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**ADOPTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED
AFRICAN STRATEGY FOR THE SEAS AND OCEANS 2050
(STRATEGY AIM 2050)**
(Item proposed by the Republic of Congo)

**Adoption of the Implementation of the Integrated African
Strategy for the Seas and Oceans 2050
(Strategy AIM 2050)
(Item proposed by the Republic of Congo)**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Africa's inland waters, oceans and seas are under pressure. Over the years, traditional maritime activities, such as shipping or fishing have intensified, while new ones, such as aquaculture or offshore renewable energy activities, emerged. However, the intensification of maritime activities is taking place against the backdrop of insecurity, various forms of illegal trafficking, degradation of the marine environment, falling biodiversity and aggravated effects of climate change. In the past decades, direct aggregate losses of revenue from illegal activities in Africa's Maritime Domain (AMD) amounted to hundreds of billions of US dollars, not to mention the loss of lives.

2. The development agenda of the African Union (AU) promotes, among other things, human capital development and improved standard of living. It is inclusive and based on a human-centered approach to development in which all social groups are engaged. The agenda sees an Africa using its own resources to take its rightful place in a multi-polar, inter-reliant and more equitable world. In Africa's maritime domain, the wide variety of activities are inter-related to some extent, and all have a potential impact on the prosperity derivative through their contributions to social, economic and political stability, as well as to safety and security. Therefore, the approach to regulation and management of maritime issues and resources cannot be confined to a few select sectors or industries.

3. The process of developing the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy) took into consideration not only the vast potential of Africa's Maritime Domain for wealth creation, but also the fact that Member States of the African Union have shared maritime opportunities and challenges, and hence have significant role to play, all in accordance with their potentials, in generating the political will required to implement the Strategy.

4. Accordingly, the 2050 AIM Strategy provides a broad framework for the protection and sustainable exploitation of the AMD for wealth creation. The strategy is the product of inputs from African experts that include Think Tanks, NGOs and the academia, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Mechanisms (RMs), AU Member States, specialized institutions and other important stakeholders such as the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), African Port Management Associations (APMA), Union of African Shippers Councils (UASC), Maritime Training Institutions, all MoUs on Port State Control, the United Nations, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), World Trade Organization (WTO), World Customs Organization (WCO), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Global Shippers Forum (GSF), International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the private sector. It is structured to address emerging maritime challenges and opportunities in Africa, taking into account the interest of landlocked countries, with a clear focus on enhanced wealth creation deriving from sustainable governance of Africa's inland waters, oceans and seas.

5. The Strategy clearly defines achievable vision and goals, including specific medium-term objectives, as well as activities and timelines for attaining the strategic end state of increased wealth creation in a stable and secured AMD.

II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

6. Conscious of the contribution of waters and oceans to Africa's socio-economic development, the Heads of State and Government meeting in the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Ordinary Sessions of the Assembly of the Union held in Sirte, Libya, in July 2009 and in Kampala, Uganda, in July 2010 respectively, decided to adopt a rational and coordinated policy for maritime and coastal activities with a view to making the best of the Continent's maritime wealth.

7. Pursuant thereto, the African Union Commission took the initiative of elaborating and implementing the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy) to address the geostrategic challenges and exploit the opportunities in the AMD.

8. There was an extremely urgent need for adoption of a common maritime strategy to enable Africa to fully take on the responsibility of protecting its oceans and seas. To that end, two Conferences of African Ministers in charge of Maritime Affairs were held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in April and December 2012 respectively, preceded by three Workshops of Experts in April and December 2011, and in December 2012.

9. Those deliberations resulted in the adoption of the 2050 AIM Strategy together with a Plan of Action for its Operationalization and the Ministerial Declaration of 6 December 2012. Further to implementation of the Strategy it was recommended, *inter alia*, that a College of Champions composed of eminent African personalities be established with the task to promote the Strategy.

III. VISION OF THE STRATEGY

10. The vision of the 2050 AIM Strategy is to foster increased wealth creation from Africa's oceans and seas by developing the **blue economy**.

IV. DEFINITION OF THE STRATEGY

11. The Strategy consists of overarching, concerted and coherent long-term and multi-layered plans of action geared to achieving the objectives of the African Union to enhance maritime viability for a prosperous Africa.

V. OBJECTIVES

12. The objectives of the Strategy are as follows:

- Establish a Combined Exclusive Maritime Zone for Africa (CEMZA);
- Enhance wealth creation through building our countries' maritime-centric capacity and capability;

- Ensure security and safety in the African Maritime Domain;
- Minimize environmental damage;
- Prevent hostile and criminal acts at sea, and prosecute offenders if necessary;
- Protect the populations, AMD heritage and infrastructure in the African Maritime Domain;
- Promote and protect the interests of African shippers;
- Enhance Africa's competitiveness in international trade;
- Improve and facilitate intra-African trade as well as transit transport in landlocked countries;
- Ensure comprehensive understanding of existing and potential challenges, including the allocation of resources to identified priorities over a pre-determined timeframe;
Promote a comprehensive, concerted, coherent and coordinated approach that improves the maritime sector in terms of environmental and socio-economic development as well as the capacity to generate wealth from sustainable governance of Africa's seas and oceans;
- Define a common template for AU Commission, the RECs/RMs, other relevant organizations and Member States, to guide management of the maritime domain, budgetary planning and effective allocation of resources to enhance maritime viability for an integrated and prosperous Africa.

VI. OPERATIONALIZATION PLAN

13. The 2050 AIM Strategy is backed by a Plan of Action for Operationalization which constitutes the roadmap for defining the global objectives with a view to enhancing Africa's blue economy and creating employment and wealth.

14. The Plan consists of four programmes with specific objectives. It is divided into three stages: short-term (2013-2018), medium-term (2019-2030) and long-term (2031-2050).

1. Management of the 2050 AIM Strategy

15. This comprises the elaboration of the 2050 AIM Strategy, its presentation and the sensitization of stakeholders, so as to create synergy between African States.

2. Elaboration of a Maritime Governance Programme

16. The aim here is to:

- Establish a Combined Exclusive Maritime Zone for Africa;
- Ensure the security and safety of the African Maritime Domain;
- Protect the populations, including AMD heritage and infrastructure situated in the African Maritime Domain, and respect the maritime environment;
- Strengthen the legal and regulatory frameworks for maritime governance in the African Maritime Domain.

3. Establishment of a Wealth Creation Programme

17. The programme will pave the way to:

- Improve and facilitate intra-African maritime trade; and
- Promote the development of fishing and aquaculture as well as the tourism sector and maritime leisure.

4. Human Resource Development

18. The programme consists in:

- Building African maritime labour capacities;
- Improving the gender aspect of the maritime sector and maritime research capacities;
- Developing maritime training and increasing the number of seafarers.

VII. STAKEHOLDERS

19. The stakeholders include:

- Member States (Ministries, Administrations, Structures, Organs and Operators involved in maritime and coastal activities) ;
- Regional Economic Communities;
- Regional Mechanisms;
- African Institutions and Organizations specialized in maritime and related issues;
- International Organizations engaged in maritime and related issues;
- Non-Governmental Organizations;
- Development Partners.

VIII. SUPPORT AT CONTINENTAL LEVEL AND PROMOTION OF THE STRATEGY

20. It is noteworthy that AU Member States expressed their unconditional support for implementation of the 2050 AIM Strategy at two (2) Conferences of African Ministers in charge of Maritime Affairs held in April and December 2012, respectively.

21. A number of Member States have already endorsed the establishment of the **College of Champions. This keen interest is reflected, *inter alia*, by:**

- ❖ The will expressed by some Member States at the May 2013 session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, which stated loud and clear that it is no longer possible for Africa to turn its back on the sea, as evidenced by the Advocacy of the Republic of Congo and the interventions of The Seychelles, Mauritius, Cape Verde, Benin, Somalia and Mauritania;
- ❖ The commitment made by the Heads of State and Government in the Fiftieth Anniversary Declaration to preserve, protect and use our maritime spaces and resources for the benefit of the African Continent and its peoples, with a view to achieving sustainable food security;
- ❖ The Gulf of Guinea Summit on Maritime Safety and Security which brought together twenty-five (25) Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC), during which they acknowledged the need for the regions to develop regional strategies to implement the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy (2050 AIM Strategy).

22. Furthermore, the AU Commission, through coordination of the Task Force, carried out actions to raise stakeholders' awareness of the Strategy at different fora that address maritime issues. That created a groundswell of support for the 2050 AIM Strategy and its Plan of Action on the part of various institutions such as the International Maritime Organization, the Regional Economic Communities, specialized sub-regional and regional maritime institutions, namely: the Summit of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, ECCAS and GGC on Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea, held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 24 to 25 June 2013. In addition, at the 387th Meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council held in Addis Ababa, the blue economy was presented as "a new frontline of Africa's Renaissance" as developed by the 2050 AIM Strategy.

23. The Republic of Congo proposes that the item be adopted by all Member States. Africa should be proud to be a pioneer in the maritime field, being the first organization to truly develop an African Integrated Maritime Strategy.

IX. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

24. In the light of the aforesaid, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government may wish to:

- **Immediately adopt** the 2050 AIM Strategy which defines a long-term, global, coherent and multidimensional vision initiated and piloted by Africans, and designed to ensure that the challenges and opportunities of the African Maritime Domain are effectively addressed;
- **Also adopt** the Plan of Action for Operationalization of the 2050 AIM Strategy;
- **Urgently request** the AU Commission and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms to spare no effort to ensure the speedy implementation of the Plan of Action for Operationalization of the 2050 AIM Strategy;
- **Institute** 25 July every year as African Maritime Day;
- **Approve** the proposal for establishment within the AU Commission Department or a stand-alone unit tasked with maritime affairs to comprehensively address the geostrategic, cross-cutting and multidimensional challenges and opportunities inherent in our inland waters, oceans and seas;
- **Also approve** the proposal for establishment of a High-Level College of Champions of the 2050 AIM Strategy to provide advocacy for the cause. Comprising eminent African personalities, the mission of the College shall be to promote the Strategy throughout Africa and in the world at large;
- **Urge** international strategic partners to support initiatives pertinent to implementation of the regional cooperation;
- **Request** the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization, and the Chairperson of the AU Commission to backstop efforts geared to mobilizing the resources required for implementation of this Decision.

2014

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