

THE VOYAGE



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YEAR OF THE FEMALE GENDER: TOWARDS GREATER GENDER BALANCE IN MARITIME SECTOR



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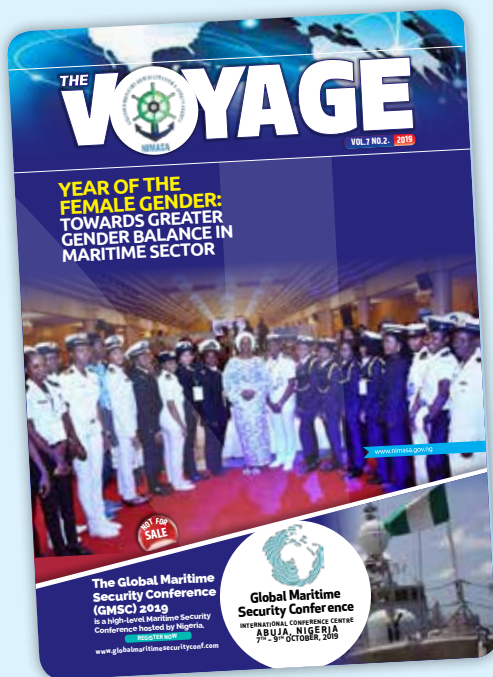
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Dr. Dakuku Peterside,
DG/CEO NIMASA

NIMASA is Consulting the Women

I

f myths are meant to be broken and not to continue to constitute a mystery, then the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) is the government agency to pick some enduring lessons from.

In Nigeria's shipping industry, NIMASA has succeeded in demystifying the notion that we are in a man's world. Statistical results from a survey of the gender equation reveal tremendous increase in the number of women in the present seafarers' register, compared to the past, thanks to NIMASA's gender parity drive.

According to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the figures for the population of female sea workers worldwide indicated that only two per cent of women were involved out of the 1.2 million seafaring workforce. That is an abysmal underutilisation of a powerful sector of the global workforce. It compelled IMO to make gender equality the focus of the 2019 Day of the Seafarer celebration held on June 25. That

itself captured the 2019 World Maritime Day theme: "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community."

NIMASA's response to the challenge is bearing fruits. We now post impressive figures comparable to global standards. Some 9.3 per cent females number among Nigeria's seafarers. At Maritime Academy of Nigeria (MAN), Oron, 26 of the 250 students (10.4 per cent) are females. On the practical level, we now have a great percentage of females rubbing shoulders with the men among the 239 cadets currently enjoying sea time training sponsored by NIMASA.

This is a task that must be done if we desire all-round development for our society. We cannot afford to leave them out. And because charity begins at home, even here at NIMASA, women are to be found in strategic points of operations and across the entire machinery of administration.

The reforms we are undertaking in NIMASA to key into national development anchored on economic diversification are based on the all-inclusive initiatives of President Muhammadu Buhari's Next Level agenda. He himself has taken exemplary steps by reserving major cabinet portfolios for our womenfolk in his second term, signaling that Nigerians should expect more delivery of a tender, caring and thorough governance that comes into play when women are in the picture.

The first female Prime Minister of Great Britain, Margaret Thatcher, once said, "In politics if you want anything said, ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman."

At NIMASA, we want things done; so we are asking the women!

Dakuku Peterside

WORDS ON MARBLE

It is interesting that this year is dedicated by the IMO to empowering women in the maritime sector, specifically, shipping.

– DR. DAKUKU PETERSIDE



Isichei Osamgbi

From the Sea to the Land

T

his edition is a voyage into the charming world of women and their abilities. They are also the fair sex, by the reckoning of the secular world, on account of the attractive features God has endowed women with. But is that all there is to see about the womenfolk in the society? Are they just to be admired and left in the background to add colour and charisma to the domestic front? To be sure, they can be employed for more visibly productive ends.

That is what we are exploring at NIMASA: drawing our women increasingly into the Blue Economy, the seemingly ignored sector that harbours the bottomless riches of the globe's resources.

This edition, featuring, among others, the exploits of women in a field thought to be the exclusive terrain of men, amounts to a testimony of NIMASA's bold moves to include women in national development. We are not in the league of those who think of women as being "inappropriate" for activities in the oceans.

Women are successfully exploring the outer space; they are triumphantly flying fighter jets in deadly combat operations ignorantly perceived as closed male territories. They sit atop business empires whose investments and capital inflow outstrip the GDP of some nations. So why can't a pivotal agency like NIMASA not draw on the prowess of women to conquer the

marine world? That is exactly what we are doing in line with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) theme for 2019 "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community" We need more than the men to tame the ocean so we can get more of its buried wealth and enjoy its waterways to ease land transportation. The advanced nations of the planet are not leaving their women behind in the race to reach new heights.

The Voyage this season is also reporting NIMASA's activities as a sensitive corporate citizen. In the wake of natural disasters like floods that have destroyed the homes of tens of thousands of Nigerians, top NIMASA officials, representing the Director-General, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, have visited Internally Displaced Persons' Camps (IDPs) to identify with our compatriots' plight by donating relief materials.

The reports reveal another face of NIMASA: our humanitarian responsibility to the larger community. We are not limited to aquatic activities. We are also concerned about the society outside. That led NIMASA to go the length and breadth of Nigeria to give to the needy in the camps of those displaced by the disasters across our nation.

Enjoy The Voyage!

Bon Voyage!

Isichei Osamgbi

OUR VISION

To be the leading maritime administration in Africa, advancing Nigeria's global maritime goals.

OUR MISSION

To achieve and sustain safe, secure, shipping, cleaner ocean and enhance maritime capacity in line with global best practices towards Nigeria's economic development.



YEAR OF THE FEMALE GENDER: TOWARDS GREATER GENDER BALANCE IN MARITIME SECTOR

Mary Hamman, President of WISTA Nigeria, looks at the efforts to achieve more gender equality in the maritime industry



T

here has been the erroneous belief and social perception that the seafaring and, generally, the maritime professions are exclusive for men. In fact, there was a general myth that women bring bad luck at sea. Although the myth that links bad luck at sea to women and the social perception actually kept women out of maritime professions, including seafaring, living

in the 21st Century, it is obvious that this can only be superstition.

Gender inequality and discrimination against women is not peculiar to the maritime industry, but it seems to be in higher percentage in the sector, as women constitute 39.3 per cent of the global workforce with only two per cent of them being seafarers. Hence, the need for global efforts by the shipping





community to bridge the gender gap.

Globally, the maritime industry has made concerted efforts towards furthering the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5, "Gender Equality". However, despite the progress and awareness to achieve gender equality, there remains a critical gender imbalance in the maritime workforce.

According to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), women represent only two percent of the world's 1.2 million seafarers, with 94 percent working in cruise ships or passenger ferries. As such, there is a demand for the concerned bodies and stakeholders to strategically intensify efforts to improve women participation in the maritime sector, and in so doing prompt growth and economic development.

There is a growing demand for initiatives, such as gendering shipping, to be encouraged. Gendering shipping is an emerging trend or benchmark in the

maritime sector based on visible good examples of socially responsible attitude on solving the gender issues within the industry. The concept of gendering shipping defines companies which communicate actively the voluntary implementation of gender policies in their organisational culture.

The implementation of gender policies occur before regulations on the topic might shift the voluntary approach in one more or less recommended or mandatory approach. Gendering shipping represents a supportive response of the seafaring industry, long expected, to the empowering necessities of female seafarers' communities from the world shipping sector

The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, calls on member-states that operate a public seafarer recruitment and placement service to consider maintaining an arrangement for the collection and analysis of data on the maritime labour market for statistical purposes, which can further be used in programme framework to prevent age and gender discrimination. The promotion of equal opportunities and treatment throughout the recruitment process is one important step in eliminating gender discrimination. Employment policies aim to guarantee equal opportunities in the recruitment process, as well as during training and career development, and in the terms and conditions of employment and benefits.

Other International Bodies have taken up the cause, seeking for gender equality in the maritime sector, with various research institutions conducting studies on variables that impact and can be impacted by gender equality in order to be able to make a

“There is a demand for the concerned bodies and stakeholders to strategically intensify efforts to improve women participation in the maritime sector, and in so doing prompt growth and economic development.”



L-R: Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Mr. Sabiu Zakari; wife of the Vice President, Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo; and Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside

convincing argument for the cause. The International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) and Nippon Foundation, in 2017, founded the Gender Equality and Cultural Awareness in Maritime Education and Training (GECAMET) Trans-National Project. The research objectives of GECAMET were: to improve the human factors in the maritime sector, taking into consideration gender equality and cultural awareness issues; to better evaluate the economic efficiency of shipping companies with mixed crews; to evaluate the effects of external requirements on ship management policies regarding modern human resource management, gender equality, and cultural awareness; and to evaluate holistically the role of maritime education and training in the complex relation human factors.

The Gender Empowerment and Multi-cultural Crew (GEM) Project is another of such research endeavours undertaken to better present an argument for the cause to increase female participation in the maritime sector. Findings from their studies show increased levels of tolerance and broadened horizons, and increase in both personal and professional networks were experienced on vessels that had an increased number of women and multicultural personnel on board.

As at 1988, few Maritime Institutes opened their doors to female students. However, with the intervention of the IMO, institutional framework was put in place to incorporate gender dimension into IMO policies and procedures. IMO came up with resolutions to ensure access to maritime training

and employment opportunities for women in the maritime sector, thus birthing the Women in Maritime Programme, which is over 30 years strong.

Since 2008, IMO supports gender equality and empowerment through gender-specific fellowships and technical trainings.

IMO has supported and is still supporting female graduates through the following institutions:

- World Maritime University (WMU)
- International Maritime Law Institute
- International Maritime Safety Security and Environment Academy

The gender-specific fellowships have been supported through the following institutions:

- Galilee International Management Institute (GIMI), Nahalal, Israel
- L'Institut Portuaire d'Enseignement et de Recherche (IPER), France

Courses delivered in partnership with the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA), IALA WWA, France

On the international front also, IMO's theme for the World Maritime Day celebration for 2019 is, "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community." This is in an effort to raise awareness and address the gender gap in the maritime industry, and highlight the contribution of women in the maritime sector. Now, more than ever, there is a need for equality and inclusion to become a focal point in this male-dominated industry.



L-R: Secretary-General, Abuja Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Port State Control for West and Central African Region, and former Director-General of NIMASA, Mrs. Mfon Usoro; Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo; and President, Seaport Terminal Operators Association of Nigeria (STOAN), Dr. Vicky Hastrup, during the 2019 Day of the Seafarer celebration in Lagos

Additionally, the maritime industry in the UK has established a taskforce to investigate the issues behind the dreadful statistics of women in maritime and to proffer solutions in redressing this anomaly. Other countries, including Nigeria, have been seen to follow suit.

Obviously, there is genuine global concern and efforts are being made to eliminate gender disparity and imbalance, especially in the maritime sector. Nigeria is, indeed, part of this paradigm with several advocacy for women involvement in shipping, though the all-time engagement of women in the maritime industry in Nigeria remains dreadful. According to the Director-General of Nigerian Maritime Administration Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside, statistics show that out of 6,039 seafarers on the Nigerian seafarers' register, only 9.3 percent (567) are women.

According to Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Shippers Council (NSC), Barr. Hassan Bello, the reason for the awful participation of women in the maritime industry in Nigeria includes, but not limited to, the harsh working environment, sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and inappropriate comments.

To address the growing concern in the male-dominated maritime industry, the Nigeria government under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari has actively partnered with Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) of government, such as NIMASA and NSC, to drive the active participation of women in the maritime industry by educating young girls on the potential opportunities and benefits of a career in seafaring.

In his 2011 study, *Gender Discrimination in Nigeria's Maritime Industry*, Dr. Donatus E. Onwuegbuchunam of the Department of Maritime Management Technology, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, posited that strongly held beliefs and stereotypes in the work

environment and society had significant impact on the number of women in the maritime workforce.

Government and non-governmental organisations have chosen to be proactive in efforts to debunk the prevailing stereotype that the maritime industry is intended majorly for men. They have implemented policies that encourage indigenous companies to adopt fair and equal opportunities for men and women, particularly in the maritime sector.

The Nigerian society is a culturally inclined society, which emphasises motherhood and marriage as a prerogative for women in society. Additionally, there is the stereotype of the woman as the carer, who cannot have it all, but would have to have fundamental social trade-offs to meet societal expectations of what it means to be a woman. For instance, there is the belief that a woman must choose between career and a successful marriage. Consequently, society and immediate families deter women from pursuing a career in a male-dominated industry due to the fear or its limiting impact on motherhood and marriage.

However, in view of UN's goal to educate and empower the girl child, more and more people and groups are demanding that these stereotypes should be eradicated to promote gender equality in male-dominated fields.

NIMASA'S EFFORTS ON GENDER BALANCING IN THE MARITIME SECTOR

At the fore of the campaign for Nigeria in this stead is NIMASA. The Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP) instituted by NIMASA supports projects aimed at generating the interest of the male and female genders in maritime disciplines. Scholarship slots have been increased for ladies, in particular, to encourage more women to delve into maritime disciplines. Through the NSDP more women are being trained and released into the maritime

“The agency’s focal point is developing policies and programmes that encourage and support women participation in maritime. It is hoped that these policies would foster a working environment that gives equal opportunity to women and creates a safe space devoid of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and inappropriate comments.”

industry to take up various roles.

The Maritime Academy of Nigeria (MAN), in Oron, Akwa Ibom State is also partnering with NIMASA to increase the population of Nigerian seafarers as well as also paying special attention to the female gender through a special quota, to increase female interest in maritime disciplines.

NIMASA has been involved in sponsoring various maritime women’s groups, like Women’s International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA), Women in Logistics and Trading (WILAT), and Women in Maritime (WIMA), to attend relevant international meetings and conferences to further empower them.

WISTA was formed in 1974 as a global organisation connecting more than 3, 000 female executives from all sectors of the maritime industry. Membership includes women in management positions in the Navy, Coastguard, Ship-owners, Ship Managers, Female Seafarers, Engineers, Lawyers, Maritime Administrators, Port Managers, Port Concessionaires, Chandlers, Port and Flag State Controllers, and Ship Registrars, etc.

In Nigeria, it is noteworthy that the only female Director-General of NIMASA so far, Mrs. Mfon Usoro, Esq., is a past President of WISTA.

The main thrust of the association’s existence is to encourage women to explore opportunities in shipping, which is dominated by men. The association achieves this through advocacy, industry discussions, academic and women entrepreneurship lectures, encouragement of young women to take up career opportunities in shipping, provision of scholarships to exceptional female students, as well as vital partnerships with relevant institutions.

The association has also taken its campaign to rural and usually neglected maritime communities where women are found to engage in maritime businesses, though, at a very low scale. The aim of the outreach

is to identify, encourage and enable these women to build requisite capacities for sustainability. In doing this, WISTA provides items, such as fishing nets, fishing boats, small watercrafts outboard engines, and seed monies for these industrious women in shipping.

WISTA has previously donated fishing boats (with engine and fishing nets) to fisher-women at Epe and Oron communities in Lagos and Akwa Ibom states, respectively, among several other activities.

The NIMASA Director-General has partnered with WISTA, Nigeria, to support women in the maritime industry through programmes, such as “Girls go to the Sea” advocacy, and sponsorship to regional conferences that encourage women participation in shipping. Progressively, the agency’s focal point is developing policies and programmes that encourage and support women participation in maritime. It is hoped that these policies would foster a working environment that gives equal opportunity to women and creates a safe space devoid of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and inappropriate comments.

At the global stage, WISTA recently achieved a feat by securing a seat at IMO, the organ of the United Nations that regulates maritime activities worldwide. WISTA can now formally contribute to discussions for increasing capacity in the maritime industry, both for shore-side and onboard ships, with strong commitment to women involvement in shipping at all levels.

IMO, in its wisdom, chose “Empowering Women in the Maritime Community” as the World Maritime Day 2019 celebration theme. This provides an opportunity to raise awareness on the importance of gender equality, in line with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to highlight the important contributions of women all over the world to the maritime sector.

President of WISTA International, Despina Panayiotou Theodosiou, asserts that “substantial, effective change needs time, collaboration and patience”, as is the case for eradication of social stereotypes and myths made outside conscious awareness globally and in Nigeria.

In the coming years, given the various efforts, the maritime industry is expected to experience a significant increase in women in the workplace. However, double the effort is expected for this to be achieved.

Although, the prevalent issue of gender inequality in the maritime industry has drawn significant attention globally, there are hardly concrete plans and strategy on how to combat this challenge. In recent times, the effort has widely been on supporting women in the industry to encourage other women to seek a career in the maritime industry. Overall, there is a need to do more and increase collaborative efforts across all bodies. There is need for more awareness and commitment by relevant bodies. More advocacy is expected from government and non-governmental bodies, and more funding and support for women participation in shipping is needed. Corporate bodies

and individuals are expected to sponsor the training of female seafarers and deliberately support their engagement after training.

PROJECTION FOR THE NEAR FUTURE

There is a reawakening presently for gender equality in the maritime industry. With the intervention of IMO, ILO (International Labour Organisation), WMU, NIMASA, and other stakeholders in the maritime space worldwide, a bright prognosis for women in maritime is certainly unfolding. Given the rising commitment to increasing the participation of women in maritime professions and allied activities, through various policies, programmes, legislations, training and mentoring activities, there is a strong indication that in the next five years the female folk will form an increased share of the maritime professions, up to eight per cent, from the present two per cent.

In the years to come, more women will be ship captains and occupy managerial positions that were hitherto reserved for men due to increasing levels of expertise being demonstrated by females on the job. That is if the current efforts are doubled and sustained.



Mrs. Mfon Usoro (middle) flanked by President, WISTA Nigeria, Mrs. Mary Hamman (tenth left); Deputy Director, Western Zone, Mrs. Helen McFoy (eleventh left); Director-General, Nigerian Chamber of Shipping, Mrs. Obi Obiageli (eighth right); and some female seafarers

Wife of the Vice President, Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo (middle) flanked by female seafarers



NIMASA on Board with Gender Equality as World Fetes Seafarers

Adiza Abu explains how the agency is trying to help and encourage women in the maritime industry

W

hen in 2010 the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) instituted the Day of the Seafarer, it was obviously an attempt to resolve an age-old economic irony. And when it chose gender equality as theme for the 2019 Day of the Seafarer, IMO apparently meant to attack an unfair

workforce reality that seems even more intense in the maritime industry. The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has also been at the forefront of efforts to redress the imbalance in the traditionally male-dominated maritime industry, where women make up only two per cent of the workforce.

Seafarers are among the most unsung heroes of the global economy. Yet, the industry they man carry nearly 90 per cent of world trade. The United Nations, through the IMO, moved to resolve the seeming contradiction in 2010, when it established the Day of the Seafarer as an annual international event.

The event seeks to make the unique contribution of seafarers to the global economy and human progress, generally, a focus of especial attention. It tries to encourage governments, shipping companies, and everyone associated with seaborne trade to promote and uphold sea trade and the work of seafarers.

With the Day of the Seafarer, IMO has, undoubtedly, succeeded in bringing seafarers, seafaring, and the well-being of mariners into international public and official conversation.

On the occasion this year's Day of the Seafarer, coming up June 25, IMO is taking a step further to highlight the contributions of women in the global maritime industry and raise awareness about opportunities for women in the maritime world.

IMO has chosen gender equality as its main campaign theme for this year's event.

"Throughout 2019 there will be a strong emphasis throughout the maritime world on the importance and value of women within the professional ranks," an IMO statement reads. "Much of this is being driven by the World Maritime Day theme (Empowering Women in the Maritime Community). It is already clear that this theme has a very strong and far-reaching resonance."

IMO says the theme "provides an opportunity to highlight opportunities for women, as well as the contributions they are already making in a wide range of maritime careers and professions, but the focus



will be very firmly on one aspect of that community — seafarers.”

An IMO report in 1992 estimated women seafarers worldwide to be between one and two per cent of the total seafaring population. This included those in service sections onboard ships, such as hotel and catering workers. In 2003, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) commissioned a study on women seafarers, which similarly estimated that the percentage of women in maritime was between one and two per cent of the total seafaring population. Women seafarers on cargo vessels were even found to be less – about 0.12 per cent.

The above were corroborated by the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO) and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), in their Manpower Report published May 2016, which studied the global supply and demand for seafarers in 2015. The report found that the percentage of women seafarers still revolved around one per cent.

Women's participation in seafaring and the maritime industry has remained generally low. Though, according to a 2015 edition of *Maritime Women: Global Leadership*, a publication of the World Maritime University (WMU), women now make up about 30 per cent of workers in various maritime organisations. This includes organisations involved in merchant marine, cruise sector, and onshore maritime cluster.

Progress has remained generally slow in efforts to achieve greater gender equality in the maritime sector. And this has been attributed to an enduring perception that it is inappropriate for women to work onboard ships due to the nature of seafaring.

NIMASA has supported attempts to challenge this negative perception of seafaring. It has not only supported the women in maritime, but also tried to attract more women to the industry.

“NIMASA has been a blessing to us, because there is nothing we have asked NIMASA to support on that they did not avail us,” attests president of Women's International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA), Nigeria, Mrs. Mary Hamman. “We just came back from a regional conference in Ghana and NIMASA sponsored about 10 of us to attend. And anytime we have events, we just call on NIMASA and we get sponsorship. We get the NIMASA public relations to



cover our events, which ordinarily is something very expensive. We get preference from the management of NIMASA. Dr. Dakuku Peterside has been very good to us, very supportive and encouraging.”

On male dominance of seafaring and the negative consciousness that tends to create among women wanting to go into the profession, Hamman, who is also an Assistant Director in the Shipping Development Department of NIMASA, says, “That is why we are there telling the women that we are also in the system and we are women, mothers, and married, and they can also come into the industry and perform just like the men.

“It won't stop them from being mothers or getting married. As long as they know their job and they are qualified, there is a place for them in the maritime industry.”

WISTA is an international organisation dedicated to promoting the interest of women in the shipping industry through networking and mentoring. The 45-year-old organisation got an Observer Status at IMO last year and it has a membership of about 3,500 women in the maritime profession from across over 40 countries.

In keeping with the global focus on enhancing the role of women in the shipping sector, the Director-General



Seafarers standing at attention with their arms raised in a salute during the Day of the Seafarer ceremonies in Lagos

of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, had in February announced the Agency's readiness to support initiatives aimed at getting more African women involved in the industry. Dakuku stated this when the president of WISTA, Ghana, Jemilat Mahamah, paid him a courtesy visit at the NIMASA headquarters in Lagos ahead of the 6th WISTA Africa Region Conference held in Accra from April 2 to 4.

Interestingly, the theme of the conference, "The role of women in harnessing the potential of Africa's blue economy," coincided with IMO focus this year, which is "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community."

Dakuku told the WISTA delegation, "It is interesting that this year is dedicated by the IMO to empowering women in the maritime sector, specifically, shipping. Your conference coincides with the thematic thrust of the IMO this year. Therefore, it is very easy for us to align with the global agenda of the international maritime community and support your initiative of hosting the continent in Accra."

"You can count on the support of NIMASA and, by extension, Nigeria. We believe and support everything that would give women a role in the maritime sector. There is no sector that would exclude 50 per cent of the population and expect that sector to thrive. If we exclude women, we are excluding 50 per cent

of our population from benefitting in the economic activities in the maritime sector."

Dakuku added that the focus of the WISTA conference also accorded with current efforts by African leaders to create economic activities in the continent by maximising the benefits of the blue economy.

According to him, "The blue economy is one critical sector that will create employment for our people, contribute to economic growth, and give opportunities to all our people, whether they be men or women. So it is timely and most appropriate that you are focusing on how to get 50 per cent of the continent's population involved in the blue economy, be it fisheries, fishing, or underwater mining, aquaculture or any of the activities that go on in the blue economy. That totally aligns with our vision of making the blue economy play a greater role in the economic growth of our country and our continent."

Last year, the Day of the Seafarer had the theme, "Seafarers wellbeing," which tried to capture a strong drive within the industry to address seafarers' wellbeing, particularly their mental health.

"By addressing the issue of seafarers' wellbeing and particularly mental health, this campaign helped inform specific strategies to tackle stress and other issues affecting seafarers' mental conditions – and make the tools available more widely known," IMO had stated. "The campaign sought to highlight and showcase best practices and good examples but also, inevitably, brought out areas of concern and examples of shortcomings."

NIMASA has trained many seafarers under the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP), which was conceived in 2008 to address the dearth of certified and qualified seafarers in the country, and their depletion due to age and the migratory instinct for greener pastures. The scheme was launched in September 2009 to complement the full implementation of the Cabotage Act, 2003, which is geared towards strengthening indigenous shipping capacity.

Beneficiaries of the scheme have received the mandatory sea-time training on both Cabotage and ocean-going vessels under NIMASA's sponsorship.

NIMASA recognises the vital place of seafarers in national development. The Agency joins IMO and the entire maritime world to mark this year's Day of the Seafarer, which specially celebrates women in the maritime industry.

Usoro



USORO: We Should Do More to Make Seafaring Conducive to Female Gender

Mrs. Mfon Ekong Usoro is Secretary General of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Port State Control for West and Central African Region, also called Abuja MoU, which is one of the nine regional MoUs and one national MoU established pursuant to IMO Resolution A.682 (17) of 1991. Usoro adds her voice to the rising call for greater women involvement in the maritime industry, in this interview with **Ganiyu Alayaki**. Excerpts:

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hy do you think the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) is concerned about the poor participation of women in the maritime industry?

Yes, IMO is concerned, but we have to go beyond the IMO. Everybody has to be concerned about it. Every responsible member of the United Nations has to be concerned

about the issue of gender parity. The campaign for gender balance is a United Nations initiative. IMO is a specialised agency of the UN focused on maritime. It has discovered that maritime is up till now a male-dominated field. Nigeria is a member of the United Nations. We also signed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). What the IMO is doing is to pursue the implementation of SDG 5, which is on empowerment

“We have a right, and we want you to respect that right and open up the opportunities for us to have a future in shipping. We encourage the industry and government to remove the barriers that prevented women from going into that area before now.”

of women – gender equality. We are glad that IMO has taken up that struggle. We are also happy that Nigeria, as a responsive and responsible state-party to the IMO, and UN have taken up the mantle of encouraging women to participate in the maritime sector. As a woman, I am in full support of that initiative. I will be happy to see Nigeria do more than it is doing.

Previously, they were called sailors and seamen. But the terminology now is seafarers because it is open and we have women who train in all aspects of shipping. We have female marine engineers, female captains, etc. We also have women in the shore side of shipping – marine insurance, maritime law, logistics, freight forwarding, etc. We just want more women to be part of that sector. That is what we are clamouring for, and that is the essence of IMO honouring women by focusing on gender equality in the maritime sector this year.

Do you see much of an economic leverage from the participation of more women in the maritime sector?

May I also ask, how rewarding is it for the men to do what they love doing? It is the same for women. First of all, you are happy to have the opportunity to pursue your passion, earn a living for yourself or contribute to the upkeep of the family. Just like men, women are happy to pursue career. We are also happy to be trailblazers, so that other women will know that it is possible for women to get into that field that we used to think was for men alone.

It is not about how rewarding it is to involve more women. It is about what we need to do to make the workplace, whether at sea or onshore, compatible with the female folk, because you can't ignore women in the workplace anymore. We are not denying our femininity.

We are saying because we are half or more than half of the population of the world, we have a right to be at the workplace of our choice. We have a right, and we want you to respect that right and open up the opportunities for us, women, especially the young ones, to have a future in shipping.

So we encourage the industry and government to remove the barriers that prevented women from going into that area before now.

What is your advice to young ladies seeking a career in seafaring?

My advice would be, let them first be sure that that is what they love doing. If you are involved in something you are happy to do, that you are excited and passionate about, you will be able to handle the difficulties that may come in along the way. You will be able to manoeuvre the obstacles, you won't run away because there are obstacles on the way. In life, we expect that we have obstacles. I encourage them to pursue their passion. I encourage us, the older ones, and those in power to recognise that passion and create the opportunity for those young women to achieve their dreams.

What is the essence of the Abuja MoU?

It is an intergovernmental organisation of 15 member-states, from Mauritania to South Africa. The organisation was formed in 1999 pursuant to an agreement with the IMO. What we do actually is the inspection of foreign vessels that call at the ports of member-states. The purpose of the inspection is to determine compliance of these foreign vessels with relevant international maritime conventions and codes. Why that is necessary is because it is important to complement the efforts of Flag States, being maritime administrations, like NIMASA, in compelling compliance of vessels that fly their flags. And it is important that when these vessels go to foreign ports, they be inspected because the reality is that a vessel may be registered in Nigeria, for instance, or Paris, but it does not trade in the European waters. Which this means is that the vessel may escape survey or inspection for several years because it just doesn't sail around the waters of the country that it is flagged. Except, may be, after five years, when it goes back for the certificate of registration to be renewed. That is for flags that are conscientious with their duties. But within a period of five years, a lot of things with respect to safety

of the vessel might go undetected, save for Port State Control officials that will board that vessel wherever it trades in the world to ensure that it is compliant.

Would you say your activities have had a significant impact on safety and security in the maritime domain of the West and Central African region?

They necessarily have to. Because of the stringent inspection of foreign vessels along the coasts of the countries that border the Atlantic Ocean, which is our territory, we have recorded fewer incidents of foreign-flagged substandard ships at our ports. Prior to now, we had very high record of deficiencies in ships because we were not performing Port State Control inspections as we ought to. I would say that the inspection efforts of the Port State officers in our member-states have helped in the reduction of substandard ships in our waters.

Given the rising calls for the development of the eastern flank ports, and as Chairman of the Ibom Seaport Implementation Committee, can you give us an update on the project?

Ibom Deep Seaport is a great project. It is still a project, it is not yet a port. There is need to have a deep seaport in the eastern part of Nigeria. If you divide Nigeria into two, from north to south, you would see that our ports are mostly located on the western coast of Nigeria, which means that for the big importers, they have to truck their cargo from the Lagos port to the South-east and South-south parts of the country. That is the critical matter. It is important that we have a deep seaport that would service that part of the country.

Indeed, studies were carried out between 2013 and 2015, where it was confirmed that Nigeria needed to augment its port capacity. That was the reason the Federal Government started those projects, to augment the port capacity.

Even though we have a lull now, it's going to pick up again to where it was pre-2015. We don't want to



wait until we have too much for our ports to handle before we start developing ports.

We have gone far with the Ibom Deep Sea project. It is a Federal Government project that is driven by Akwa Ibom State because it is located in the state. There is a Ministerial Project Development Steering Committee that works with the Akwa Ibom State Technical Committee. So far, we have had the cooperation of the Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi. We have also had the cooperation of the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC), which is the agency responsible for such projects. We have the Outline Business Case (OBC).

We went through the rigorous procurement process of the ICRC and a preferred bidder emerged, the BolloréPowerChina Consortium. We have commenced negotiations with them. The Full Business Case (FBC) is also ready, it is awaiting approval of the Federal Government. The project is going on as planned.

You were among the people that midwived the Cabotage Act. How do you see the implementation?

Because of the work I am doing now at the regional level, I haven't been following very much the details, in



terms of having the statistics. But I know for a certainty that the Cabotage Act was like a catalyst for the influx of Nigerians into the shipping sector. Prior to the Cabotage Act, they were just a handful. But when the Act came, some non-Nigerians who thought we were going to have a very strict implementation divested from shipping and invited Nigerians to buy into their businesses. That was how some Nigerians who are really making it now got into the shipping trade. It has impacted positively. We have more Nigerians involved, not just in offshore supply vessels, but actually vessels that carry ordinary cargo – not just oil and gas. We have them in various associations, and we have those who are not part of the ship-owners associations but are doing extremely well. We also have Nigerians in shipping whose vessels are not flagged in Nigeria, but who access loan in Nigeria.

The Cabotage Act generated interest and investment in the sector. Of course, everybody is saying the implementation level should be better. I think in every new endeavour, there is always room for improvement.

The collaboration between NIMASA and the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has really impacted greatly on the involvement of Nigerians in the shipping sector.

What is your take on the issue of human capacity development in the maritime sector?

I don't think we are doing badly. But, again, there is room for improvement. We understand Maritime Academy of Nigeria (MAN), Oron, is going to be upgraded to the level of a university so that it could be like the regional maritime universities in Ghana and Ivory Coast. That is excellent.

Nigeria is blessed with enormous manpower, particularly the youth population. If we target that population and train them purposely to be skilled in the maritime sector, we can do more than Philippines is doing in exporting maritime manpower. We need to specifically narrow down on the production of skilled maritime manpower for the local industry and export as one of our focal points or most important projects.

As a former Director-General of NIMASA, what is your assessment of the current management of the agency led by Dr. Dakuku Peterside?

Dr. Peterside has surprised many people, because some of us were of the opinion that it should be subject-matter experts that should be appointed to head specialised agencies. But Dr. Peterside has shown that when you are intelligent, passionate, and eager to learn, you can perform excellently. I am absolutely impressed by his performance, not just myself, because we discuss among ourselves. We are impressed by the level at which he has within a very short time mastered the industry. When you speak with him, you can see the kind of mastery he exudes, you will think he has been in the industry forever.

And he is very good in administration. He has managed the agency very well.

Another thing he has done is to project Nigeria's image to the region, continent, and the international community. There was a time NIMASA was disengaged from the world, more or less. Now, in the kind of work we do in the sub-region, Nigeria is one of the

“We are happy that Nigeria, as a responsive and responsible state-party to the IMO, and the UN have taken up the mantle of encouraging women to participate in the maritime sector. I will be happy to see Nigeria do more.”

countries that other member-states look up to with respect to Port State Control. And because Nigeria is performing well, we have Nigeria heading the technical working group of the Abuja MoU. The same goes for the IMO, and his headship of the Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA).

Every head of maritime administration in Africa knows about Dr. Peterside. They know what NIMASA is doing, because NIMASA under him is not insulated from what is happening regionally and internationally. I think with the kind of reputation he is building, the next time Nigeria ventures to seek anything from the IMO Council, they would win because he has really improved the reputation and image of Nigeria.

How would you evaluate the Director-General's disposition to women empowerment in the maritime sector?

I also like the fact that he believes in the capacity of women to perform. I have observed him, I have also engaged him one-on-one on placement of women in decision-making positions in NIMASA, and I like his viewpoints on supporting women.

We always have foreign training opportunities in the Abuja MoU. Recently, we had the opportunity to nominate Port State Control officers, who must be marine engineers, captains, etc. In all our member-states, nobody had ever nominated a woman for the past

eight years I have served the organisation. This time, we wanted a NIMASA nominee to go for the training in Japan. I just sent Dr. Peterside a text message, saying I would appreciate if it is a lady. He acquiesced, and said the panel had already nominated someone but since I wanted a lady, they would send a lady. They sent a lady. Not every male CEO would do that. That is just one example to show that he is ready to hold the ladder for women to grow in the agency.

What is your advice to the regional countries with respect to improvement of the maritime industry?

I would like the maritime sector in Nigeria to work a little bit harder to project and sustain themselves as the sea power for the region. They can easily get that. Specifically on women, because we are celebrating women, we would like to see more women in decision-making positions, not just the service sector, but the core operations aspects of the agencies of government. We want to see more women at the managerial level. We want to see female executive directors.

It is in the interest of society generally to have more women in top positions. That does not mean we would drive away the men. I respect men. There are areas they are certainly better than women. All we are saying is that we want to be on the table to make decisions that will grow the economy and society generally. We are mothers to men and women.



First Lady, Dr. Aisha Buhari

Nigerian President Desires More Women Professionals in Maritime to Boost Economy, Says First Lady

As the world celebrates seafarers, the wife of the president leads campaign for increased female involvement in the maritime industry. **Kumuyi Oluwafemi** reports

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n June 25, the global maritime community hosted a celebration on the theme of gender equality. Aptly tagged, "I Am On Board with Gender Equality," the campaign theme for this year's Day of the Seafarer sought to turn global minds and attention to the serious challenge of gender inequality in the maritime industry.

Explaining the theme, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) stated, "It provides an opportunity

to highlight opportunities for women (as well as the contributions they are already making) in a wide range of maritime careers and professions, but the focus will be very firmly on one aspect of that community – seafarers."

The subject of gender balance certainly bears a special significance in the industry where only about two per cent of the global seafaring population are women.

Wife of the Vice President, Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo (left), and Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside



In Nigeria, the First Lady, Dr. Aisha Buhari, led an energetic campaign to try to correct the gender imbalance and encourage more female participation in seafaring and maritime trade. Her drive caught the attention of many dignitaries and stakeholders in the maritime community, prompting a series of activities and actions.

Speaking in Lagos on June 25, at an event to mark the 2019 Day of the Seafarer, Mrs. Buhari said she was inspired by her husband's determination to provide platforms that will encourage more women's participation in maritime to boost his economic transformation agenda. She highlighted the need to promote gender balancing in the seafaring profession, saying President Muhammadu Buhari is aware of the economic benefits that accrue from encouraging more active role by females in the maritime sector.

Represented by the wife of the Vice President, Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo, the First Lady applauded NIMASA's efforts to promote and encourage women in the maritime sector.

"Under the current leadership of NIMASA, we have seen significant strides aimed at making women active players in the blue economy industry," she stated, adding, "Mr. President is desirous of seeing more women play active role in the maritime industry. This celebration focusing on women seafarers is, therefore, apt."

She called on "all government agencies, especially those in the maritime sector, to ensure the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5, which is aimed at attaining gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls."

Mrs. Buhari's optimistic address set a vibrant tone for the event.

The Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside, advised the men to provide the needed support for women to participate actively in the maritime sector.

"We hope to sensitise the industry operators and

players on the significance as well as economic importance of bridging gender inequality and the need for men to support women towards reaching their potential and navigating workplace challenges. For us to have more women at sea and onshore, the men have a major role to play in terms of providing the needed support," Dakuku stated.

On steps by NIMASA to encourage the female gender in the maritime industry, Dakuku disclosed, "In addition to the 304 female cadets we have trained in seafaring since the inception of the Nigerian Seafarers Development Programme (NSDP), greater attention will now be given to the training of female seafarers in specialised courses and areas to enable them take up professional responsibilities in specialised vessels and offshore operations, and maritime sector, generally."

Dakuku also spoke on the New Cabotage Compliance Strategy (NCCS), which suspends waivers on Cabotage manning. He said placement of women on board vessels will be given high priority, with greater attention also given to providing an enabling environment for female seafarers. He disclosed that NIMASA had made good progress with the NCCS initiative, as about 7,000 Nigerians were employed by ship-owners between 2018 and the first quarter of 2019. The director-general said the agency was doing everything in its powers to resolve the issue of armed robbery and piracy at sea.

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Sabiu Zakari, revealed that the Federal Government had initiated policy reviews aimed at promoting gender equality, empowering women in the maritime sector, and creating conducive work environment for females in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

President of the World Maritime University (WMU), Dr. Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, commended Nigeria's effort to encourage more female professionals in the maritime industry. In her goodwill message to Nigeria

on the occasion of the Day of Seafarer, Doumbia-Henry said, "Nigeria is one of our long-standing partners that has provided funds for our fellowships and we want to encourage them to continue. Under the MoU with NIMASA, as well as the support provided by the Nigerian Ports Authority, today, we have 199 WMU alumni from Nigeria, of which 31 are women. About half of these Nigerian female graduates were funded by the government. The rest received funding from other sources and other WMU partners."

The event was attended by many stakeholders, including Executive Secretary, Nigerian Shippers Council, Alhaji Hassan Bello; Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Ms Hadiza Bala Usman, who was represented by NPA's Executive Director, Marine and Operations, Dr. Sokonte Davies; Rector, Maritime Academy of Nigeria (MAN), Oron, Commodore Duja Effedua; Director, Maritime Safety and Security, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Mr. Danjuma Dauda; and renowned maritime lawyer, Mr. Emeka Akabogu.

Prominent Nigerian women in maritime also graced the occasion. They included Director-General of the Nigerian Chamber of Shipping (NSC), Mrs. Obiageli Obi, and Chairperson, Nigerian Shipowners Forum, Mrs. Margret Orakwusi.

In attendance also were members of the NIMASA

Governing Board, led by the Chairman, Gen. Jonathan India Garba, and members of the Executive Management.

Preparatory to this year's Day of the Seafarer, NIMASA held a sensitisation workshop in Lagos for female students. Dakuku, who was represented at the occasion by the Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Mr. Gambo Ahmed, emphasised the need for proper structures that would produce a strong maritime sector, and a robust economy. He noted that the sensitisation of the girl child on career in maritime was an intervention programme by the agency, stressing that "On Board with Gender Equality" coincides with the disposition of NIMASA as a gender-sensitive organisation.

Inspirational career talks were delivered by some women in the Nigerian maritime industry, including Miss Iwu Augustina Ogechukwu Sandra (Navigator), Mrs. Adebimpe Oluwadamilola (Chief Engineer), Miss Karen Ogidigben, and Miss Pauline Adula (Marine Engineer). They spoke on the benefits of female participation in the industry as well as the challenges.

Female students from many schools, including Nigerian Navy Secondary School, Ojo, Lagos; Victoria Island Girls Secondary Grammar School; Queens College, Yaba; Kuraimo Junior Secondary School; and New Era Girls Secondary School, were in attendance.



R-L: Mrs. Obi Obiageli, Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, NIMASA, Mr. Gambo Ahmed, Mary Hamman, and a guest

Usman



USMAN: Interagency Collaboration Has Enhanced Competitiveness of Our Ports

Hadiza Bala Usman, the Managing Director of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), speaks on the efforts to ensure the viability of the country's ports, in this interview with **Ganiyu Alayaki**. Excerpts:

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How has the journey been so far?

The journey has been a very interesting one. Within the period, we have been able to institute a lot of reforms across the systems and those reforms are mainly around improvement of efficiency, entrenching transparency, and accountability within our operations. We have noted the gaps that exist hitherto and we have sought to work on how to improve them.

One of the key things that we need to do is to build the institutions, strengthen the institutions to ensure that there is sustainability in any reform we put in place. When you look at instituting transparency and accountability, all we sought to do was to demystify our processes, demystify governance. To enable stakeholders understand our respective tariffs, for example, we made them very public.

What steps have you taken to ensure more involvement of stakeholders?

We have instituted a mechanism where stakeholders can come and make enquiry. Stakeholders are free to

see what we charge for everything and that reduces to a certain extent challenges on implementation. We have also put in place measures around improvement of efficiency, ensuring that the terminal operators provide the maximum service as required and stipulated within the concession agreement. We sought to improve on the deployment and maintenance of our channels and we believe that it is important for us to provide our services in an optimal manner. We have expanded some of our dredging maintenance work to new areas to expand a long channel within the Lagos area. We have sought to dredge the Escravos River to enable heavy vessels come into the Warri area. These are some of the things we have put in place within the last three years to improve on our efficiency.

Do you think Nigerian ports are now more attractive for business in comparison with neighbouring ports?

Absolutely, we are very attractive and we provide an enabling environment for stakeholders and users of the port to excel. But one of the important things is that the competitiveness of ports is beyond the mandate of

“Collaboration among the agencies of government is key in the deployment of these tools that would improve on our competitiveness.”

NPA. For example, it is related to entry and exit of goods in our ports, and some of these issues around inspection of cargo, deployment of scanners, are things that are outside the purview of NPA, and yet constitute the basis with which ports in Nigeria are benchmarked.

I would like to speak about the need to deploy the national single windows, this is an integral trade facilitation tool that needs to be deployed. But, again, this is also not the mandate of the NPA. However, we seek to collaborate with agencies of government that have the mandate to deploy it.

Another area is the issue of inspection of cargo. We need to have scanners for inspection of cargo to facilitate faster cargo clearance and this is also a very key issue that affects our competitiveness as a port. This also is deployed by another agency of the government and we are working with them to ensure that they deploy this faster. While NPA is delivering on its own part of the obligation, it is important for all other agencies of the government within the value chain of trade facilitation to show the same level of commitment. To a certain extent, whatever NPA does, if other agencies that are part of the clearing of cargo are not on par, our ports will remain uncompetitive. Collaboration among the agencies of government is key in the deployment of these tools that would improve on our competitiveness.

How do you see the calls for development of the eastern seaports to decongest the Lagos ports?

Indeed, as you are aware, the choice of the destination of cargo is the consignee's decision. The consignee determines where he wants to take his cargo to. So whatever cargo comes to Lagos is the choice of the consignee who looks at the western ports as a destination port that they want to take their cargo to.

For the eastern ports, we have improved patronage within that area. Last month, we granted a concession

of 10 per cent waiver on harborage on our charges graduated across the volumes of cargo brought into Calabar port, Warri port, and Port Harcourt. These are some of the measures we have taken to encourage patronage in the eastern ports.

Beyond providing concession, we also sought, as I mentioned earlier, to dredge Warri port to 7.5 meters to facilitate the movement of bigger vessels coming in. We cannot go below 7.5 because we have the NNPC pipelines buried beyond that limit. So that is the maximum that NPA can dredge the Warri port. The same thing with Calabar. Calabar has a very long channel and dredging it involves a huge investment that is not commensurate with the traffic coming into that area. We have sought to encourage flat bottom vessels, we have had flat bottom vessels coming into Calabar with cargo and that is an exciting thing for us. We are now marketing these flat bottom vessels to be brought into Calabar port and any of the shallower locations. This would enable us to use those ports.

With the recent conclusion of the training for port managers and officers of NPA's Harbours Department, how close is the authority to getting the International Standard Organisation, ISO 9001:2015, Certification?

We are still in the process of getting our ISO certification. We are meeting up all the requirements and inspection will be done to determine our certification. Work is in progress but the process has deployed and improved on our documentation process. It has enhanced deployment of our marine service. This is a very important thing and we look forward to getting our ISO certification upon completion of the IMO requirements. The is another feat.

What is your opinion on the leadership of the Minister of Transportation?

The Minister of Transportation has shown exemplary leadership role and leadership capacity. He has led the transportation ministry in such a dynamic way that has enabled all the agencies maximise their capacities and have the best coming out. The minister allows us as heads of agencies to define the purpose. He provides the leadership that is required to guide us and I will like to commend him for what he has been able to do within the period.

Some of the achievements we have been able to deploy across the agencies are as a result of his support and guidance. He has provided us with such a strong bond across the agencies.



R-L: Head SERVICOM NIMASA, Mr. Segun Abiodun; DG NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside; National Coordinator, SERVICOM, Mrs. Nnenna Akajemelu; and representative of Special Adviser to the President on Ease of Doing Business, Mr. David Uzozi, during the signing of the Service Level Agreement by NIMASA at the agency's headquarters in Lagos

SERVICOM, Ease of Doing Business: NIMASA Demonstrates Compliance

Kumuyi Oluwafemi examines NIMASA's efforts to comply with the government's policies on efficient service delivery

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ffective and efficient service delivery is one of the hallmarks of a successful organisation or business. It guarantees customer satisfaction, and builds both confidence and patronage.

In most cases, customer service satisfaction has been ascribed to the private sector, as they are seen to be more disciplined and focused on ensuring a profitable and viable business environment. Various means are used to try to achieve customer satisfaction in the private sector. They include tracking performance of employees through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), placing sanctions on erring employees, and using reward systems for employees who meet customer expectations in line with the company's policy.

But the Federal Government has put mechanisms in place to also encourage such attributes in the public sector. The government has introduced checks and balances to ensure customer satisfaction in the Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has continued to prioritise the delivery of efficient and effective service to its stakeholders.

Concerned about the need to engender discipline

and accountability in the federal MDAs, the government introduced SERVICOM, an acronym for Service Compact with All Nigerians, in 2004. The intention is to promote effective and efficient services and manage the gap between government and citizens on issues pertaining to service delivery.

Aside from SERVICOM, the Federal Government introduced the Ease of Doing Business initiative and set up the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC) to manage and implement it. The Ease of Doing Business initiative is meant to bring about transparency in the MDAs and effective execution of government directives. It is also purposed to ensure a one-stop processing system for port operations, entry of visitors, and travelers' documentation. The initiative aims, ultimately, to create an enabling environment for businesses in Nigeria.

Under the Ease of Doing Business strategy, MDAs are expected to ensure transparency by publishing complete lists of fees, timelines, and other requirements on their websites so as to discourage irregularities and sharp practices, especially in the collection of fees. The Ease of Doing Business one-government plan aims also to promote information sharing and collaboration among government agencies. In port operations, agencies

“Excellence is a journey; so whatever must be done to achieve it must be put in place. The bigger picture of excellent service delivery is Nigeria. We, therefore, look at the future of seeing our customers delighted.”

present at the ports are to harmonise their operations and function as a single joint task force, to make for easy movement of goods in and out of the country, and discourage excessive bureaucracy in the clearing of goods at the ports and time wastage.

On entry experience of visitors and travelers, agencies at the airports are to work collaboratively at the various departure and arrival points to ensure a single customer interface. The plan also mandates that visas for tourists and business owners should must be made available within 48 hours.

For default approvals, MDAs are mandated to communicate approvals or rejections of applications within the specified timelines, as failure to do that will be taken to mean that approval has been granted to the applicant.

NIMASA prioritises the provision of efficient and effective service to its stakeholders, in line with the SERVICOM and Ease of Doing Business initiatives. This was demonstrated recently with the signing of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the agency and its stakeholders.

During the ceremony in Lagos, the Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, emphasised the critical role of effective and efficient service delivery in the country's quest for development. Dakuku stressed that the agency was firmly committed to promptness and excellence in its operations.

He said, “The signing marks a new era and significant milestone for the agency for greater service delivery in quantifiable and measurable terms. It also brings to focus what the leadership of NIMASA stands for on the issues of effectiveness, efficiency, and, most importantly, the credibility of service delivery.”

The DG noted that quality service was a culture that must be observed at all times, as it can attract

foreign direct investment to the country, adding that investors' confidence is very crucial. He said NIMASA's commitment to quality and excellent service in all its service windows was total, stressing that the agency remains unwavering in its determination to actualise the government's desire of attracting more investors into the country.

He also emphasised the importance of reliable customer feedback, and said this was the essence of the Service Level Agreement.

The occasion was organised by NIMASA, in conjunction with the Office of the National Coordinator of SERVICOM.

The Special Assistant to the President on Ease of Doing Business, Mrs. Jumoke Oduwole, assured at the event that the Federal Government remained committed to the ideals of making business processes and procedures easy in order to attract investors to the economy. Represented by Mr. David Uzoike, Oduwole commended the management of NIMASA for its commitment to excellence as well as prompt and consistent submission of the agency's monthly performance reports.

In her own remarks, National Coordinator of SERVICOM, Mrs. Nnenna Akajemelu, applauded the management of NIMASA for its passion for reform, saying excellent service delivery is a collective responsibility. Akajemelu stated that with the SLA, the service provider was merely expressing its commitment to the public and, as such, handing to the public all the standards to be deployed in ensuring that excellent services were rendered at all times. “Excellence is a journey; so whatever must be done to achieve it must be put in place. The bigger picture of excellent service delivery is Nigeria. We, therefore, look at the future of seeing our customers delighted,” she said.

For NIMASA, the signing of the service agreement marks a new era and a significant milestone in the pursuit of better service delivery in quantifiable and measurable terms. It also brings to focus what the leadership of the agency stands for on the issues of effectiveness, efficiency, and, most importantly, the credibility of service delivery.

The Service Level Agreement is a requirement under Executive Order 1 on the Ease of Doing Business, signed by the Federal Government in May 2017. It commits NIMASA to a binding agreement with its customers to, in the spirit of transparency, publish data on the processes and accessibility of organisation-wide information with regard to cost, timelines, and other requirements for obtaining services in the agency.

Maritime Industry Living Legends Award



NIMASA Board Chairman, General Jonathan India Garba (rtd), and Director, Special Duties, Hajia Lami Tumaka (right)



L-R: His Royal Majesty, Pere Stanley P. Luke, Kalanama VIII, the Pere of Akugbene-Mein Kingdom of Delta State; Publisher of Shipping World magazine, Elder Asu Beks; and Gen. Jonathan India Garba (Rtd.)



DG, NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside (left), giving an award to recognise the participation of other African countries on the Nigerian day.



NIMASA Board Chairman, Major Gen. Jonathan India Garba (Rtd.), at an interactive session with stakeholders



R-L: DG, NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside; Norwegian Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Jens-Peter Kjemprud; General Manager, Operations, Charkin Maritime, Capt. Joseph Owodeha; and President, Shipowners Association of Nigeria (SOAN), Dr. Mkgorge Onyung



L-R: Deputy Director, Public Relations, NIMASA, Isichei Osamgbi; Head, Shipping Development, Anthony Ogadi; and a staff of the Agency, Chigozie Emeghedo



L-R: Executive Director, Operations, NIMASA, Engr. Rotimi Fashakin; Hon. Nasiru Sule-Garo; India Garba; and Ogadi



Cessation of Cabotage Waivers



Director-General, NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside (left); Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Mr. Gambo Ahmed (right); and former President, Nigerian Trawler Operators Association (NITOA), Mrs. Margaret Orakwusi (middle), at a stakeholders consultative meeting for the cessation of Cabotage waivers organised by NIMASA in Lagos



L-R: Orakwusi; a stakeholder; Ahmed; and Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Starz Marine and Engineering Limited, Mr. Greg Ogbeifun



Maritime lawyer, Mr. Mike Igbokwe, SAN (left) and a stakeholder



NIMASA Reaches Out to Needy Compatriots

In keeping with NIMASA's belief in accountability to society, the agency sent teams to donate relief items to victims of disaster. **Vincent Obia** writes

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dministration of society's complex institutions and their human components has gone beyond leaving it solely in the hands of government and politicians. Experts have adduced a number of reasons why the formal machinery of government alone cannot cope with

the demands of society. Budgeted state resources, no matter how ginormous they seem to be, fall far short of meeting the expectations of the populace, notably in severe times of stress. Secondly, natural disasters, diseases of epidemic proportions, wars, etc., all of which cause massive displacements of people, are unpredictable and, therefore, do not allow for government to plan monetary succour for victims.

Another reason is that government is weighed down by a huge bureaucracy that sees other needs as extraneous distraction unworthy of serious attention. One more point is today's notoriously politicised mechanism of governance. Those in government tend to think more of winning elections, pushing them to identify and reckon only with those politicians who strategise for them rather than

with the people they serve.

So the government needs partners to support it in moments of challenge. Such sidekicks could be government agencies, private companies, professional groups, academic and research centres, non-profit organisations, foreign civil society bodies, communities, and individuals. They become corporate citizens discharging their responsibilities the same way the tax-paying members of the society do.

High-performing bodies feel obligated to show gratitude to the society from which it has earned much by giving of its profits in return.

Therefore, when recently thousands of Nigerians were sacked from their homes by floods and forced into Internally Displaced Persons Camps (IDPs), the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) hit the road to sympathise and empathise with the afflicted in 20 states across the federation. NIMASA was making a statement with the trips it undertook to bring comfort to the suffering. It was announcing that the agency can be counted among those bodies contributing to the stability of the nation's economy. It is also a way of partnering with the government in its war against poverty. The



agency also demonstrated that while it is working hard to promote shipping, it also has a tender heart sensitive to the hardship of those in need.

When NIMASA Director-General, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, kicked off the journey to the IDPs in Lagos, armed with millions of naira of relief items, he made the mission clear in no unambiguous terms. Represented by the agency's Director of Special Duties (External Relations and Technical Cooperation), Hajia Lami Tumaka, Dakuku said, "We have come to identify with you and to share in your trying moments..."

"As a socially responsible corporate entity, we are concerned about your wellbeing and we remain committed to partnering with the Lagos State Government to ameliorate your challenges."

NIMASA made the presentation to the IDPs at the Lagos State Emergency Resettlement and Relief Camp at Igando. Items donated included food, clothing, beddings, wheelchairs, and baby nutrients.

The General Manager of Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Adesina Tihamiyu, received the materials and described NIMASA as a "worthy partner". Tihamiyu urged others to emulate the agency, recalling that in 2018, NIMASA put smiles on the faces of victims of a flood disaster in Lagos through several relief items it brought.

The NIMASA comfort train has also been to Kano. Its Director-General again spoke of NIMASA's unbending

determination to assist those affected by natural disasters across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The agency's Deputy Director and Head of Financial Services, Mrs. Olamide Odusanya, stood in for Dakuku at the Kano presentation. He said, "This is part of the nationwide donation of relief materials to people displaced as a result of the 2018 flood disaster that submerged some parts of the state...this is a continuation of our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives."

NIMASA then presented assorted materials, including foods, blankets, mosquito nets, toiletries, as well as sewing, grinding and pumping machines to the displaced persons. Executive Secretary of the Kano State Emergency Management Agency, Ali Bashir Nikkel, took delivery of the gifts on behalf of the government. Nikkel expressed profuse thanks to NIMASA and assured the agency that the materials "would be judiciously distributed to the affected persons."

Cross River State's internally displaced persons have also benefited from NIMASA's goodwill towards the society. Here the Director-General made a profound declaration that gave more insight into the philosophy of the agency's corporate citizenship. Dakuku said, "Though our core mandates are principally to regulate and promote shipping as well as other associated maritime ventures in Nigeria, we are acutely aware ...of the plights of natural disaster victims like you. We are with you and we share your sufferings. We are here in realisation of the fact that an injury to you is an injury to us, and by extension, an injury to Nigeria. And so, NIMASA as a responsible corporate citizen will continue to support the Federal Government's efforts in ameliorating your sufferings and challenges."

In addition to food items, the displaced persons got school bags, detergents, fishing nets and mattresses, among numerous other items.

NIMASA's Director of Planning, Research and Data Services, Mrs. Moronke Thomas, made the presentation for the agency. The Acting Director-General of the Cross River State Emergency Management Agency, Princewill Ayim, received the materials and thanked NIMASA for its humanitarian gesture, urging others to follow in the federal agency's footsteps.

The relief-offering train dispatched by NIMASA from Lagos has also been to Niger State, where deadly floods savaged the Suleja axis, rendering thousands homeless and destroying large tracts of farmlands, which had been the source of income and food supply for the masses. NIMASA commiserated with the people of Niger State

Katsina



L-R: Katsina State Deputy Governor, Alhaji Mannir Yakubu; Mr. Ibrahim Jibril, representing the Director-General of NIMASA; Director, Special Duties, NIMASA, Hajia Lami Tumaka; and Executive Secretary, Katsina State Emergency Management Agency, Alhaji Babangida Nasamu, during the presentation of relief materials to IDPs in Katsina State

NIMASA REACHES OUT TO NEEDY COMPATRIOTS

Continued from page 31

as the Director-General's representative, Hajia Lami Tumaka, presented goods worth millions of naira to alleviate the pain of the affected citizens. Dakuku told those at the camp: "The fact that you are here today (in the camp) does not make you any less Nigerian, but for the circumstances that brought you here. As a socially responsible corporate entity, NIMASA remains committed to supporting all Nigerians in distress, no matter how little."

Niger State Governor Abubakar Sani Bello, while receiving the items, applauded "NIMASA's initiative of always bringing succour to distressed Nigerians." Bello was represented by his deputy, Mohammed Ahmed Ketso.

Nigerians got a comprehensive picture of the nationalistic nature of NIMASA's relentless drive to deepen its corporate responsibility when the disaster relief team touched down in Anambra State. The NIMASA Director-General said besides providing comfort for the displaced citizens, the relief materials were meant to "support the flood victims' reintegration into society". He added, "We have come here to show our support to the people of Anambra State, especially those who were affected by one disaster or the other... NIMASA feels the need to reach out to the victims in order to reintegrate back into society and help them to enjoy a normal life."

NIMASA's Director of Internal Audit Victor Onuzuruike delivered the donations on behalf of the agency. Receiving them was Executive Secretary of the State Emergency Management Agency, Paul Odenigbo, who represented the Secretary to the Anambra State Government, Solo

Osita Chukwulobelu. He thanked NIMASA for identifying with the people of Anambra State during this critical time of the mass displacement of its citizens, among them the aged and children.

NIMASA has also extended its comfort-the-disaster-victims project to Akure, capital of Ondo State in the South-west geopolitical zone. The agency's team was led by NIMASA's Western Zonal Office Director, Olayemi Abass, who made the donation of the relief materials on behalf of the Director-General.

Dakuku stated in Akure, "We are here to comply with the Federal Government's directive for all government organisations to use their powers and resources to alleviate the suffering of Nigerians affected by flood and other disasters."

Ondo State Deputy Governor Agboola Ajayi received the relief package for the displaced persons. The Permanent Secretary in his office, Mrs. Desola Alabi, stood in for the Deputy Governor, who thanked NIMASA and said the agency had intervened at the right time to help those sacked by the rainstorm in Supare and Ikare Akoko areas of the state.

NIMASA's well-received trips to assist the states pummeled by natural and man-made disasters that have dislocated tens of thousands of citizens prove that it is not enough to assess corporate bodies only by the statistics of their profits. They must be evaluated in the light of what they give back to society in moments of grave challenges and how they support government efforts to tame such problems. On this score NIMASA has passed the test.

Kano



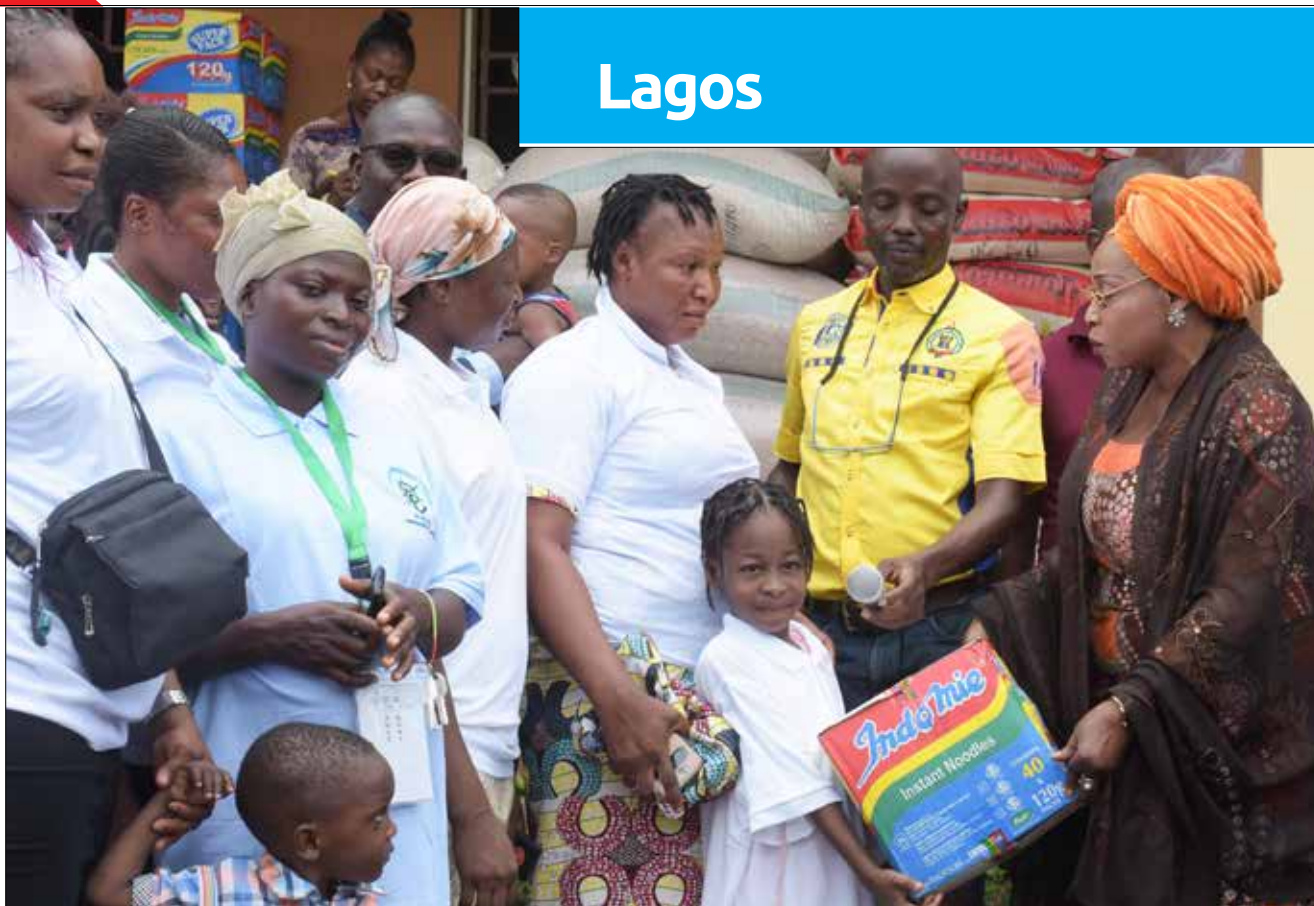
Representative of the DG, NIMASA, Mrs. Olamide Odusanya (second left), presenting food items and materials to the Executive Secretary of Kano State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), Alhaji Ali Bashir Nikkel (third right), for IDPs in the state, while other officials of the state government look on

Cross River



Director, Planning, Research and Data Management Services, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Mrs. Moronke Thomas (Middle); Head, Corporate Communications, NIMASA, Mr. Isichei Osamgbi (second right); NIMASA's Calabar Port Services Controller, Capt. Adebayo Omotosho (right); Special Adviser to the Governor/Acting Director-General, Cross River State Emergency Management Agency, Hon. Princewill Ayim (left); and Coordinator, Bakassi Internally Displaced Persons, Mr. Okon Etim Effiom, during the presentation of relief materials to IDPs by NIMASA, in Calabar.

Lagos



Representative of the Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Director, Special Duties, Hajia Lami Tumaka (right), and General Manager, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), Mr. Adesina Tiamiyu (second right), at the flag off ceremony of the distribution of relief materials to flood victims by NIMASA at the Igando Resettlement Camp in Lagos



Niger

Tumaka, representing the DG, presenting relief materials donated by NIMASA, for IDPs in the state, to Deputy Governor of Niger State, Alhaji Mohammed Ahmed Ketso, in Minna.



Ketso (middle); Tumaka (fourth left); Assistant Director, Public Relations, NIMASA, Mr. Philip Kyanet (fourth right); and some members of the Niger State Executive Council, during the presentation of the relief materials by NIMASA.

Ondo



Director, Western Zonal Office of NIMASA, Mr. Olayemi Abass, handing over some of the relief materials donated to Ondo State by NIMASA to the Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office, Mrs. Desola Alabi, in Akure





AAMA Reiterates Commitment to Competitive African Maritime Sector

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he Chairman of the Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside, has restated the commitment of the body to building a competitive maritime sector in the continent through engagement and sharing of ideas. Dakuku spoke during

the 3rd session of the Executive Council (EXCO) of the association held at the Farah Hotel Casablanca, Morocco. He stressed the need for concerted effort to make the maritime administrations in Africa compete favourably with their counterparts in other parts of the world.

The AAMA chairman, who is also the Director-General of NIMASA, noted that the choice of the various countries in the EXCO was to ensure geographical spread.

"I beckon on you all to note that our primary aim

of coming here is to continue to uphold the tenets of the African Maritime Transport Charter (AMTC) to improve, among others, the capacity, capability and performance of Africa's maritime administrations and the maritime/shipping sector with great emphasis on human resources development, technology and information sharing," he told the gathering.

The AAMA Executive Council is made up of representatives of Central Africa (Cameroun, Cape Verde), West Africa (Cote D'Ivoire and Ghana), East Africa (Tanzania and Comoros), Southern Africa (Mozambique and South Africa), and North Africa (Egypt and Sudan), with Uganda representing land-locked countries. The meeting had in attendance Executive Council members from Cape Verde, Ghana, Tanzania, Comoros, Mozambique, South Africa, Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, and Nigeria.

DG, NIMASA, and President, Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside (right), engages Norway's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marianne Hansen (second left), and Lamia Radia (left), while South African Ambassador to Norway, Selaelo Ramokgopa (second right), watches, at the Nor Shipping Conference in Oslo Norway.

Photo Credit: Richard Alabi/Clearpoint



'National Fleet'll Help Nigeria Lift Crude, Reduce Capital Flight'

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ndigenous operators will be able to lift crude oil for export, thus, helping to reduce capital flight, when the national fleet comes into operation, so says the Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside.

Dakuku stated this at a media breakfast meeting on the sidelines of the Nor-Shipping Conference and Exhibition in Oslo, Norway. He said such an outcome will end the pressure on foreign reserve associated with the present arrangement where Nigeria sells its oil on free on board basis to customers.

The DG said the new national fleet would be owned 49 per cent by a technical partner and 51 per cent by Nigerian investors. According to the plan, the Nigerian investors will hold equity in lots, so there will be no domineering shareholder, he stated.

Dakuku said the national fleet was part of a new strategic direction on the blue economy, which is designed to tap the country's maritime potential. He invited local and foreign investors, interested in

the project, to partner with the country, saying the opportunity in crude freight is just one of the many prospects in the sector.

He said the country was also taking its maritime security seriously and had invested in the acquisition of security assets to boost the policing of its waters. The assets include patrol boats, helicopter, unmanned air vessels, and naval ships.

The DG noted that the assets, acquired under the Deep Blue Project, which he called a homeland security solution, will be operational by September this year.

Dakuku called on investors to tap into the rich potential of the maritime sector in Nigeria, saying the government has incentivised the sector with offers of tax holidays and institutional support.

Nigeria, he reminded his audience, is an investment-friendly environment with comprehensive maritime security, a robust financial sector, and seven port complexes. The country accounts for 70 per cent of seaborne trade into West Africa and is endowed with a skilled workforce and the world's ninth largest hydrocarbon deposits.



Nigeria Restates Determination to Lead War Against Crimes in Gulf of Guinea

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igeria says its commitment to a leadership role in the war on piracy and maritime crimes in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region remains unwavering. Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, made the declaration in a keynote address at a symposium on Security in the Gulf

of Guinea at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in London.

The meeting was jointly organised by IMO, Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO), International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA), International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF), and the International Chamber of Shipping. It had in attendance MDs and CEO's of top multinational shipping, oil and gas, and logistics firms.

Dakuku said countries of the GoG region, an area widely considered a notorious crime base in Africa, were facing serious security challenges that had affected their economies severely. He said the region needed global support and cooperation to tackle the problem.

However, he said the location of the Gulf of Guinea held enormous advantages, as it holds a significant percentage of the world's total oil and gas reserves as well as rich deposits of solid minerals, such as diamond, bitumen, copper, uranium, granite, quartz, lead, fluorite, and marble.

Already, Nigeria has committed to the hosting of a Global Maritime Security Conference (GMSC), which comes up in the country's capital, Abuja, from October 7 to 9.

Dakuku stated that the conference will afford

the international community a platform to develop actionable strategies to put an end to piracy and other security threats in the African geological and maritime region.

The DG, who is also Chairman of the Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA), noted that the Gulf of Guinea occupied a strategic location in international seaborne trade. It is home to two regional economic blocs: Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), comprising 26 countries.

"It is, therefore, seen as a resource provider and critical contributor to national growth and prosperity of the nation's lining its coasts and even those inward and with no shared boundaries, due to the access it grants to them," he said.

He disclosed that the region's waterways were a key navigational route for international commerce, connecting the Far East to countries in the North and South of the Atlantic. "It is the hub of extensive Trans-Atlantic trade linking Africa with Europe and the Americas," he stated.

Dakuku highlighted factors that made Nigeria strategic in the fight against maritime crimes in the GoG region to include being the country with the highest military contingent and might within the region, and a huge deposit of oil and gas, which makes it a place of interest in the international energy dynamics. Others are the geo-strategic location of Nigeria, and the country's big deltas, which are the largest in the world, with thousands of creeks.

The DG said being the biggest economy and most populous country within the region, accounting for



over 65 per cent of cargo generated in the area, Nigeria occupied a vantage position to lead efforts to solve the maritime security challenges in the region.

While acknowledging that maritime insecurity had economic, social and environmental implications for the region, Dakuku told the international community that Nigeria was leaving no stone unturned in the attempt to overcome the challenges.

He said it was this determination that led to the decision to approach the menace through a total

spectrum maritime strategy. The strategy involves law enforcement, regional cooperation, response capability building, and enhanced maritime domain awareness for all organs of government involved in maritime security.

The DG declared that with the new initiatives, kidnapping and other violent crimes in the GoG region would soon become history.

Highlighting the importance of regional and international cooperation in the fight against maritime crime, Dakuku stated, "We have no option but to work together, but we cannot have imposed solutions...

"NIMASA will also be hosting a Global Maritime Security Conference in October to seek tailored short and long term solutions to strengthen regional and international collaborations in the Gulf of Guinea."

He noted that the implementation of an integrated national surveillance and waterways protection solution with command and control infrastructure in the agency was part of the Nigerian government's deep blue project to enhance security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Dakuku said it was Nigeria's interventions that led to the establishment of the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Security Strategy (EIMS) and Inter-Regional Coordination Centre (ICC) in Yaoundé. He also disclosed that Nigeria played a leading role in the establishment of the African Integrated Maritime Security (AIMS).

At the operational level, Dakuku stated that NIMASA, through collaboration with the Nigerian Navy in 2012-2013, established "Operation Prosperity", a security taskforce that had helped to reduce criminal activities in the region. Other initiatives include the establishment of a legal framework to fight maritime crimes through an anti-piracy bill. "The bill, when signed into law, will bring to bear appropriate sanctions on offenders and deter perpetrators of maritime crimes," he assured.

Nigeria will be hosting the global maritime security summit, themed "Maritime Security and Global Trade Facilitation," as part of its commitment, along with its partners, to stamping out piracy in the region.

Thanking the international bodies and other regional partners for their efforts to tackle maritime insecurity, especially in the Gulf of Guinea, Dakuku called for more support in the fight against piracy and maritime crimes.



Amaechi



Bello

Nigeria Long Overdue for National Fleet, Says Dakuku

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he Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside, has said that Nigeria is way overdue for an active national fleet that would properly position it in the comity of maritime nations. Dakuku stated this in Lagos

when he played host to members of the National Fleet Implementation Committee (NFIC) at the headquarters of the agency. He pointed out that National Fleet will energize the maritime sector, retain huge spending on freight in-country and create job opportunities to grow the economy.

He declared the agency's readiness to support the committee, saying, "The national fleet implementation is long overdue and so NIMASA will work assiduously with the committee to ensure that the national fleet is restored to its past glory so that our nation can be reckoned with in the comity of maritime nations."

The Director-General stated that NIMASA had taken a lot of steps towards developing the maritime sector and increasing indigenous participation. He detailed the measures to include repositioning of the Nigerian Ship Registry; securing a special tax regime, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Finance and the Nigeria

Customs Service; and changing of trade terms from Free on Board (FOB) to Cost Insurance and Freight (CIF).

"The national fleet implementation will create employment and wealth opportunities in Nigeria. The focus lab will also help Nigerians to understand the maritime sector and bring the players together to solve and understand issues better," he said.

The chairman of the committee, Mr. Hassan Bello, enumerated the work done so far by the committee and solicited NIMASA's support. Bello also requested a joint briefing with NIMASA to the Honourable Minister of Transportation to get his buy-in on the need to go through the Focus Lab to realise the Nigerian fleet project. He said there was need for the Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of Budget and National Planning to write a joint memo to the Federal Executive Council and other relevant arms of the government for approval to hold the lab.

NFIC was set up by the Honourable Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon Rotimi Amaechi, to work out modalities for the establishment and sustenance of a Nigerian Fleet.

It would be recalled that Nigeria had a lot of vessels under the Nigeria National Shipping Line (NNSL) before it was liquidated in 1995.



Dakuku (right), with publisher, Shipping World magazine, Elder Asu Beks, at the Season 2 of the Nigerian Maritime Industry Living Legends Awards held in Lagos

Dakuku Bags Maritime Industry Living Legends Award

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or his outstanding performance and contributions in the maritime sector, Dr. Dakuku Peterside bagged Nigeria's Maritime Industry Living Legends Award. Organised by Maritime Media Limited, the award was given to him at a ceremony in Lagos.

Speaking at the occasion, Dakuku advised the media in Nigeria to pay more attention to productive reporting aimed at spurring positive action in the country, especially in the maritime sector. He thanked the management of Maritime Media Limited for the recognition, saying the media, as a major stakeholder in the maritime industry, should make reports meant to keep the agency and other players in the sector on their toes, their main emphasis.

"There is great transformation going on in the maritime industry and we can achieve more when all the stakeholders are put on their toes by the media; more can be achieved through constructive criticism," he stated.

He said NIMASA would continue to leverage its key

resources, including existing structures and stakeholders' support, to push back the frontiers of transformation.

The Managing Director of Maritime Media Limited, Elder Asu Beks, said the NIMASA DG deserved the honour bestowed on him because of the transformational initiatives he had brought to the Agency since his assumption of office.

The Pere of Akugbene Mein Kingdom, in Bomadi Local Government Area of Delta State, His Royal Majesty Pere P. Luke, Kalanama VIII, while presenting the award, said, "The recognition is as a result of the track record of positive impact made by the agency and its leadership in the industry that has distinguished them from others."

Other awardees from the agency were Chairman, NIMASA Board of Directors, Maj. Gen. Jonathan India Garba (Rtd); Executive Director, Finance and Administration, Dr. Bashir Jamoh; Executive Director, Operations, Engr. Rotimi Fashakin; Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Mr. Gambo Ahmed; Director, Internal Audit, Mr. Victor Onuzuruike; and Director, Special Duties, Hajia Lami Tumaka.



Maritime University, Fulfillment of a Major Economic Dream, Says Dakuku

- *Presidency: we're walking the talk in Niger Delta*
- *NMU will play key role in global maritime – Sylva*

The Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside, says the coming of the Nigeria Maritime University (NMU), Okerenkoko, marks the launch of an institution of critical importance to the economic development of the country. Dakuku stated this at the weekend during the maiden matriculation of the university, held at its takeoff site at Kurutie, in Gbaramatu Kingdom of Delta State.

He said the school fulfilled for Nigeria a major economic dream of having an institution that would produce high-end manpower for its growing maritime industry, while helping to develop the locals and building lasting peace in the Niger Delta.

The Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, said

the project was another demonstration of Niger Delta's strategic importance to Nigeria. Osinbajo said it also showed how the Federal Government was "walking the talk in the Niger Delta."

Dakuku stated, "This is the fulfillment of a dream. Recall that many years ago, precisely in 2013, NIMASA initiated the idea of a Nigerian Maritime University to fill a gap. We identified that if you want to grow your maritime industry, there are three important elements. One, is the asset, the vessel itself; the second one is the human capacity; the third is the supporting infrastructure. For all these three, the most important is the human element. And we clearly identified the fact that we are lagging behind in the human element and we needed to build capacity.

"To build high-end capacity, we need our own maritime university. We were among the leading maritime nations

"We appreciate the grant by the Federal Government to support the numerous grants given by NIMASA, acting also on behalf of the Federal Government. But, without a doubt, we need to put more money here because we need a lot of infrastructure, apart from the human resource. We have a good number of professors. We need to put a lot of infrastructure in place



L-R: Vice Chancellor, Nigeria Maritime University, Okerenkoko, Gbaramatu Kingdom, Professor Ongoebi Maureen Etebu; representative of the Vice President, Senior Special Assistant to the President on Niger Delta Affairs, Chief Edobor Iyamu; Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, Dr. Dakuku Peterside; and Pro-Chancellor of the university and Chairman, Governing Council, Chief Timipre Sylva, at the maiden matriculation of the institution at its takeoff site in Kurutie, Delta State.

without a maritime university. So today is the fulfillment of that great dream."

Dakuku commended the Federal Government's financial commitments to the university, but said more needed to be done. "We appreciate the grant by the Federal Government to support the numerous grants given by NIMASA, acting also on behalf of the Federal Government. But, without a doubt, we need to put more money here because we need a lot of infrastructure, apart from the human resource. We have a good number of professors. We need to put a lot of infrastructure in place," he stated.

He explained that NIMASA would intensify engagements with the Budget Office, Office of the Vice President, and other stakeholders on how to collaboratively fund the NMU.

The Vice President, who was represented by Senior Special Assistant to the President on Niger Delta Affairs,

Chief Edobor Iyamu, said the commencement of academic activities at the premier maritime university in Nigeria was another example of how the President Muhammadu Buhari government was "walking the talk in the Niger Delta".

In his own remarks, the Pro-Chancellor of the University and Chairman, Governing Council, Chief Timipre Sylva, commended NIMASA's vision and support for the university, saying the institution has demonstrated capacity to play a key role in the global maritime industry. Sylva said, "NMU has shown great capacity for rapid growth and development, a defining characteristic of upward mobile organisations the world over."

He added, "We are fully persuaded that it is only a matter of time before this premier maritime university in Nigeria will play significant national, regional and global roles."

NOR-SHIPPING 2019: Dakuku Puts Nigeria on Front Burner

With an eye on foreign direct investment, the NIMASA Director-General sells Nigeria's investment promise to the world. **Okey Ibeke** reports

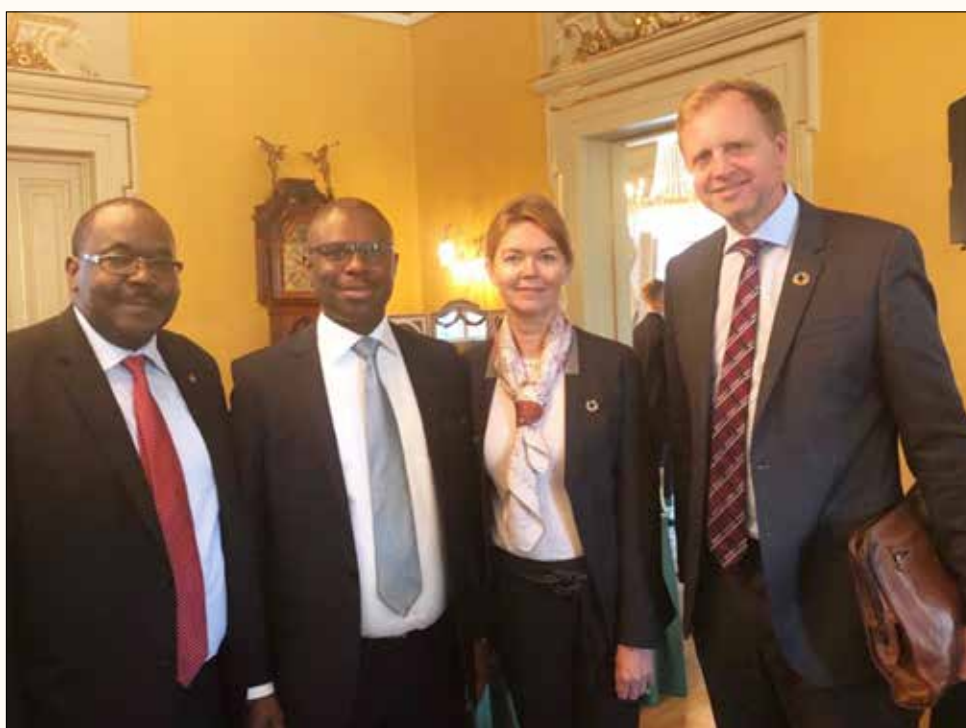
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or-Shipping is an international shipping and maritime event that takes place in Oslo, Norway every two years since 1965. Here, maritime, ocean and business meet to connect, build relationships, discover opportunities and tackle challenges. It is one of the leading international shipping events and an important meeting place for the shipping industry. For participants from all over the world that attended this year's edition, it was quite a rewarding and spectacular experience. It brought together who's who of leading figures from shipping, ocean industries, politics, business, finance

and more.

According to the organisers, Nor-Shipping 2019 was the most successful ever with a record 50,000 participants from all over the world attending the official event between 3 and 7 June – an increase of 34% over the 2017 figures.

A total number of 300 high-level speakers participated across more than 220 conferences and events, delivering valuable knowledge on subjects as varied as cyber security, collaboration, de-carbonization, green financing, alternative fuels, renewables, digitalization, gender equality and evolving ocean regulations, port development, amongst other key issues.



L-R: Mr. Sheindu Juvenal of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO); Chairman, Association of African Maritime Administrations (AAMA)/Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dr. Dakuku Peterside; Chief Sustainability Officer and the CEO of the United Nations (UN) Global Compact, Ms. Lise Kingo; and Dey Norse Veritas - Germanische Lloyd's (DNV GL) Group, Mr. Bjorn K. Haugland, at the ongoing Nor-Shipping Conference and Exhibition in Oslo, Norway, June 4, 2019

This year's edition of the Conference also attracted a broad range of global leaders, from a diverse array of business, political, academic and regulatory backgrounds who delivered valuable takeaways right across the board.

The conference afforded the distinguished participants and global visionaries the opportunity to celebrate successes, outline challenges, and steer a course for the development of the industry, sharing their thoughts on some of today's and tomorrow's most pressing issues.

The speakers covered the most crucial areas for maritime and ocean businesses. From cyber risk and security, through to evolving maritime regulations, innovative digital technology, changing market and geopolitical drivers, new energy demands, and, crucially, enabling sustainability, both commercially and environmentally.

These elite speakers and contributors included Admiral Michael Rogers, Norway's former director of the National Security Agency (NSA), Nobel Laureate (Economics) prize winner Paul M. Romer, IMO Secretary General, Kitack Lim, Ann-Christian Andersen, Technip FMC's Chief Digital Officer, Geir Haoy, CEO Kongsberg, DNV GL's Remi Eriksen, Lise Kingo, Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and

Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg, amongst others.

Among the audience were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon of Norway, government officials, delegates from the UN, Ambassadors, top CEO's and maritime professionals.

Nigeria featured prominently in Nor Shipping 2019 with a strong team led by the Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Dakuku Peterside, and NIMASA Board Chairman, Gen. Jonathan Garba (rtd). The governor of Cross River State, Prof Ben Ayade, President of Shipowners Association of Nigeria (SOAN), Dr. MK George Onyung, NIMASA officials and prominent Nigerian maritime players were also at the event.

NIGERIA'S DAY AT THE CONFERENCE

Nigeria's day at the conference was quite remarkable; remarkable in the sense that ordinarily, it would have been a disastrous outing for the delegates and Nigeria, but for the ingenuity, courage, and the never-say-die Nigerian spirit of Dakuku Peterside, the Director-General of NIMASA.

A few hours before Nigeria could take the centre-



NIMASA stand at the ongoing Nor-Shipping Conference and Exhibition in Oslo, Norway, June 4, 2019

R-L: DG, NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside; Norwegian Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Jens-Peter Kjemprud; General Manager, Operations, Charkin Maritime, Capt. Joseph Owodeha; and President of Shipowners Association of Nigeria (SOAN), Dr. Mkgeorge Onyung, at an interactive session with the global maritime community, at the Nor Shipping Conference 2019, in Oslo, Norway.



stage, the news filtered in that India had placed a red alert on Nigeria, banning seafarers of Indian origin from working in various coastal states in the Gulf of Guinea, which includes Nigeria, Ghana and other West African countries. The circular containing the ban by the government signed by its Director of Shipping, Capt. Anish Joseph said armed robbery attacks in the Gulf of Guinea were becoming more violent, with a greater tendency to attack, hijack and rob vessels as well as kidnap crew. The circular drummed up what it called the rise in crime rate at the Gulf of Guinea.

At first, the news was being hushed around; then, it blew into the open, and all eyes were on Nigeria. But Dakuku Peterside, was undaunted as he mounted the rostrum. With perfect aplomb, the erudite NIMASA DG took on the whole world first, defusing the tension created by the news from India, and then selling Nigeria's maritime sector and the entire economy to the world. By the time he was done, it was applause for Nigeria. Instead of ending the day with head bowed, Nigerians stood tall and walked away with pride.

The NIMASA DG started off with the news making the rounds concerning the insecurity of Nigeria's waters and the Gulf of Guinea. He debunked the claim that Nigerian waters were unsafe, and condemned the exaggeration of the true situation at the Gulf of Guinea. He then told his audience the giant strides Nigeria had taken to combat piracy and criminality in her waters and the Gulf of Guinea which are yielding positive results.

Peterside said Nigeria had recorded remarkable success in tackling insecurity along its own stretch of the Gulf of Guinea due to robust investment in intelligence and maritime security assets, as well as the commitment of Nigerian authorities to ending the threats, and this has led to more investments in the fight against maritime crime.

These investments made under Nigeria's Deep Blue Project will see to the acquisition of two special mission aircraft, three helicopters and unmanned air vehicles. Others are two special mission vessels and 17 interceptor patrol crafts. This is in addition to the land assets which include 16 armoured vehicles and an intervention team of 340 highly trained personnel. The entire project also makes use of satellite technology that will monitor Nigeria's exclusive economic zone and feed real time information to a command and control centre.

He asserted that the Nigerian portion of the Gulf has become relatively free of security threats, and is now relatively safe. This claim was corroborated by the Norwegian ambassador to Nigeria, Jens-Petter Kjemprud.

Mr. Kjemprud said Nigeria's tackling of the security issue had been so impressive that for more than one year he had not had call for help from Norwegian seafarers plying the route. Already, Norway and Denmark have pledged their commitment to partner with Nigeria in organizing the Global Maritime Security Conference to be held in Abuja in October.

Peterside said security was only one area of improvement in the maritime component of the ease of doing business in Nigeria. He pointed at other interventions of government to include the building of a modern railway system to link all the ports to the hinterland, investment in truck transit parks, fixing of bad access roads and the reduction of the number of agencies at the ports.

The NIMASA DG took the opportunity to invite the entire maritime world to the global security summit Nigeria will host in October. The summit is aimed at bringing the world together to collaborate in developing a robust maritime security system to combat the security threats in the Gulf of Guinea. The global security summit will afford the international



“There is need for a lot of investment in training and development of maritime professionals.”

community a platform to develop actionable strategies to finally put an end to piracy and other security threats in the region.

That done, Dakuku Peterside then went ahead to showcase Nigeria’s vast investment opportunities and maritime potentials, urging the international community to tap into the huge business opportunities that exist in Nigeria. These investment opportunities, he said, are in ship building and repairs, fleet development, ship financing, port infrastructure development, maritime tourism, renewable energy, ferry services, seafarer training, research and development, offshore logistics for the country’s oil industry, block chain technology, and aquaculture etc.

Specifically, he told the world maritime community that opportunities abound in Nigeria in ship repair and maintenance services, tug operating services, Line handling vessels service, Dredging equipment services, mooring services, specialized piers for chemicals or gases, ICT components/spare parts, repair/maintenance and back-up systems, Cargo handling equipment leasing for empty container operations (handling/transfer), quay apron, transit shed and terminal operations, fire-fighting vessel services, communications patrol services leasing, and safety and inspection services in keeping with ISPS code.

Dakuku told his enthralled audience that Nigeria’s maritime industry holds a lot of promise for economic development. One of which is the gradual migration of Nigeria’s oil and gas exploration towards deep offshore, off the coast and in the coastal waters. This means an increase in the demand for more offshore support vessels (FPSOs), tankers and platforms. He said huge investments are required in developing these areas of the oil and gas industry.

He also told them that there are huge investment opportunities in ship building to meet national and cabotage requirements, emphasizing that “dry docking

remains a critical area of investment with over 3,500 vessels operating in Nigerian waters and largely being dry-docked outside the shores.”

He said Nigeria’s marine insurance subsector is one of the most under-developed compared to its peers, and a number of critical factors that have the potential to drive growth in the area, such as technology, mergers and acquisition, recapitalization to underwrite big transactions have been identified as game changers for investors in the industry. In addition, there are huge opportunities for intending investors as ship owners are called upon to consider establishing a Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Club.

The NIMASA DG also talked about manpower and human capacity development which he said was crucial to the development of Nigeria’s maritime and shipping sector, stating that large opportunities exist in establishment, upgrading of facilities and management of maritime institutions.

“We need to train our young generation to develop cross disciplinary skills required in today’s world by providing professional development course focusing on advanced maritime technologies, cyber security, maritime and port management, supply chain management etc. There is need for a lot of investment in training and development of maritime professionals,” he declared.

He also talked about opportunities in haulage and storage services (warehousing), saying that Nigeria is striving to adapt to changes and develop in sync with shifts in the broader trade and logistics ecosystem. He explained that as ports are now much more than transit points, providing added value in such areas as the processing of products, financial breaks in free trade zones, specialized packing methods etc. investors are needed in these areas.

Similarly, opportunities also exist in supply chain logistics (transport of raw materials usually in bulk)

which accounts for two thirds of shipping traffic, while distributing logistics (manufactured products usually transported in containers) account for the third. Haulage business provides a lot of opportunities and so do warehouses or distribution houses outside the ports, Dakuku intimated his audience.

He emphasised that robust investment opportunities exist in marine support services, ship brokerage, port development and modernisation, construction of new green-field ports, particularly deep sea ports. He stated that multiple opportunities for the development of deep-sea ports are available considering Nigeria's vast coastline stretching over 853kms.

Dakuku extended invitation to the international gathering to invest in Nigeria's Inland Container Depots and Multimodal Transport. He stated that inland container depots are needed in Nigeria because of the vastness and diversity of the country's landscape and the resulting distance between some major commercial centres and the coastline. This has created the need to bridge the service gap occasioned by the lack of access to seaport services.

Hinterland connectivity & Multimodal Logistics was another area the NIMASA DG marketed at the event, telling his listeners that Nigeria was modernizing its rail corridors and connecting narrow gauges at the ports to speed up evacuation of goods. He told them that Nigeria needs investments in this area through public private partnership.

The NIMASA DG also took time to explain to the international community why Nigeria should be an investor's destination in Africa. He explained that Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with over 200 million people. It is the biggest economy in Africa, with Lagos, its commercial capital, as the sixth largest economy in Africa. Nigeria maritime industry is the most active maritime sector in West and Central Africa with 65% – 70% of shipments headed to West and Central Africa ending up in Nigeria.

"We have more port complexes than any other country in Africa. We have six port complexes. And we have more terminals than any other country in Africa. And you can now understand when I say that Nigeria's maritime is the most active in the West and



Central Africa.”

In addition, Nigeria has a coastline of 853 kilometers and exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles. Nigeria also has the most navigable inland waterway in the world, spanning over an area of 10,000 kilometers, and one of the biggest delta regions in the world.

He proudly announced that Nigeria has a proven gas reserve of 112 trillion cubic feet –the biggest gas reserve in the world. It is also one of the world’s greatest oil producing nations, making Nigeria a strategic energy economy in the world.

Dakuku did not leave out Nigeria’s vibrant financial sector, stating that the country has one of the biggest financial services sector in Africa. He remarked that Nigerian banks are present in virtually every African country. “Our services sector is top match. So, if anybody is thinking about investment in Africa, which in any case is the current attractive economic frontier, basic instinct will tell you, that you think of Nigeria, and even more so, the maritime Services sector,” he said.

He also wooed ship owners to Nigeria’s ship registry, telling them that some incentives have been put in

place to enable a foreigner to bring his vessel and register it with Nigeria’s shipping Registry. “We’re automating all vessel registration processes. You don’t have to come to Nigeria to register your vessel; you could register your vessel online, provide all the information needed and when the information is verified, you would be given provisional registration.” He told them that registering their ships in Nigeria comes with a lot of incentives such as foreign vessels registered under Nigeria Ship Registry enjoying the benefits reserved for local vessels, including the plan to reserve preferential berthing spaces in Nigerian ports for locally registered vessels. Other incentives are tax exemptions, import duty reductions, and quick response to any challenge involving Nigerian registered vessels.

The NIMASA DG also told the audience about Nigeria’s efforts to build a national fleet/carrier, disclosing that imports generated by the federal, state and local governments will be reserved for the national carrier, as well as 50% of oil and gas cargoes and West Africa.

Adroitly, Dakuku ended his speech from where he started, identifying insecurity as a key challenge. However, he said Nigeria had put together a spectrum of maritime security strategy to deal with the challenges of maritime insecurity. Under this spectrum is a legal framework to fight piracy and other maritime crimes, saying that Nigeria’s legislature had passed an Anti-Piracy Bill which is awaiting presidential assent. He reiterated that Nigeria was also building up response capability under the deep blue sea project which is geared towards protection of maritime assets with Special Mission aircraft, special mission telecommunications gadgets, 17 interceptor special mission vessels and Command and Control Center, with a complement of armoured vehicles to patrol areas of adjoining littoral states, and a standing military force to deal with criminals and sea pirates.

In addition, he told them that Nigeria was working with its regional partners to strengthen regional maritime security system to fight piracy in the region. He also reiterated that as part of anti-piracy strategy, Nigeria was organizing a global conference on maritime security on Gulf of Guinea in October this year, and invited all to the event. By the time Dakuku left the stage, it was cheers and respect for Nigeria.

• Okey IBEKE is Editor-Chief, Business and Maritime West Africa



Female seafarers at the Day of the Seafarer celebration in Lagos



Women and Seafaring: The Dilemma of Going Onboard

Obiageli Chuma-Ugbo advocates deliberate efforts to create conditions conducive to women participation in maritime

W

hen the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) came up with the statistics that only two per cent of seafarers across the globe were women, it came as a surprise to many people, especially those that are not really participants in the maritime sector. Some

even tried to juxtapose those statistics with the situation in the aviation sector, where a very large percentage of crew members on aircraft across the world are females. In fact, some airlines are celebrating all-female crews from one destination to the other. And that is an industry perceived to be more dangerous than the maritime industry.

What then is the issue? Why do we have this meagre number of female participants in the seafaring profession? The question raises a lot of dust. But from experience, if one looks at maritime generally, bringing the Nigerian context into focus, the first question to ask is, how have women fared in the maritime sector.

Interestingly, because of the nature of women, their lifestyle of dedication to any cause they are pursuing, you would find out that the women that have taken advantage of the opportunities in the maritime sector have been very successful. For instance, the Secretary-General of the Abuja Memorandum of Understanding on Port State and Flag State Control, Mrs. Mfon Usoro, is someone you cannot but talk about. Due to her strides and footprint in the African maritime sector everyone that comes in contact with her knows that she is an encyclopedia of maritime. You also have somebody like Vicky Hastruup, and not

to forget the Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority, Hadiza Bala Usman, all carving out a niche for themselves in the industry.

So do we then say it is the remuneration package that has discouraged women from taking a career in seafaring? This is obviously not so, because seafaring is an international career which is well regulated and payment for seafaring is mostly in foreign currencies, based on internationally acceptable standards. It, therefore, means that financially, every seafarer, if not taking the whole responsibility of the family, would greatly support their spouses.

A major challenge could be lack of awareness. You cannot just jump on board without getting the necessary qualifications and when you talk of courses like nautical engineering, marine engineering and the like, you don't find a lot of young females aspiring to be engineers not to talk of taking these specialised fields in engineering. The problem is lack of proper education of our brilliant young females before enrolling into the higher institutions. Perhaps, if maritime agencies take it upon themselves to address the issue by catching them young it would be of immense benefit.

Another issue is the compatibility of vessels to the female gender. It is an irony that vessels are referred to as females but they are not often constructed to suit the female gender. I am of the opinion that modern vessels should start having dedicated female restrooms, including areas designated for females alone, so that they can have their own private time onboard.

Nigeria Invites World to Global Maritime Security Summit

• **IMO, Norway, Denmark, Others Support**

N

igeria has invited the entire maritime world to a global security summit meant to engender collaboration in the development of a robust security system to combat the security threats in the Gulf of Guinea.

The Global Maritime Security Conference (GMSC), which the country will host in Abuja from October 7 to 9, will afford the international community a platform to develop actionable strategies to finally put an end to piracy and other security threats in the region.

The Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, (NIMASA), the country's maritime regulator, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, issued the invitation at the Nor-Shipping Conference in Oslo, Norway. He was speaking at a forum for international investors on the Investment Opportunities in Nigeria's Blue Economy.

The Director-General said the summit will also afford the international community an opportunity to tap into the vast investment potentials in the Nigerian maritime industry. These potentials span shipbuilding and repairs, fleet development, ship financing, port infrastructure development, maritime tourism, renewable energy ferry



services, seafarer training, research and development, offshore logistics for the country's oil industry, and aquaculture.

Dakuku noted, "The conference will bring together officials from international agencies, governments, donor partners, shipping firms, oil and gas industry, navies and coastguards and maritime regulators across the globe, to discuss the options for tackling security challenges in the Gulf of Guinea, an area which accounts for more than 70 per cent of Africa's oil and gas production and five per cent of global proven energy reserves."

The objectives of the conference include defining the precise nature and scope of coordinated regional responses to maritime insecurity, evaluating the relevance of various external interventions, and moving towards policy harmonisation and regional cooperation. The conference will also tackle threats to maritime security, strategise alternative approach to prevent cyber security threats and advocate deeper global commitment to the deployment of resources for ending maritime insecurity within the region in the shortest time possible.

WOMEN AND SEAFARING: THE DILEMMA OF GOING ONBOARD

Continued from page 50 →

The issue of staying away from the family for a long period of time can also be a reason for less female participation in the seafaring profession. However, the world is now a global village because of the advent of technology. You can now do video calls. In fact, you can virtually do everything you need to do with your immediate family because there is no difference between travelling abroad and being onboard vessels. Let us not even dare go into robotics where they can be programmed to prepare the meals and take charge of the children's homework. Again, there are a lot of leaves attached to the seafaring profession, so it would not take long before the next visit home.

Well, what most people fail to discuss when they encourage females to go onboard is the issue of sexual harassment onboard. Considering the fact that it is a male-dominated environment, how do we protect the female gender in this confined area? It should not be

a challenge because a lot has been done to ensure that the issue of sexual harassment is dealt with in the workplace on land. Why can't this be applied to the vessels, because it is also a work environment? If appropriate sanctions are attached to erring seafarers it would go a long way to deter potential harassers.

It is heartwarming that the IMO has taken up the challenge of encouraging gender equality onboard vessels with the theme of this year's World Maritime Day focusing on gender equality. To further highlight the question of gender balance, some IMO member-nations, including Nigeria, have also adopted this theme for the commemoration of the Day of the Seafarers. So in no distant future, the number of female seafarers will swell for the benefit of all, and very soon we will celebrate an all-female crew voyage on a merchant vessel. I am onboard with gender equality. Please, come and join me.

Women of Blue Economy

Ajala P. Agaba, Principal Admin Officer with NIMASA, shares her feelings on the issues of inclusiveness and gender balance in the maritime industry



W

hen we consider the phrase, “Empowering Women in the Maritime Community,” what comes to mind may be, “women are looking to impose yet another feminist agenda or another avenue for the comparison of genders.” But that is not what the World Maritime Day theme for 2019 should inspire. The theme should ignite a need for more inclusive and balanced industry, hinged on competence, fair, and equal opportunities.

The maritime world and its complex mix of activities have always fascinated me. More so, as a daughter of an experienced, skilled and well-travelled Master Mariner. My first words as a child were probably “ocean” and “boats”. I have always had a fascination for the Seas – in my mind’s eye, the long periods my father was away sailing made him a mysterious hero of the waves. And the few times my mother and I were opportune to join him on his voyages set off a chain of questions: Could I also be a Captain? Could I navigate a vessel through turbulent waters? Could I take responsibility for the lives of all on board of this great big ship?

Maritime was not my first career choice, but it was as though the universe was bent on aligning my destiny with my childhood subconscious aspirations, and further down my life’s timeline, I found myself working in maritime capacity building for the Nigerian government. In my little way, I have found it imperative to sensitise, encourage and coach young girls and women to explore a career path in seafaring and other maritime roles.

In the coming years, the full potential of the blue economy all around the globe will be greatly maximised, when more women come on board to balance out the maritime sector. I am very proud to be in the maritime industry today, and pressing for more female inclusion as well as the preservation of the seas and its abundant resources for the coming generations.

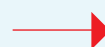
Going forward, I strongly believe the inclusion of more women across the value chain of the maritime industry will portend steady, positive and progressive growth in the

global maritime environment and in maritime businesses. This will be, because a lot of women no longer consider themselves along stereotypical characterisation of fragile, delicate and squeamish creatures that require protecting or shielding. But, as competent, intelligent and bold individuals who are more than capable of rolling up their sleeves and solving problems in an increasingly knowledge and technology-driven world.

When it comes to women, in order to change the narrative and offer different paradigms, women should increasingly focus on training and acquiring necessary skillset and competencies in every field of the maritime industry. So that regardless of whether it be in the boardroom, the engine room, the bridge, quay side or any side of the broad spectrum of the maritime profession, women can bring their skills, patience and rectitude to bear, just as we have proven capable in all other endeavours like medicine, IT, law, engineering, finance and entertainment.

Furthermore, for the women who are contemplating moving into the maritime and the young women who are yet to decide, the crucial factor for their sensitisation is MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING. Education is such an integral part of economic development, and with education being applied in strategic ways, a country can move from being classed as “developing” to “developed”.

The United Nations Sustainable Goals 4 (Quality Education) and 5 (Gender Equality) are in my opinion intricately interwoven, which reinforces the importance of the call for the equalisation of educational standards for every child. This same logic can be applied to the maritime industry and the need for the proper inclusion of women by encouraging the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and other multilateral bodies to set up more maritime driven programmes – with the aim of closing the gender gap and opening up areas that specifically discriminate against females, such as accommodation for female seafarers on board ships and electing more women into positions of policy and decision-making.



Oruakpa



Bala



Promotion: NIMASA Makes IMO Representative Director

T

he Governing Board of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) has approved the promotion of the Nigerian Alternate Permanent Representative at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Mr. Dikko Bala, to Director. Also

elevated to the position of Director in the agency was the Deputy Director, Maritime Labour Services, Mrs. Rita Uruakpa.

Other beneficiaries of the promotion exercise were Mr. Kazir Musa, who was promoted to Deputy Director, and 18 officers, who were elevated to Assistant Directors. Two hundred and thirty six other staff across all grade levels also benefited from the exercise.

The promotions were ratified at a meeting of the Governing Board of the agency held in Lagos under the chairmanship of Major-General Jonathan India Garba (rtd).

The Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, congratulated the promoted staff and charged them to continue to be committed to the agency's vision of taking the Nigerian maritime sector to an enviable height.

Dakuku stated, "Our determination to continue to motivate the agency's workforce remains unwavering. This was a rigorous but fair process, and in this wise, I

will like to congratulate the newly promoted staff and to say to them that the reward for hard work is more work.

"On our part as Executive Management, we will continue to ensure that staff are promoted as and when due so that they can remain motivated to give their best in the agency's drive to reposition the maritime industry."

In their comments, the promoted staff said before now, staff of the agency were hardly promoted, stressing that the story changed with the coming of the Dakuku-led management.

According to one of the promoted officers, who craved anonymity, "More than ever, NIMASA staff have remained committed to the agency's cause, knowing full well that every hard work is rewarded by the management. This promotion exercise has clearly shown that the Dr. Dakuku Peterside-led management is determined to actualise its promise to take the Nigerian maritime sector to the next level by encouraging professionalism."

Chairman, Governing Board of the Agency enjoined the newly promoted staff to be more dedicated to their duties, saying the promotions will come with more responsibilities.

This promotion exercise is the third under the Dakuku management since he assumed office about three years ago.

WOMEN OF BLUE ECONOMY

Continued from page 52

The maritime sector is a hallmark of safety consciousness and like in every other field, it is affected increasingly by IT, IT Security, and new breakthrough safety-based technologies, which means there is always room for improvement and upgrade. In order to tackle the challenges arising within our Industry, the women already in the industry should not be left out of training and workshop opportunities, in order to upgrade their skills and give them the competitive advantage they require.

Maritime Organisations and Administrations across the world, especially in Africa, with the support of women in the industry, should continuously raise awareness on the issue of empowering women in the maritime industry. This can be achieved through enlightenment campaigns, career fairs, and counselling, especially for early teenage girls in secondary schools. Seminars, mentorship schemes, and symposiums should be organised to encourage free

interaction and networking among women in the industry, women in training, and those yet to secure employment.

The establishment of a healthy quota for female employment by maritime institutions should also be encouraged, in a bid to boost female inclusion. The maritime industry should be a robust ground for fertilisation of ideas and shared experiences by women across all strata in the industry.

Associations, such as Women's International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA), are currently making very powerful statements on the issue of gender equality in maritime. It is hoped that more maritime promoting and unifying incentives would increase in the years to come, because little drops of water, they say, eventually create a mighty ocean – an ocean of dedicated men and women all driving the same agenda, creating high functioning and profitable Blue Economy across the globe.



Dakuku (right) exchanging pleasantries with Chief Operating Officer (Upstream), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Alhaji Bello Rabi, while Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transportation, Alhaji Sabiu Zakari, looks on at the Offshore Technology Conference in Houston Texas, United States

Nigerian Waters Now Safer, FG Tells Texas OTC

T

he Federal Government has assured the international oil and gas community that the Nigerian maritime sector is safe for investment, saying a special tax regime is being considered to grow capacity in the industry.

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Alhaji Sabiu Zakari, stated this while addressing journalists at a technical workshop on deep sea exploration on the sidelines of the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston Texas. Zakari noted that Nigeria was aware of the drift towards deep sea exploration and policies to enhance effective maritime transport were now being considered by the Federal Government.

He said the recent report by the International Maritime Bureau that piracy declined in Nigerian waters in the first quarter of 2019 was an attestation that efforts by the President Muhammadu Buhari administration to guarantee safety and security in the maritime sector had started yielding fruit.

Zakari stated, "Nigerian waters are safe. NIMASA deep blue project, in collaboration with the Nigerian Navy and all other security agencies in Nigeria, is already in motion and will use the latest technology to track all vessels in Nigerian waters and reduce criminality to the barest minimum. Foreigners with genuine business interest are welcome to invest in Nigeria. So many have come and are enjoying the benefits of their investment."

The Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, said that the agency had commenced regulatory reforms to ensure a business-friendly maritime environment to spur economic growth hinged on both foreign and indigenous investors. He assured the international community that

NIMASA was committed to growing in-country capacity so that collaboration between Nigerians and foreigners could take place without fear of compromising standards.

According to him, "We are building up capacity, and creating the right regulatory framework for the Nigerian maritime sector. We believe that our three dimensional approach of creating the right regulatory environment, providing easy access to capital, building capacity, and facilitating access to business opportunities will hasten indigenous capacity development. Regulation ought not to stifle businesses, regulation ought to support business, spur economic growth, without endangering the environment and the people."

On Cabotage implementation in Nigeria, Dakuku said the agency was in discussion with the Federal Ministry of Finance and the Nigerian Customs Service on the need to create a special tariff regime for those importing vessels and vessel parts into the country

He stated, "At the moment, a temporary import permit mainly granted foreigners attract just one per cent, but importation of vessels by Nigerians attract 13 per cent. So it's difficult to compete."

"We are engaging the Nigeria Customs Service on the need to review this regime. We have also made appreciable progress in our discussions with the Central Bank of Nigeria to see that Nigerians in the maritime sector have access to single-digit facilities so they can compete favourably with their international counterparts."

Meanwhile, Chief Operating Officer, Upstream, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Alhaji Bello Rabi, during a visit to the NIMASA stand at the OTC, commended the agency's management for its encouragement of collaboration to grow the industry in Nigeria.

CSR: Rotary Honours NIMASA for Outstanding Performance

R

otary International, District 9110, has honoured the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) with an Award for Outstanding CSR Programme for its stellar Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions. The award was bestowed on the agency at the club's recent Friendship Night, which also doubled as the launch of the Governor's Magazine, was particularly in recognition of NIMASA's recent donations to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and victims of natural and man-made disasters across the country.

Besides the donation of relief materials to IDPs and flood victims in 20 states of the federation, the support to the Nigerian Heart Foundation (NHF) and the Nigerian Squash Federation (NSF) were among charitable activities the Rotary Club said made NIMASA eligible for the award.

The Director-General of NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside, who was represented by Deputy Director and Head, Corporate Communications, Mr. Isichei Osambgi, said while receiving the award, "We thank the Rotary Club for this honour. It is surely a spur for us to do more of the things we have been doing in

our little space to improve the state of our country and our fellow citizens.

"NIMASA is a socially responsible citizen. Though our core mandates are to regulate and promote shipping as well as other related maritime ventures in Nigeria, we are deeply conscious of the difficulties of natural disaster victims. We are always with them in empathy and physical steps to ameliorate their situation."

He added, "As a responsible corporate citizen, NIMASA will continue to back the Federal Government's efforts to give hope to Nigerians, no matter the challenges we face."

District Governor, Rotary 9110, Rotary International, Mr. Kola Sodipo, who presented the award, said, "The agency deserves the award given to it because of the CSR activities it has been carrying out across the federation, which has really touched the lives of Nigerians at the point they need help the most."

Sodipo thanked NIMASA for its continued support to the Rotary Club, saying, "The more you give, the more that comes to you."

The event was well attended by dignitaries from all walks of life, including the German Consul General, businessmen, and socialites.



L-R: Deputy Director, Corporate Communications, NIMASA, Mr. Isichei Osambgi, representing the DG; German Consul General, Dr. Stefan Traumann; District Governor, Rotary International District 9110, Dr. Kola Sodipo; and his wife, Mrs. Nike Sodipo, at the presentation of the Rotary Outstanding Invaluable Company Award to NIMASA for its Outstanding Corporate Social Responsibility Efforts in Nigeria



L-R: NIMASA Board Chairman, Gen. Jonathan Idia Garba (Rtd); President, Seaport Terminal Operators Association of Nigeria (STOAN), Dr. Vicky Haastrup; DG NIMASA, Dr. Dakuku Peterside; wife of Vice President, Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo; Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Mr. Rabi'u Zakari; Chairman, Shipowners Forum, Mrs. Margaret Orakwusi; and Executive Director, Marine and Operations, Nigerian Ports Authority, Dr. Sokonte Davies



Executive Director, Finance and Administration, NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh (left), and Rector, Maritime Academy of Nigeria, Oron, Commodore Duja Effedua (Rtd)



Dakuku and some stakeholders



Mrs Osinbajo (middle) and stakeholders



Dakuku (left), and Executive Secretary, Nigerian Shippers' Council, Hassan Bello



L-R: Garba; Assistant Director, Maritime Labour Services, Mr. Ibrahim Jibril, NIMASA, Alhaji Ibrahim Jibril; Executive Director, Maritime Labour and Cabotage Services, Mr. Gambo Ahmed; and Director, Special Duties, Hajia Lami Tumaka



L-R: Dakuku, Mrs. Osinbajo, and President-General, Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN), Comrade Adewale Adeganju



L-R: A stakeholder, Jamoh, Obiageli Obi, Effedua, Ahmed, Hamman, and Chief Operating Officer, Starz Investments Company Limited, and Chairperson, Finance and Membership Committee, Ship Owners Association of Nigeria (SOAN), Ms. Iroghama Ogbeifun-Obuofoforibo



Executive Director, Operations, NIMASA, Engr. Rotimi Fashakin (left), and Garba



Jamoh (left), and Former Director, NIMASA, Mrs. Ego Nwokocho



Deputy Director, Public Relations, NIMASA, Mr. Isichei Osamgbi (right), and Deputy Director, Procurement, Obom Otonye



Bello (left) and a stakeholder



Mrs. Obiageli Chuma-Ugbo (left) and Mrs. Nkiru



NIMASA staff during a health walk exercise as part of the agency's commitment to the wellbeing of employees



HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Impact on Employers, Employees

Ehi Iden, an occupational health and safety expert, discusses the effect of behaviour and lifestyle on the working population

In our studies and work with several organisations we have identified that chronic disease and lifestyle-related health issues are on the rise globally, raising potentially disruptive implications for workforce planning and development. In order to effectively plan for a sustainable workforce, employers with global reach are now compelled to refine business strategies with employee well-being in mind.

As the economies of different countries and organisations are affected by the new global economic hardship, more pressure has been placed on executives and organisations like never before to uphold their organisations through sustainable innovations and strategies. This expectation is worsening the level of health outcomes of organisations through stress, burnouts, sleep deprivation, increased blood pressure, poor heart health, very critical timelines, leading to overwhelming mental and bodily task and overall health risks. These collective health issues, if allowed to prolong, will make us all end up with chronic diseases in the long term.

Retirement years are becoming characterised by so much illnesses, which are outcomes of our behaviour and lifestyles during our active work age.

Smart companies across the world are enacting innovative health and wellness programmes to stimulate

improved employee health. Motivated by a desire to positively impact their employees' health and well-being, as well as driven by defined business goals and redefine their work cultures.

Achieving business success is not only predicated on business strategies and processes, the health and wellness of the work population cannot also be overemphasised. The question is, how integral is a healthy population to our overall business success?

What is healthy population? This is the healthy outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within a group. Though there are existing health plans (health insurance, etc) in most organisations, the need to move from focusing on curative healthcare approach within the workplace and moving to preventive health underpinned in health and wellness programmes is of urgent importance. The need for organisations to focus on social ecological models within the workplace and consider environmental cues that influence overall health and wellness has become expedient.

There are two major factors that have become key influencers of continuous presence of chronic disease in our workplaces. They are:

- Dietary pattern or style
- Physical inactivity

Dietary pattern: What we eat becomes who we

end up becoming. Our dietary pattern and eating habit has grossly changed in the past two decades and the need to revert the trend has become a global anticipation. Most organisations have common food sources and the need to tie the food types into our wellness and health programmes is also of overall importance.

Eating behaviour has also gone very bad. Binge eating and disordered eating have characterised eating pattern and this is fuelling body sizes and body weight accumulation. It will interest us to know that body weight and body fat composition are pointers to our collective health risks. Psychology of eating states that people eat for different reasons; these talk about hunger, appetite and satiety. We should eat not because we have appetite for food but because we are truly hungry. Eating because we have presence of food all around us is stimulated by appetite and this is one underlying cause of increased body weight.

There is the concept of energy balance which we must all apply in ensuring a healthy lifestyle and body weight. Energy intake over energy expenditure is what energy balance represents. If you must eat much, be sure you have enough physical activities to expend the amount of food taken in. This will keep you healthy.

Physical inactivity: Physical activity is not same as physical exercise, this is unintentional or unplanned physical activities we get involved in. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscle and require energy expenditure.

Physical inactivity has become a huge cause of chronic diseases. As technology improves, mechanisation of the workplaces increases and this fuels sedentary lifestyle among workers. The guideline for healthy living says sitting in a position for one hour and above at a single stretch is unsafe and unhealthy to us all. Studies have revealed that sitting time is associated with increased risk of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other diseases.

Most smart organisations in their attempt to improve healthy lifestyle have adopted the policy of having a central printer system, which is kept far from everyone's seat. This means everyone will have to deliberately move from his or her seat to pick documents sent for printing. This means unintentional muscle activity has become part of the workplace engineering processes. This should be encouraged and emulated in workplace health and wellbeing designs.

• *Iden can be reached at: ehi@ohsm.com.ng*

NIMASA Employee of the Month



AYODELE JOHN OLUKAYODE
MARITIME LABOUR DEPARTMENT
APRIL 2019



NWEKE VINCENT IKENNA (CNA)
FINANCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
MAY 2019



OBIAGELI CHUMA-UGBO
PUBLIC RELATIONS UNIT
JUNE 2019

Global Maritime Security Conference 2019

7TH - 9TH OCT, 2019

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE,
ABUJA, NIGERIA

THEMATIC SESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE ARE:

- Maritime Security, Legal Framework and Regulatory Issues in the Gulf of Guinea
- Maritime Governance and the Blue Economy
- Technology Deployment in Maritime Security: Emerging Issues
- Maritime Security: Moving Beyond Policy Statements to Taking Collective Actions
- Balancing Geopolitical, Economic and Geostrategic Interests in Maritime Security Initiatives
- Maritime Security: Evolving Roles, Models, Missions and Capabilities
- Future of Maritime Security: Trends, Emerging Threat Vectors and Capability Requirements
- Ensuring Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea: Effective Regional Cooperation and Roles of International Partners
- Enhancing Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)
- Maritime Security Partnerships: The Roles of Civil Societies
- Harmonized Standard Operating Procedures (HSOP) a model for cooperation

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