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*Nurturing Transport, Sanitizing Marines*

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## **RESEACH WORK BY SEAEMPOWERMENT RESEARCH CENTRE**

### **(A case study of West Africa container Terminal – WACT)**

- a) Our finding confirms that **WACT** topples any other south/Eastern ports in container throughputs, just like a major port in Lagos topples other ports in the western zone in container throughputs.
- b) Findings also confirms that most of the container vessels that calls to **WACT** and other major ports across the across the geo-political zone sails back to origin ports majorly with empty containers, less exports contents.
- c) Findings affirms that **WACT** and few other port operators has enough terminal space to advance and undertake a measurable cold logistics operations, but are not core basis contemplating in this regards, reasons as noted below.
- d) It is statically clear that due to absent of an effective cold logistics operation within the zones, perishable produces (deciduous perishable produces fruits, vegetables and other farm product.
- e) With the availability of perishable produces on account of a steady farming activities in all the geopolitical zone (presently benefiting from the federal government policy thrusts on agricultural revolution) many business interest and investment

wants to go into cold logistics export businesses in collaboration with freight forwarders , but are limited, reasons stated below:

- f) Taking a cue from the South African Cold Chain Logistics revolution of 2008, **WACT** and few other port operators across the zones are better placed to unlock this aspect of cold logistics provisions with its wide range of job creation and opportunities inherent in the supply value chain.
- g) Findings also confirms that presently **WACT** is willing and ready to handle as much volumes of perishable produces available, provided they ascertain a realistic forecast from shipping lines so as to effectively manage planning capacity.
- h) Findings further also affirm that **WACT** has enough standby energy generating sets and reefers plugs in use. Basically if exports forecast increases, then the need for capacity boosting may consider.
- i) Besides the needs for a realistic forecast and business contracts with exports, there is also needs to engage a dedicated cold shipping lines to promote steadily available ocean going vessels , as the port terminal is not meant to be a storage area but a transit area.
- j) Findings reveal that the country with its untapped cold logistics exports Business, need dedicated and specialized cold logistics Exports Ports to harness its export potentials and maximize its exports shares among the comity of cold logistics exporting Nations.

So, our question has been why is it that most port concessionaire's investment policy vision does not point to full sector maximization of this aspect as a key investment target.

Professional forwarders, knows that **WACT** and other port operators can actually open a new horizon for international trade and security supply chain in the country. Evolving this through the specialized cold port logistics operations, that has remain under utilized for centuries. Furthermore, it is important to point out that this option indeed has capacity to gradually decentralize import and export activities across the geo- political zone.

Findings also shows that zones, and collaborations with critical stakeholders it won't be an unachievable task.

Findings equally shows that willingness and proper consultation with all the states chambers of commerce within the zone, and collaboration with critical stakeholders, it won't be an unachievable task.

Findings equally shows that with the abundance exportable farm produce and deciduous fruits in the country, giving the background to our rich fertile farm lands and available human capacity across the zones , it is envisaged that with peculiar dedication of administrative resources and the channeling of right administrative policies, cold logistics operations and its related supply value chain has the capacity to sustainably create over a million job per annum, thus maritime in the right perspective should supposedly be a bigger employer of labor annually.

Findings also confirms that the present canvas for women inclusiveness in the maritime industry can make much difference and be impactful if the cold logistics export business is revolutionized.

It suffices, for us to engage women inclusiveness advocacy with a profound sense of national concerns. With an effective plan and

objectives devoid of industry propaganda that are mere self seeking or political patronage,

Many factors continue to hamper the effective evolution.

Commencement. Exploration and sustenance of these national fortunes

### **Keys amongst them are:**

- 1) Produce quality and services certification questions, the standard organization of Nigeria has a duty to explore, renegotiate its international quality standards acceptance abroad. Having lay down a simplified processes and procedures for products quality assessments and conformity scheme in relation to the application of fertilizer to produce, and certified packaging.
- 2) Cold logistics exports business is capital intensive: port operations are not willing to invest into a business aspect it cannot steadily project or forecast on. thereby it breeds an industry reliability questions.
- 3) Cold logistics export business requires cheap energy source, presently all the ports in Nigeria are powered by diesel engine generator sets on 24/7@ 365 days a year. Which is the basic reason why cargo handling in Nigerian ports is high?
- 4) Going by the concessioning agreement Nigeria Port Authority is solely responsible for the provisions of lightening and powering of the port 24/7 @ 365day but has continuously renegade in this contractual obligation leaving the terminal operator to source for their independent energy source to run the ports and keep business afloat. Note that there is nowhere in the world. Where Cold Logistics Export is run with private generating set. It must be guaranteed by the provision and availability of natural and

general energy source. We make bold to say. That no matter how thoughtful the ease of doing business quest of the government appears to mean. It is indeed meaningless if the canvassed easiness cannot bring down cost and time of container handling in the port.

- 5) **Emphasis on the role of shipping lines:** shipping lines are the owners of all exports equipments (Refrigerated vessels and containers without their key participation the terminal operator can do nothing.

Shipping lines are the ones who enter into business contracts with the exporters, they are the ones who galvanize and sustain shipping routes they are great determinant factor to transport and handling costs they are the ones who provide a realistic forecast on cargo, vessel and routes plans.

Terminal operators merely provide value added services in the form of storage and loading operations.

Unfortunately, most of the shipping lines appear to be reluctant at investing into the cold logistics exports business

Findings from some of them indicate that they are quite skeptical of government policy inconsistency and non 100% respect of agreement also insisting that government should show first commitment as initial key investors into the cold logistics exports business.

Suggestion/conclusion:

Government has a duty to go back to its national planning table through transport ministry with the aim of putting and exploring every avenue available and necessary to revolutionize the cold logistics export business in Nigeria.

The present efforts of the government to revamp and resuscitate our national fleets is commendable but should not be limited, it has to shop for specialized and dedicated shipping lines operators and enter into business memorandum of understanding with them.

Government must take into cognizance the benefits inherent in cold logistics export business with regards to skill developments. Exchange of expertise. Technological advancement.

Above all job creation in the face of ever increasing population and unemployment rate. National foreign exchange earning and performance, then capacity building at the state and federal level.

Cold logistics Exports business should be embraced with national development consciousness and with deserving political and economic will. The retort of shipping lines should rather challenge the government positively while appreciating their role as critical stakeholders in the cold logistics export business. Nigeria have dwell long treating this aspect of economic growth with lip service.

To this extend the incoming ministers of transport and his counterpart in energy and agriculture should jointly consociate a National Revamp committee on cold logistics Export Business that will review the ongoing Green Field Port Expansion and development with due sense of establishing a specialized port system.

To this extend, the incoming minister of transport and his counterparts in energy and agriculture should jointly convocate a national revamp committee on cold logistics exports business.

The minister of transport should in consultation with its relevant agencies review the ongoing green gild port expansion and development with a due sense and a diversification mindset tilting towards the establishment of specialized ports system.

Women inclusiveness in the maritime industry is apt and highly important and for an overall utilization and effectiveness purposes wherefore a home tailored and a mile stone actualization plan should be put in place on the basis of industry facets and strata's consideration and not just a show off.

There are aspects of maritime business women do have comparative advantages over men such aspects are needed to be identified and maximized accordingly.

As for the appointment of more women into the maritime agencies and parastatals it is also a welcome idea, all that our women requires is an enabling environment to aide even participation in all the maritime gamut of operations.

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