

SPEECH BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE GHANA MARITIME AUTHORITY,  
MR. KWAME OWUSU ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD MARITIME DAY  
CELEBRATIONS IN GHANA ON 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017

MR. CHAIRMAN

HONOURABLE MINISTER

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE IMO,

VICE CHANCELLOR, REGIONAL MARITIME UNIVERSITY

CHIEF EXECUTIVES OF MARITIME AGENCIES PRESENT

DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS

MEMBERS OF THE MARITIME FRATERNITY

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It gives me great pleasure to join you today to celebrate the World Maritime Day. As you may be aware, this day is set aside by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Specialized Agency responsible for regulating international shipping to recognize the contribution of the maritime industry to global economic development.

The Day which is celebrated across the globe during the last week in September also provides an opportunity to reflect on particular aspects of IMO's mission to ensure maritime safety, maritime security, efficient shipping and the protection of the marine environment from pollution.

The theme for this year's World Maritime Day celebration is "*connecting ships, ports and People*" and is intended to provide focus on the many

diverse players involved in the maritime industry and also raise awareness on the relevance of the IMO as a global regulatory body for international shipping.

The maritime industry is one of the most specialized and perhaps the most internationalized of industries. The IMO from its inception has always recognized that the best way of improving shipping is through the development of international rules and standards that are implemented and uniformly applied by all countries

The global economy today, depends on shipping as a prime facilitator with 90% of world trade being carried by the international shipping industry providing the only really cost effective way to transport raw materials, finished goods, fuel and foodstuff over great distance.

Mr. Chairman,

Since its inception, the IMO has developed and adopted a comprehensive framework of global regulations covering the maritime industry. Under these regulatory framework, shipping has become progressively safer, more efficient more environmentally friendly. As a result of the work of the IMO, seaborne trade continues to expand and bring more benefits to consumers across the globe.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme for this year's World Maritime Day was chosen within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that was established in 2015 as a global response to the increasingly complex challenges facing our world today.

As a United Nations agency, the IMO has a strong commitment to helping achieve the SDGs. Shipping and ports can play a significant role in helping to create conditions for increased employment, prosperity and stability through promoting maritime trade.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the focal agency for the implementation of the IMO programmes, the Ghana Maritime Authority is also using the world maritime day celebrations to create awareness about its role as a regulator of the maritime industry and also to highlight on some legislative initiatives that are being implemented in pursuance of its statutory mandate.

In this respect, I am pleased to inform you that the Ghana Maritime Authority is taking steps to introduce legislation that seeks to encourage Ghanaian participation in the shipping industry, including the offshore oil and gas sectors. To this end, a draft Cabotage legislation has been prepared and will soon be submitted for stakeholders discussions and Parliamentary consideration. This legislation will reserve trading activities in Ghanaian waters for only Ghanaian registered vessels that are build in Ghana, owned by Ghanaians and manned by Ghanaian seafarers. It is our expectation that the cabotage regime will restrict the use of foreign vessels in our domestic coastal trade and promote the development of indigenous tonnage.

Additionally, the Ghana Maritime Authority, has drafted a Shipping Services Providers Regulations that will again be subjected to stakeholder consultations and eventually be submitted to Parliament for enactment. The draft regulations is intended to regulate the activities of shipping service providers such as shipping agents, freight forwarders and similar service providers with a view to ensuring an efficient, cost effective and orderly provision of shipping services.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Ghana Maritime Authority is committed to the work of the IMO and will continue to partner with it to ensure the implementation of its programmes. To this end the Authority will this year, through the Ministry of Transport seek Cabinet approval for the ratification by Parliament of key IMO Conventions such as 2005 Protocols to the Convention for the

Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and its Protocol relating to Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, the Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks and the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships. Ultimately, the provisions of these Conventions will be incorporated into our domestic law to provide the legal framework for enforcement.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The World Maritime Day is also being marked today to coincide with the 10th Anniversary celebration of the Regional Maritime University. The Ghana Maritime Authority takes this opportunity to congratulate the RMU for the successes it has chalked over the years in making sure that the University remains an excellent centre for maritime education in our sub region and beyond.

The Ghana Maritime Authority will continue to collaborate with the RMU to ensure that the training and certification of Ghanaian seafarers are conducted in accordance with highest international standards in order to give them competitive advantage in the international maritime labour market.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to conclude my remarks by wishing all the maritime agencies and stakeholders a very happy World Maritime Day celebrations.

Thank you for your kind attention.

# DRAFT SPEECH

## ADDRESS BY THE HON. MINISTER OF TRANSPORT MR. KWAKU OFORI ASIAMAH TO MARK WORLD MARITIME DAY CELEBRATION ON 23<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017

MR. CHAIRMAN

DEPUTY MINISTER

DIRECTOR GENERALS & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE MARITIME INDUSTRY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VICE CHANCELLOR, REGIONAL MARITIME UNIVERSITY

IMO REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

LA MANTSE

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

ALL PROTOCOL OBSERVED

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

It is indeed an honour and a great pleasure for me to be here today to join you to celebrate the World Maritime Day which is being marked under the auspices of the Ghana Maritime Authority in collaboration with the Regional Maritime University.

I would first of all want to express my gratitude to the organizers of this event and to all stakeholders in the maritime industry who have in their various ways contributed positively to sustain activities in the industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen

World Maritime Day is an official United Nations day which provides an opportunity to focus attention on the importance of shipping and other maritime activities. It is also used to highlight the significant contribution of the International Maritime

Organization (IMO) and its Member States to global efforts in improving the safety, security and efficiency of shipping and protection of the marine environment.

Mr. Chairman

We are all aware that over 70% of our planet is covered by oceans which transcends across nations and connecting us all together. We are also aware that every country relies, to some degree, on selling what it produces and acquiring what it lacks. It is also estimated that about 80% of global trade by volume and over 70% of global trade by value are carried by sea and are handled by ports worldwide. The bulk transport of raw materials and the import / export of affordable food and goods to sustain the global economy would simply not be possible without shipping. Seaborne trade continue to expand, bringing benefits to consumers across the world through competitive freight costs, and almost everyone in the world today relies on shipping to some extent thus making *shipping indispensable to the world*.

According to reliable statistics, there are more than 50,000 merchant ships trading internationally, transporting every kind of cargo. The world's fleet is registered in over 150 nations with about 75% of international ships under developing countries' flags which are manned by more than a million seafarers of virtually every nationality.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Shipping and international trade have always grown hand in-hand and it is considered as the only cost-effective, energy-efficient and sustainable means of transporting commodities, fuel, food, goods and products. It provides a dependable, low-cost means of transporting goods globally thereby facilitating commerce and helping to create prosperity among nations and peoples.

International trade is equally critical to almost all African economies. An estimated 90% of African imports and exports are conducted by sea transport and efforts are being made to place maritime development at a high position in the Post 2015 Development Agenda. Considering also the vast maritime opportunities in Africa, promotion of seaborne trade within Africa and the development of intra-African trade

by sea is fundamentally important to sustainable economic growth. This is in line with the African Union's 2050 Integrated Maritime Strategy.

### *Ladies and Gentlemen*

As we celebrate today, i would like to mention that each World Maritime Day has its own theme which reflects existing / current events or wider United Nations initiatives.

The 2017 theme for the World Maritime Day is "**Connecting Ships, Ports and People**". I have been informed that the International Maritime Organisation chose this theme to build on the 2016 theme - ("**Shipping indispensable to the world**") and it is intended to provide an opportunity to focus on the many diverse actors involved in the shipping and logistics areas. The theme will also enable the IMO and its Member States to bring to light the existing cooperation between ports and ships to maintain and enhance a safe, secure and efficient maritime transportation system.

Mr. Chairman

The World Maritime Day themes for 2016 and 2017 are therefore complementary and may also be seen as a response to United Nations post-2015 sustainable development agenda and, in particular, the Sustainable Development Goals.

As a UN agency, IMO has a strong commitment to helping achieve the aims of the Sustainable Development Goals. Shipping and ports can play a significant role in helping to create conditions for increased employment.

The maritime sector, which includes **shipping, ports and the people** that operate them can be wealth creators both on land and at sea. The maritime sector plays a significant role in creating conditions for prosperity and stability ashore through promoting trade by sea.

Ultimately, more efficient shipping, working in partnership with a port sector supported by governments, ability to streamline procedures and remove excessive barriers to trade, embrace new technologies, root out corruption and treat safety,

security and reputation as both desirable and marketable, will be a major driver towards stability and sustainable development for the good of all people.

For the connections between *ships, ports and people* to be sustainable, they must also be secure. To this end, International Maritime Organisation is encouraging Member States to enhance maritime security, focussing on what both the shipping and port sectors can do to protect itself and to assist governments to protect global maritime trade.

Ports are viewed as critical infrastructure and their security is a facet of national security. However, without clear national legislation, policies and direction to coordinate the activities of all stakeholders, security responses in port facilities may be fragmented. A well-coordinated, risk-based preventive strategy is critical to the success of port and port facility security regimes, and this is a vital element in IMO's efforts to *connect ships, ports and people*. Coordination and cooperation between ships and ports is vital for the provisions of many international maritime instruments to be effectively implemented.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As we celebrate this important event, I would like to urge all participants here whom I believe are key stakeholders in the maritime industry, to work closely together to promote best practices and to build bridges between the many diverse actors involved in this sector.

Finally, distinguished ladies and gentlemen

Before I end my speech, I wish to mention again that this year's theme for the World Maritime Day celebration "*Connecting Ships, Ports and People*" was chosen to enable the IMO and its Member States to shine a spotlight on the existing cooperation between ports and ships to enhance and maintain a safe, secure and efficient

maritime transportation system; bearing in mind that the maritime sector is indeed a wealth creator both on land and at sea.

I thank you for your attention.