

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR. BEN OWUSU-
MENSAH, DIRECTOR GENERAL
GHANA PORTS AND HARBOURS AUTHORITY**

**6TH INTERMODAL AFRICA 2008
ACCRA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE
THURSDAY 28TH FEBRUARY, 2008**

Honourable Minister of Harbours & Railways
Managing Director, Transport Events Management,
Malaysia
Members of the Shipping and Trade Community
Distinguished Guests and Participants
Members of the Press (Corps)
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour and pleasure, on behalf of the Board, Management and staff of Ghana Ports And Harbours Authority, to extend my warmest welcome to the Honourable Minister of Harbours And Railways, Professor Christopher Ameyaw Akumfi, the Executives of TRANSPORT EVENTS MANAGEMENT, and all distinguished participants of the 6TH INTERMODAL AFRICA 2008.

Today definitely marks another milestone in the history of maritime transport in Africa. This annual International Exhibition and Conference is designed to promote and enhance transportation in Africa and I have no doubt that your full participation and support in making this gathering a great success will be very much appreciated for the good of the maritime industry.

Under the Ghana Government Gateway Project, Ghana Ports And Harbours Authority was mandated to be a TRADE FACILITATOR. We were also tasked to operate the Ports to ensure that the cost of doing business is as low as possible in the Sub-region. To this end a number of projects were lined up for implementation to boost the efficiency and productivity of the Ports of Ghana.

As at now, about 85% of these projects have been completed. I can also safely report that with the exception of the Landlord Port Bill still under consideration by the appropriate authorities, Ghana Ports And Harbours Authority has completed all the Strategic Action Plans it was mandated to undertake under the Gateway Programme.

Some of you most probably visited the Port yesterday and saw the number of new development projects that have been implemented and those still being implemented. At the end of the day, the Authority would have put in place strategic structures which will ensure quick despatch of cargo and vessels through the Port of Tema which will ultimately attract more cargo: national, transit and transshipment through the Port thereby making Tema Port the true gateway to the West African Sub-region, as envisaged.

Following from that – high port productivity will bring the cost of doing business at the port to a minimum, while ensuring efficient and adequate services to Port users, both national and the Sahelian region (i.e. the landlocked countries) which depend on our ports to conduct their international trade.

It is therefore refreshing to note that a gathering like the 6TH INTERMODAL AFRICA 2008 for fruitful discussions and exchange of ideas, knowledge and experience will go a long way to promote links and contacts among maritime communities for further co-operation and possible mergers in the near future.

Honourable Minister of Harbours And Railways, it is my firm conviction that with the array of Maritime gurus gathered at this meeting, far reaching measures will be taken that will go a long way to contribute significantly to the attainment of our collective objective of promoting and enhancing maritime transportation in Africa.

In conclusion, let me on behalf of the Board of Directors, Management and workers of Ghana Ports And Harbours Authority express my special thanks and appreciation in advance to all eminent speakers and participants for their valuable time and contributions during the two-day meeting. I wish the 6TH INTERMODAL AFRICA 2008 MEETING in Accra every success and hope that you will have a fruitful and pleasant meeting.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of you and thank you for your attention.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL