

AFRICAN UNION
الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE
UNIÃO AFRICANA

2ND CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR MARITIME RELATED AFFAIRS*,
BACK-TO-BACK WITH THE
5TH AFRICAN MARITIME CROSS-SECTORAL EXPERTS WORKSHOP ON THE 2050 AIM-STRATEGY®.
3 – 6 DECEMBER 2012,
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA.

OPENING REMARKS OF H.E. DR. NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA,
CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION.

6 DECEMBER 2012

Excellencies Ministers, Members of Government and Cabinets,
Excellencies Ambassadors of Embassies of the Member States of the African
Union,
Admirals,
Distinguished Senior Officials and Experts,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am much honored to be able to address you today here at the AU Commission HQs as you meet to adopt the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy, that we intentionally call "AIM-Strategy".

In our interconnected world, the human family cannot enjoy security without development and vice versa, cannot enjoy any development without security. To act on that understanding, we need comprehensive and integrated strategies, and true team spirit among African Governments, Agencies and peoples working together to fulfill those goals.

When you look at the world map, you understand that Africa being a BIG island, there is a need for us to have a better understanding of all activities in its adjoining oceans and seas, and seriously strategize how to maximize the multitrillion dollars' worth wealth opportunities laying therein.

For reasons beyond our control, we Africans have been more land-centric, ignoring or better said, abandoning all the ocean-wealth to other actors who have benefitted from it at will. During the past five decades, we have lost more

than one hundred billion dollars from illegal fishing. We lost more than one hundred billion dollars from illegal crude oil bunkering. Africa cannot afford losing that much money. We must change the curve.

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On this same day, 6 December, back in 1956 Nelson Mandela and 156 others were arrested for envisioning a better path for South Africa. Former South African president Nelson Mandela is often known as Madiba. As Madiba said in an address in Cape Town in 1998, "Africa's long and beautiful coasts and the abundance of marine resources can contribute to providing economic, food and environmental security for the continent. These coastal and marine resources, like the rest of Africa's environmental resources, continue to be exploited in a manner that does not benefit Africa and her people. This is a paradox of a people dying from hunger, starvation and poverty when they are potentially so rich and well endowed."

Whilst more than 200 million people in Africa feed regularly on seafood, which is an important part of their nutrition, whilst on average, seafood accounts for 22% of their protein intake, with some countries at 70%, over the past 5 decades, the minimum loss from IUU - and over - fishing in Africa may in aggregate, exceed \$100 billion.

According to a special report from the United States Institute of Peace, the loss to African economy from illegal oil bunkering in the Gulf of Guinea between 2003 and 2008 totaled \$100 billion.

Africa has become a major hub for global drug smuggling, with 50 to 60 tons trafficked in West Africa and 30 to 35 tons of Afghan heroin trafficked into East Africa every year. The severe impact of this threat cannot be over emphasized.

Regarding environmental crimes, the 2,000 hectares oil spills cleanup in the Ogoniland will require more than \$1 billion and more than 30 yrs to finish, if there is no additional oil spills. All marine life in the whole 2,000 hectares is completely destroyed. You would recall that BP has just been fined \$4.5 billion for the 2010 Gulf oil spill in the USA.

I will not mention Piracy, Human trafficking, and so on, but it is good to know that in addition to loss of revenue, illegal trafficking in Africa:

- fuels violence and insecurity,
- feeds corruption,
- finances the purchase of weapons,
- corrupts youth,
- causes environmental pollution and
- destabilises communal life.

If we don't take the responsibility to strategize our **future... now**, if we don't own this strategy, future generations of African citizens will be obliged to cope with the future that others have shaped for them.

That is exactly what you are gathered here today to earmark and spearhead. It is our shared duty and more importantly, it is our shared responsibility to exercise powerful leadership Political Will and ownership of this African-driven process. The Commission is considering establishing a 2050 AIM Strategy High Level College of Champions who is to champion the 2050 AIM Strategy. Composed of selected very high profiled African leaders, this High Level College of Champions is to leverage, through sustained lobbying throughout Africa and around the world, the necessary tangible and intangible sources of power, political will and buy-in, as well as marshal the required resources for the implementation of the 2050 AIM Strategy.

The efforts we are all undertaking to advance shared cross-cutting maritime interests and collectively navigate the future are essential to efficiently and effectively addressing some of the most important issues we face in Africa, in the context of this inter-reliant complex world of the twenty-first century.

As you well know, there is a maritime dimension to virtually every major issue facing Africa today, including competitiveness, job creation and security. This is why the Commission is increasingly putting maritime affairs at the centre stage.

Talking about jobs creation, as you may know, within the framework of the 2050 AIM Strategy, the Commission is launching a walkthrough gigantic acrylic viewing tunnel Giant Africa Aquariums (GA2) Programme in partnership with the world leader in this field, for a best value for money economies of scale to AU Member States.

In this regard, the Commission is considering building at least one giant aquarium in each Member State that will provide a unique combination of wealth creation and job opportunities, as well as socio-economical, educational, eye-opening and entertainment facility.

The Commission is receiving very positive signals from Member States, and will strive to launch the first series during the fiscal year 2013.

I believe that every African, no matter how old, wants his or her future to be bright. Every African is longing for increased dignity. Ensuring a sustainable future for Africa's seas and oceans hence calls for an interagency joint coordinated effort under different law enforcement agencies, security, fisheries, transport, trade, environment, industry, scientific research or other agencies. This is a challenge we all have to overcome, setting aside our individual goals. Together, we are greater than the sum of our individual ambitions. Together, we are more than a collection of french, portuguese, spanish, english and arabic speaking States. We are, and forever will be, Africans.

At the Commission, considering the fact that Africa is a BIG island, considering the challenges and opportunities ahead, we must consider setting up as soon as possible a standalone Department to address cross-cutting and multifaceted oceans and seas geostrategic challenges and opportunities. These geostrategic challenges and opportunities should be enshrined in our respective Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) molecules.

Real achievement can only be reached if all those involved in the implementation at all levels are engaged, including the RECs and the local communities.

Building and strengthening our maritime partnerships have become even more critical in this century, as foreseen geostrategic challenges will only grow bigger in years ahead.

Your efforts and commitment to provide Africa with this long-term comprehensive strategy to address its multifaceted challenges and opportunities are very much appreciated. I want to commend you all for taking the time despite the short notice, to join us for the adoption of the 2050 AIM-Strategy, which articulates an **African-driven** overarching multilayered long-term common vision, focusing on wealth creation from sustainable governance of Africa's seas and oceans.

Globalization has generated transnational challenges that no longer recognize borders or nation-states. No one nation has the resources or capacity to meet these challenges alone. The need for synergies among the RECs and cooperation among AU Member States and the local communities has never been more urgent, and your efforts on Africa's seas and oceans more vital.

Building on the security-socio-economic-development nexus, we must take full advantage of the potential for wealth creation from a sustainable governance of all Africa's Oceans & Seas.

I have personally reviewed the draft 2050 AIM-Strategy and believe it is a very good document that includes all the right parts, all necessary elements of a strategy. As its name echoes, it is objective-oriented.

I take this opportunity to commend all the Experts who have dedicated so much time, including in festive periods and weekends to develop this strategy. Congratulations for a job very well done.

I have full confidence in your capacity to overcome the challenges ahead, with the support of our partners, some of which have already expressed their readiness to provide support in this effort. I also wish to acknowledge the presence of ministers from the so-called landlock States. As we used to say at the AU Commission, no AU Member State is landlocked; we are all landly-connected to the world's oceans and seas.

As we are **now** navigating the **future**, when you get back home, don't forget to tell everyone to keep an eye on www.au.int/maritime, and swim with us on Twitter and Facebook, in five languages: Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and... Kiswahili. No more sea blindness in Africa!

I wish you a very successful meeting.

GOD bless you all, and GOD bless Africa. Thank you very much.