

**SPEECH BY HON DAVID MUSILA, MBS, MP THE ASSISTANT
MINISTER FOR MINISTRY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE
DURING FIFTH AFRICAN MARITIME CONFERENCE HELD
ON 6 DECEMBER 2012 IN ADDIS ABABA - ETHIOPIA**

Your Excellency Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson-African Union Commission
Deputy Chairperson- African Union Commission

Hon Ministers

H E Ambassadors present

Senior Country Officials and the Experts Team

Ladies and Gentlemen, HAMJAMBO!

I take this opportunity on behalf of the Government of Kenya to thank the African Union for facilitating this important Conference that looks at ensuring that Africa achieves self sustenance by optimum exploitation of our resources through sustainable governance of our seas and oceans. The Maritime domain is one area that is least understood by our people in the Africa continent despite its enormous potential. This conference has come at the right time particularly now when we see a renewed scramble for Africa's resources. The foundation we are laying now is not only for our generation but for posterity. This forum provides that first step for Africa to take control of this frontier.

Ladies and gentlemen let me take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the wothwhile effort and dedication of the experts who have put in a lot of time and skill to develop the comprehensive 2050 African Integrated Maritime Strategy. It is apparent, they put in time and resources to come up with a strategy that is multi-sectoral and cuts across all the facets of government. The strategy offers immense economic growth potential and addresses most if not all of Africa's maritime challenges, threats and opportunities.

We equally support the formation of a fully fledged stand-alone department of Maritime Affairs within the AU Commission to comprehensively address cross cutting maritime issues.

The fledgling Navies of Africa have continued to defend the maritime domain without which the resources therein would have been wantonly overexploited by unscrupulous and criminal outfits. A proper framework for maritime policyming needs to be developed taking cognisance of the vastness of the seas and oceans and the limited capacity of African navies. To this end we laud the effort of the Sea Power for Africa Symposium that has played an outreach role as far as the maritime domain and its growth potential is concerned.

It is the realization of this growth potential and the need for enhanced cooperation in maritime security and economic exploitation that Kenya fully recommends the adoption of the AU final Draft 2050 AIM Strategy.

In conclusion let me reiterate once again that the sea has vast resources which hold immense economic growth potential for Africa. The time to harness our collective efforts to ensure sustainable exploitation is now. A lot has been lost to unregulated players who do not have the continent's interest at heart. Our humble role is to ensure we popularize this great endeavour to our people.

ASANTENI SANA

GOD BLESS AFRICA