

**Statement by Dr. Seyed Ali Mohammad Mousavi D-8 Secretary General at
3rd D-8 Expert Working Group Meeting on Shipping 11-12 March 2014, Abuja -
Nigeria**

*His Excellency Senator Idris A. Umar
Honorable Minister of Transport of Nigeria,*

*His Excellency Ambassador Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoibhi
Honorable Permanent Secretary and D-8 Commissioner,*

*Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of Developing Eight Countries Organization for Economic
Cooperation (D-8), I would like to welcome you all to the 3rd Meeting of the Expert
Working Group on Shipping. It is a great pleasure for me to attend the opening
session of this important Meeting.

First, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Nigerian Government,
especially to the Ministry of Transport of Nigeria and the Nigerian Maritime
Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), for this well-prepared Meeting,
providing us with this wonderful venue in the capital city of Abuja.

I would like also to express my appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of Nigeria for the valuable assistance towards organizing the meeting and all
delegates here whose participation contributes to the success of our Meeting.

Distinguished Delegates,

The global shipping industry is one of the biggest industries of today's times,
including the shipbuilding. Nowadays, the shipbuilding industry worldwide is facing
some challenges from a significant excess capacity, particularly due to the large
improvements in the productivity of the shipyards and the over-investments in the
industry. Therefore, the improving market outlook (as empirically indicated by GDP
and seaborne trade statistics) demonstrates modest growth potential and aiding future

prospects for sea transport capacity demand levels.

It is worth to mention that there are several growth determinants and challenges facing the global shipping industry in front of us, including the role of bunker oil prices, target price sensitivity, the impact of China's steel industry on the global dry bulk shipping sector, the high growth of the handy-size segment, and the likely consolidation in the global shipping industry.

Distinguished Delegates,

Let me now turn to the Meeting here today. Thanks to the Nigerian Government's keen interest in this area of our common activities under Transportation, as one of the five main priority areas of the work of the Organization, we are meeting at the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on Shipping, here in Abuja.

The previous meetings in shipping cooperation established the overall framework, gave the Member Countries the opportunity to introduce their shipping sector to the rest of the Organization, engage in the exchange of experiences and best practices in the field of shipping, and also to agree on a number of important recommendations for further work.

Looking at the programme of work of this Meeting, as proposed by the host country and distributed among the members by the Secretariat, I am reminded that we have quite a number of important issues to address, inter alia,

1. To elect the new prime mover of D-8 Shipping cooperation for the next 2 years;
2. To encourage exchange of experiences and best practices in the promotion and development of the maritime sector;
3. To review the implementation of resolutions and recommendations from the 1st and 2nd Working Group Meetings on Shipping;
4. To encourage Public Private Partnership in the promotion and developing of shipping;
5. To improve the standard of living and improve the position of member states in the global economy through enhanced cooperation in the maritime sector;
6. To create new opportunities for member states in World trade

Let me just add that in addressing the above issues - substantial as they are - we have to be realistic and objective in our approach, particularly with respect to the challenges ahead of us in promoting cooperation in this field, as in other fields, bilaterally as well as collectively.

In addition, we might need to re-strategize implementation processes of the recommendations taken from our previous meetings in shipping cooperation. Moreover, as experience tells us, in this sector as in other areas of our work, we need to articulate specific projects and set timeline for execution, bearing in mind, needless to say, the strength and potential of Member Countries.

Distinguished Delegates,

The private sector in shipping industry enjoys the requisite potential to play its constructive role in promoting the level of actual cooperation, whose realization

depends on their own will and determination and equally so on the conducive

environment to be supported and facilitated by the public sector.

With above in mind, I would also like to underline the particular importance of two more aspects in our work here; one, to promote investment, education and training in shipbuilding technology; and two, to prepare an action plan for implementing the recommendations from this Working Group.

In our collective efforts towards achieving the above objectives in the course of the coming years, both in public and private sectors, I believe it is incumbent upon us here to work in earnest to design an appropriate structure for the Working Group on Shipping, including the election of the new prime mover for the next 2 years as well as the articulation of its functions and responsibilities.

Distinguished Delegates,

In concluding my remarks, I would like to emphasize, once more, the imperative of realism and objectivity in our approach and discussions on how to take a concrete step forward in our collective endeavor in the field of Shipping Industry, as clearly underlined in the 2008-2018 Roadmap.

Once again, I thank the government of Nigeria for hosting this important meeting and for their hospitality and I wish you all success in your endeavors and deliberations.

Thank you very much for your attention.