

**SPEECH BY HON. BAGIIRE AGGREY HENRY (MP),
MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT, THE REPUBLIC OF
UGANDA, AT THE 6TH MEETING OF THE ISCOS ASSEMBLY
OF MINISTERS, 19TH NOVEMBER 2019, MWANZA, UNITED
REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA.**

Minister for Works, Transport and Communication, United Republic of Tanzania and Chair of the ISCOS Assembly of Ministers, **Hon. Eng. Isack A. Kamwelwe;**

Kenya High Commissioner to Tanzania Representing the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development, Republic of Kenya, **Your Excellency Hon. Dan Kazungu;**

Zambia High Commissioner to Tanzania, Representing the Honorable Minister of Transport and Communications, **Your Excellency Benson K. Chali;**

Members of the ISCOS Coordination Committee;

The Acting Secretary General of ISCOS;

Representatives of Regional Economic Commissions, Stakeholders of the Shipping Industry, Development Partners and representatives of the Maritime, Shipping and Logistics Institutions Present;

Members of the Press Present;

Distinguished Delegates Present;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It gives me great pleasure and honour to address this 6th meeting of the ISCOS Assembly of Ministers. I bring you warm greetings from the government and the people of the Republic of Uganda. I wish to express my glowing tribute to the government and the people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the warm reception accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city of Mwanza (Rock City). I also wish to take this opportunity to pay special tribute to the government of Tanzania through the Minister for hosting this important meeting and steering ISCOS activities as a Chair for the past two years.

As you may be aware Honourable Ministers, over 80% of world trade, both by volume and value moves by sea. Therefore, with the belief that economic emancipation of African economies shall rely more on trade rather than donations, the shipping and maritime sector shall play a significant role in facilitating trade.

The formation of ISCOS by our fore fathers way back in 1967 was out of the realisation that shipping was international by nature and that our individual nations could not singly handle shipping matters without collaboration with especially regional partner states. This understanding birthed the need to have in place a regional specialised institution to aid the coordination, promotion and protection of the shipping and maritime interests of the member states.

Five decades down the line, the dynamics of shipping have become even more complicated, and the need for African developing economies to work together continues to become more compelling.

Therefore, there is no doubt that trade facilitation institutions like ISCOS need continuous support if our dream of economic emancipation through trade is to come true.

As one of the land-linked ISCOS member states, Uganda relies on our neighbours Kenya and Tanzania to access the sea.

While water transport is the preferred means of moving international trade, it is also affected by several emerging issues such as maritime insecurity, international regulatory frameworks like the maritime conventions issued from time to time to which we need to comply, unjustifiable surcharges imposed by the shipping lines, and many other conditions which might be hard for us as a nation to effectively handle unilaterally. We therefore partly rely on institutions like ISCOS to help us address some of these issues.

Honourable colleagues; from the reports availed to me; I note that during this Assembly's tenure, the Secretariat has achieved a lot especially in areas of trade facilitation and administrative programmes, promoting seamless logistics and shipping and advocating for best insurance practices in import and export trade.

I wish to salute the acting Secretary General and his team for the achievements registered and also pay tribute to the United Republic of Tanzania for the able leadership provided as Chair of ISCOS during this period.

However, the Secretariat needs to do more in new membership recruitment, resources mobilisation and realising complementary sources of financing. These shall require our unwavering support.

Am aware that one of ISCOS' current initiatives is the drive to ensure that legislation on marine cargo insurance are enforced in the member states in order to mitigate the expatriation of colossal amounts of monies from our economies. Uganda alone loses more than United States Dollars 100 million annually in marine cargo insurance on imported goods whose insurance policies are secured abroad.

Although we had lagged behind in implementation, I am happy to report that with great help from ISCOS, Uganda is now on course to start implementing Marine Cargo Insurance by January 2020.

I wish to appeal to the secretariat of ISCOS to continue providing technical support to the implementing agencies so that we can achieve the full benefits of this initiative. I also salute ISCOS in general for the various other Technical Advisories served to the governments from time to time.

Similarly and over the years, ISCOS' activities especially related to mitigation of unjustifiable pricing mechanisms by shipping lines have saved Uganda millions of United States Dollars. This does not include benefits from the various trade facilitation initiatives which ISCOS continues to offer. ISCOS also helped the establishment of Shippers' Council in Uganda which is providing a good forum for shippers to advance their issues. I wish to appeal to ISCOS to continue being good ambassadors for member states in the areas of shipping and freight logistics.

Honourable Colleagues; as you may be aware, all institutions largely rely on financial resources to be able to carry out their activities. Adequate funding of ISCOS is important if the objectives of the institution are to be met.

Uganda was one time in huge arrears to ISCOS. However, we instituted a service charge on Ugandan bound goods at Mombasa Port which has proved very reliable in addressing our funding requirements to ISCOS. We would highly recommend this approach to our fellow members who are currently in arrears.

The economic benefits from ISCOS' activities to both government and the private sector by far outweigh our financial obligations to the institution. Therefore, I wish to appeal to member states to fulfil our financial obligations to ISCOS to enable it realise its objectives.

Honourable colleagues; at this Assembly session, we shall among other things appoint a substantive Secretary General. I wish to pay tribute to the ISCOS Chair for ensuring that during this transition period, the Secretariat operations continued without disruption. I also wish to pay tribute to the acting Secretary General Mr. Mpaata for adequately filling in the gap and putting up a commendable performance as seen from the performance reports of the organisation.

I also appeal to members of staff of the secretariat to offer full support to the incoming Secretary General so that the organisation can continue delivering on its objectives.

As I conclude my remarks Honourable Colleagues, I wish to once again thank the Secretariat for the excellent arrangements for this meeting, adequate documentation and for the hospitality accorded to all delegations.

Last but not least, I extend my sincere thanks to the Coordination Committee for the good preparatory work done for this meeting. It is therefore my honour to wish this session of the ISCOS assembly, very fruitful deliberations.

Thank you very much.

For God and My Country