

Spotlight on African ports and harbours' customer-centric service environment

DURBAN, KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA, October 7, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 90% of Africa's trade is being concluded via ports with Durban's bustling port leading the way in terms of volumes in the Southern parts of the continent. The port handles close to 5000 commercial vessels every year, translating to 74 million tonnes of cargo per year with expected to growth to an impressive 175 million tonnes of cargo per year in 30 years' time.

To cope with the demands and forecasted growth in container, bulk liquid handling and automotive cargo, a number of projects are underway at the bustling port that are already having a positive impact.

"The ships are being offloaded much faster and the turnaround times are much faster. I'm expecting my next container next weekend, and (unlike before), I'm expecting it to be cleared with ease..." says Riaz Randeree, a Durban-based businessman who imports food products from Malaysia, who has already felt the positive impact of upgrades to the existing port on his business.

From 18 - 19 October 2016 port operators and industry experts from across Africa will all gather in Durban at the 5th annual African Ports Evolution Forum to learn, network and discuss best practices on how to improve port infrastructure and competitiveness, connectivity with rail networks and logistics performance.

The African Ports Evolution Forum forms part of a week long series of activities dedicated to the African transport sector, attracting over 1000 participants from over 15 countries and incorporates a trade expo; The African Rail Evolution Forum; The Women in Transport Awards and Kwazulu-Natal Export Week.

Increasing port competitiveness through improved customer focused needs is a key driver of most ports in Africa and Mrs Aruna Bunwaree Ramsaha, Deputy Director General, Mauritius Port Authority, will be speaking at the Forum on how the Port Louis Harbour has been improving port infrastructure with the goal of enhancing the customer experience.

Mrs Ramsaha has been extensively involved in various port development projects including the setting up of the Mauritius Container Terminal (MCT) and the proposed privatisation of container handling operations of the Port. During her career, she has been involved in issues relating to port tariffication, procurement of port assets, port investment financing and concessioning of port assets. Mrs Ramsaha is a founder member of the Association for Women Managers in the Maritime Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa (WOMESA) and also a judge for the prestigious co-located Women in Transport Awards - a collaborative platform dedicated to recognising excellence within the rail and maritime industry in Africa.

According to the African Ports Evolution Forum programme director, Ms Nevenka Ristic, the forum will feature content and in depth discussions on mobilising private investment for major infrastructure projects, how to facilitate trade across African borders, demystifying the concept of 'Smart Ports', the benefits of developing African Special Economic Zones and Improving hinterland connectivity.

Some of the noteworthy speakers include:

Hon. Lydia Sindisiwe, South African Deputy Minister of Transport
John Omingo, Head of Commercial Shipping, Kenya Maritime Authority
Argent Chuula, Chief Executive Officer, COMESA, Zambia
Andrew Pike, Head of Transport, Bowmans, South Africa
Thato Tsautse, Managing Director, EThekweni Maritime Cluster
Barbara Mommen, CEO, Maputo Corridor Logistics Initiative
Karl Socikwa, CEO, Transnet Ports Terminals
Thabadiawa Mufamadi, Chairman, Ports Regulator of South Africa

Limited places remain, delegates wishing to book a seat can do so by contacting
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