

COMMUNIQUE FOR THE MACN-SIEMENS WEBINAR THEMED “COLLECTIVE ACTION: IDENTIFYING AND BUILDING ALLIANCES WITH PORT USERS ON CARGO AND VESSEL TRANSACTION IN WESTERN PORTS” WHICH HELD ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2020.

INTRODUCTION

The webinar was organized to identify and build alliances with ports users on cargo and vessel transactions using a collective action to tackle inefficient operations at the ports that facilitate corruption as well as to encourage and demand a greater compliance with standard procedures at the ports. The webinar is sequel to the formal launch of the MACN Siemens initiative that held on July 23, 2020; under the aegis of this initiative, MACN and CBI will enable port users to track, demand, and drive greater compliance in Nigerian ports over the next three years (2020 – 2023). The initiative will also help strengthen government capability to establish compliance systems and collaboration between business, government and civil society as well as create the platform for the cultural changes that are necessary to improve trade flows in and out of Nigeria.

The Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN)—a global business network of over 130 companies working together to tackle corruption in the maritime industry—is expanding its Collective Action initiative in Nigeria with the support of the Siemens Integrity Initiative.

PANELISTS

- **Mr. Martin Benderson** – Head of Collective Action and Partnerships (Asia & Americas), Maritime Anti-Corruption Network
- **Deputy Comptroller Dera Nnadi** – Deputy Comptroller, Nigerian Customs Service
- **Mrs. Funmilayo Olotu** – Port Manager, Lagos Ports Complex, Nigerian Ports Authority representing the Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority
- **Mr. Michael Osho** – Head of Finance and Operations, Platinum Shipping Services Limited.
- **Mr. Soji Apampa** – CEO, The Convention on Business Integrity (Host)

ISSUES RAISED & PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION DURING THE WEBINAR

Issue 1: Poor conditions of the physical port infrastructure, within and outside the ports as well as between Tin Can and Apapa ports; this includes bad or inaccessible roads as well as berths not properly dredged. Also, there are improper terminal handling and charges as well as lack of better technology integration which causes slow processing time, bottlenecks, extra charges and unorganized management and gridlock of trucks.

Recommendation: There is a review process to be done by the NPA on terminal SOPs, charges and upgrade. With regards to infrastructure, major road repairs are being done around the ports and this has further made accessibility cumbersome because other road users alongside port users can only access the port via one lane. Port users are advised to leverage on the Lilypond

transit truck park, which is serviced by other truck parks and can be accessed for free once complete documentation and minimum safety requirements are in place. To further reduce bottlenecks, the NPA employs a call up system for trucks to leave the Lilypond park and approach the ports. Also, port users are being encouraged to employ other mediums of transportation, such as rail and barges to convey their goods. Finally, more port processes need to be automated and technologically driven to facilitate seamless processes for example, proper electronic tracking of trucks that come in and out of the ports.

Issue 2: Lack of the same level of reforms and compliance by all port agencies and stakeholders as well as ineffective SOP implementation.

Recommendation: Constantly audit, review and optimize SOPs to ensure more efficiency and effectiveness with its implementation. The SOPs will not be very effective until port operations are optimized, the interpretation of port rules, policies and SOPs are simplified and harmonized while infrastructure is put in place to fully support the implementation. Trade policies should be designed in a way that helps the SOP work better.

There should be transparency on all sides and integrity-based supply chain should be encouraged; the NPA already consciously ensures that there is a high turnover of their staff at strategic points to reduce familiarity and corruption opportunities.

Issue 3: There is an overlap between the regulatory and revenue functions of agencies and port players which results in uneven and unclear interpretation of port policies/processes as well as implementation loopholes.

Recommendation: Continuous engagement of port stakeholders is necessary to ensure a shared understanding of policies. Roles and rules need to be simplified and clearly distinguished. It is also recommended that there should be one platform where regulatory and compliance information can be domiciled and accessed by stakeholders.

Issue 4: Lack of a harmonized command and verification of port users' information, which provides more opportunities for corruption to thrive.

Recommendation: There needs to be a central portal where port users can upload/submit their information and relevant port agencies can access it for required verification. Port users are encouraged to document their complaints about unlawful extortion or multiple payments on the PSSP portal. Port users are encouraged to join the collective action against corruption

NEXT STEPS

- Engage the government agencies with presence at the ports to nominate & train compliance officers for each port location/operations within Nigeria. Also, facilitate interaction between relevant policy makers (such as the Federal Ministry of Trade) and other stakeholders to discuss how to optimize policies with implementation loopholes.
- Continuous engagement and raising awareness with the ports users/stakeholders in the offerings of the SOP and the need to adhere to it as well as the availability of the helpdesk (<https://www.integritynigeria.org/portcallassist/>) where port users to lodge complaints for assistance and quick resolution.