.

Sen. George Akume, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), noted that AfCFTA houses brilliant promises to deepen investment, boost trade, provide jobs, reduce poverty and increase share prosperity in Africa.

Akume represented by his Senior Special Assistant (Technical), Prof. Babarunde

Bolaji Bernard, added that the objectives of AfCFTA were in line with the present administration's renewed hope agenda.

Comptroller Adewale Adeniyi, Controller General of Customs, pointed out that the platform would provide the opportunity to communicate across board.

"Trade is very central to development and prosperity which will lead to peace and security.

"Implementation of AfCFTA resonates with policy thrust of President Bola Tinubu who has identified that port state is critical to his agenda to attract investment.

"All critical elements that will make the meeting memorable are here," he said.

The Managing Director, Lekki Port Free Trade Zone, Mr. Du Rougang

commended PMAWCA's effort as a frontliner in promotion of sustainable socio-economic development of over twenty west and central African countries using maritime as a common linkage for unification.

In an interview with the Shipper, the Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of Nigerian Shippers' Council, Barr. Prus Akutah said the 2023 PMAWCA Council Meeting was in the right direction in the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy.

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Round-table mediatory discussion with parties involved in the dispute NSC Brokers truce between Maersk Nig LTD and De Shipntaur Global Consign Ltd, Directs Consignee to settle outstanding fees.

The Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC) has intervened in a business dispute between Maersk Nigeria Limited and De Sphintaur Global Consign Limited over a complaint letter titled 'Complaint against Maersk Nigeria Limited for illegal and unwarranted withholding of a container TCNC 24744938 belonging to Alhaji Yusuf Danladi'.

The Complaints Unit of the Council headed by Deputy Director, Daniel Orume summoned all parties involved for a tripartite meeting with the aim of resolving the issue in line with the established industry standard.

After an extensive analysis of the case, the Council was made to understand that Maersk Nigeria Limited erroneously released a cargo ordered by Alhaji Usman Dantata of Horpack Packaging Industries Nigeria Limited through its agent, De Sphintaur Global Consign Limited which Alhaji Yusuf Danladi represents.

Both parties involved admitted to this error and promised an amicable resolution of the issue which would require Alhaji Dantata to pay the sum of over 30,000 US Dollars to the shipping company. However, after several months of efforts made by Maersk Nigeria Limited to get either the agent or Alhaji Usman Dantata reach a payment plan that would be acceptable to the