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THE REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE SIGNS AFRICAN MARITIME TRANSPORT CHARTER

Addis Ababa, 23 December 2011 – The Ambassador of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Permanent Representative of the



Republic of Cote d'Ivoire to the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Mr. Georges ABOUA, on 23 December 2011, signed the African Maritime Transport Charter at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The signing of the Charter brings the number of signature of this international law instrument to seven signatures as of today.

Mr. Aboubakari BABA-MOUSSA, Director of Infrastructure and Energy, Mr. Adiron ALBERTO, Senior Policy Officer and Mr. Mourad B. DHIAB, Legal Policy Officer attended the signing ceremony in the Office of the Director of the Legal Counsel.

During the signing ceremony, Ambassador ABOUA indicated that, the signature is the live testimony that the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is engaged in fulfilling its continental obligation. In that regard, matters concerning signature and ratification of international law instruments under the African Union will be subject to consideration by the Authorities of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire in order to adequately participate in the activities of the continent.

Mr. Mourad B. DHIAB, Legal Policy Officer, highlighted the role played by the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire for the creation of the African Union through its founding Father the late President Felix Houphouet Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire. He said the African Union is currently enjoying this legacy.

Mr. Aboubakari BABA-MOUSSA, Director of Infrastructure and Energy, recalled that the African Union Commission is facilitating the implementation of the regional project on Abidjan-Ouagadougou-Niamey-Cotonou railway. "The acceptance by the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to integrate this multinational network is a strong commitment of this country to positively contribute to the economic integration of Africa" he underlined.

Worth recalling that, the most significant outcome of the Second African Union Conference of Ministers responsible for maritime transport held in September 2009 was the adoption of the new African Maritime Transport Charter which was subsequently endorsed by the African Union Summit in July 2010 in Kampala, Uganda. The Charter constitutes the main policy and strategic framework for the development of maritime transport in the continent. It is also a key item in the Maritime Transport Plan of Action whose implementation merits special attention of all the stakeholders in the continent and the international partners.

The Second Session of the Conference of African Ministers of transport held in Luanda, Angola, from 21 to 25 November 2011 decided in its Declaration that African States should expedite action for the ratification and implementation of the African Maritime Transport Charter.

The ratification of the African Maritime Transport Charter is among the priority tasks of the 2012-2015 Maritime Transport Plan of Action adopted by the Second Session of the Conference of African Ministers of transport.