

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE KMA ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL,
COSMAS CHEROP**

**EXCOM MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN MARITIME
ADMINISTRATIONS 6TH-7TH FEBRUARY, 2018, MOMBASA, KENYA**

The Chairman, Dr. Peterson Dakuku
Members of the Executive Committee of AAMA
Delegates from Maritime Administrations of Africa
Other Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

I consider it a privilege and indeed an honor that you picked on Kenya to host the second Association of African Maritime Authorities (AAMA)'s Executive Committee meeting. I welcome the distinguished assembly and is sincerely pleased to host this very important meeting in our city.

You are all welcome to the city of Mombasa.

I also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Chairman, Dr. Petersic's Dakuku and the entire Executive Committee (Excom) members for the privilege accorded to them to serve the continent as the drivers of the AAMA objectives.

Today's meeting of the AAMA Excom coming after the first session in Egypt is an indication that AAMA is beginning to chart a path towards Administrators' joint approach to the development of Africa's maritime industry. The vital linkage for export of raw materials and import of essential products makes maritime transportation an essential ingredient in Africa's participation in international trade and indeed its socio-economic development.

In addition the oceans and inland waters of Africa are important source of food, energy and minerals. In providing facilities for leisure and other economic activities, the waters guarantee employment for a great population of our people. Therefore maritime transport in particular and blue economy in general will always remain a key anchor for developing Africa's economy.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are aware, many African countries have in their own way begun to pay closer attention to the Blue Economy. When we hear of the initiatives undertaken in West Africa, North Africa as well as South Africa, we are indeed encouraged by

the revival efforts of the sector in Africa. We in Kenya also recently begun to put our house in order.

On 6 September 2016, our President in recognition of the potential of the Blue Economy to our overall development agenda and the need to fully exploit its potential, set up a Presidential Taskforce on Blue Economy where our institution also actively participated.

The Taskforce developed a master operational plan that identified the Blue Economy clusters to be prioritized as well as potential factors that may constrain their development. The taskforce identified priority programmes and projects that would quickly unlock the growth potential of Kenya's Blue Economy such as enabling policies and infrastructure.

Of great significance is the port expansion in Mombasa and Lamu and completion of the Standard Railway Gauge from the Mombas to Nairobi; allocation of land for construction of fish ports in Shimoni, Kilifi and Lamu; development of appropriate capacity programme for management of fish including training in deep sea fishing and development of cold storage facilities and landing jetties; ongoing development of a fully securitized coastguard for better management of Kenya's coastal waters;

Other initiatives are the ongoing development of an organizational structure to oversee the execution of the Blue Economy master operational plan in the country. We are encouraged by the good support at highest policy levels as depicted in the allocation of funds in the current budget for the initial Blue Economy operational plans.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we sit here to deliberate on the AAMA Agenda items, hard cold facts continue to face us as a continent. We are the largest island on earth with a coastline of 31,000 km, inland waterways of 300,000 sq km and that 39 (70%) out of the total of 55 countries in the continent are coastal or islands. Despite this God given privilege, our intra- continental trade is only 11% compared to the average of 60% in ASEAN, Europe and Americas and we own less than 1.2% of total world ships by number and 9% by gross tonnage.

This should make us stay extremely focused in our deliberations to change this picture as the narration of these hard cold facts in many international fora can only be stopped by us.

AAMA is looked upon to provide leadership in policy integration and collaboration in the continent. This is the most effective means of realizing coherency and continental synergy in putting the continent in global maritime map. We need to streamline the sector for a competitive freight environment, involvement in shipping and many other aspects of the industry.

Key continental aspirations as captured in the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy) and Agenda 2063 in maritime safety, security, infrastructure, management and sustainable resource utilization already provide us with a good platform to move forward. Continental associations for African Administrators, Ports, Ship-owners and Women in maritime must drive these common African Agendas in the sector.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our industry has its fair share of ills such as piracy, marine pollution, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, over-exploitation of marine resources and use of unseaworthy vessels. We need to share ideas and experiences in dealing with these challenges.

This team is expected to provide the needed leadership to bring together the continent to address the challenges. I believe that AAMA will provide the needed platform to forge a head in coordinating the revival our industry in the continent.

In conclusion, let me thank you once again for heeding the Chairman's call to assemble here in Kenya for the meeting. It is my hope that you will feel at home and enjoy the great hospitality of the Kenyan people.

Once again it is my privilege and honor to welcome you all to this AAMA Excom meeting in the Port City of Mombasa. I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.