

20 October 2024.

PRESS RELEASE

15th Port State Control Committee (PSCC15) and 3rd Bureau Meetings Of the Abuja MoU

The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control for West and Central African Region (Abuja MoU) successfully convened its 15th Port State Control Committee (PSCC15) Meeting and its 3rd Bureau Meeting in Conakry, Republic of Guinea, from 6 to 10 October 2025.

The week-long meetings brought together delegates, physically and virtually, from 17 Member States, 10 Observer organisations, and international partners to review progress in Port State Control (PSC) implementation, discuss and review topical issues in the maritime domain, share knowledge with a view to enhancing regional collaboration, and adopt forward-looking strategies for improving maritime safety, environmental protection, and ship compliance with all relevant IMO and ILO conventions across the West and Central African region.

The events were officially declared open by the Honourable Minister of Transport of the Republic of Guinea, Mr. Ousmane Gaoual Diallo, with opening addresses and goodwill remarks delivered by the Chairman of the Abuja MoU, Mr. Ebrima Sillah (Hon. Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, The Gambia), ably represented by Madam Fofana (Deputy Perm. Sec., Ministry of Transport, The Gambia), Captain Sunday M. Umoren, the Secretary-General of the Abuja MoU, the Secretary-General of the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA), Dr. Paul Adalikwu, and other observers.

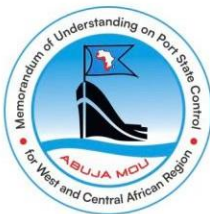
Highlights and Key Decisions

One of the major highlights of the meeting was the acceptance of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania into the Abuja MoU following the signing of its Letter of Accession, making it the 21st Full Member State of the Abuja MoU.

The Committee also:

- Endorsed and recommended Capt. Sunday Umoren for another tenure of four years as the substantive Secretary-General of the Abuja MoU.
- Decided that the current members of the ISMWG continue till 2029.
- Endorsed the 2025 and 2026 Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) themes on Ballast Water Management and Cargo Securing respectively.





- Welcomed progress on the Near Coastal Voyage Code, with appreciation to Mauritania for volunteering to translate it into French and subsequent review by all Member States.
- Reaffirmed its commitment to continuous training, mentorship, and regional cooperation among Port State Control Officers (PSCOs).

The Committee further commended the Secretariat for its ongoing partnerships with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), and other regional MoUs partnerships that continue to enhance technical capacity and promote sustainable maritime development across the region.

The 3rd Bureau Meeting of the Abuja MoU was chaired by the Honourable Minister of Marine and Blue Economy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Hon. Adegboyega Oyetola, CON, in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the Abuja MoU Bureau.

The Bureau, comprising the Ministers in charge of maritime transport from Angola, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, and Nigeria, serves as the executive arm of the Abuja MoU, responsible for providing policy direction and oversight to the Secretariat between Ministerial Conferences.

In recognition of his visionary leadership and commitment to the Abuja MoU's strategic growth, the Bureau approved the reappointment of Captain Sunday M. Umoren as Secretary-General of the Abuja MoU for a second four-year term (2025–2029).

Member States commended Captain Umoren's dedication to capacity building, innovation, and the strengthening of international partnerships in advancing the Abuja MoU's mandate.

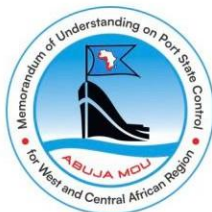
Delegates reaffirmed their commitment to advancing Port State Control effectiveness, improving inspection standards, and strengthening partnerships with the global maritime community.

The Committee also confirmed future meetings as follows:

- 16th Port State Control Committee (PSCC16) and 6th Ministerial Conference – Gabon (September 2026)
- 17th Port State Control Committee (PSCC17) and 4th Bureau Meeting – Liberia (September 2027)

The meetings concluded with renewed dedication from Member States to promote regional cooperation, uphold international maritime standards, and ensure that Africa's coastal waters remain safe, secure, and environmentally clean. The Secretariat expressed its sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Transport of Guinea and the Maritime Administration of Guinea (ANAM) for hosting the meetings, and to all partners.





Observers including sister Memoranda, and delegates from all Member States for their contributions to the continued success of the Abuja MoU.

Abuja MoU

Capt. Sunday M. Umoren

Secretary-General

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Notes to Editors:

Abuja MoU

The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control for West and Central African Region (Abuja MoU) was signed by 16 countries represented by their Maritime Authorities on 22nd October 1999 in Abuja, Nigeria.

Currently, the Memorandum has 21 full members, namely: Angola, Benin, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Togo.

The Secretariat of the MoU is provided by the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy, formerly referred to as the Federal Ministry of Transportation, and is located in Lagos, Nigeria. The Abuja MoU Information System (AMIS) is a fully automated database that collects and stores PSC inspection data uploaded by Member States. The database is designed to provide information exchange on PSCI data within the region.

Port State Control is the inspection carried out on visiting foreign ships to verify their compliance with relevant international instruments (IMO and ILO) on maritime safety, pollution prevention, and seafarers' living and working conditions. It is a means of enforcing compliance and further acts as the objective safety net in cases where the owner and flag State have failed in their responsibilities to implement or ensure compliance. The Port State Inspector can require deficiencies to be put right before sailing, defer the deficiency to be remedied at next port or within a given time, and/or detain the ship for this purpose if necessary. It is therefore also a Port State's defence against unnecessary exposure of its ports from visiting substandard shipping.