



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release | Lagos, Nigeria | 29 June 2026

Abuja MoU Launches a Five-Year Project to Strengthen Port State Control in West and Central Africa supported by Lloyd's Register Foundation

- The five-year capacity building project was officially launched today with an inaugural ceremony and a Regional Workshop for Directors-General / Chief Executive Officers and Heads of Port State Control of Maritime Administrations in Lagos, Nigeria.
- The project will strengthen inspector capability, regulatory alignment, data-driven inspection practices, integrity, systems and regional mentoring across West and Central Africa.
- The workshop is being held from 29 June to 1 July 2026 at Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos, under the theme: "A Future-Ready Port State Control Regime: Leadership, People, Governance, and Performance for Safer Maritime Systems."

The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control for West and Central African Region (Abuja MoU), with the valued support of Lloyd's Register Foundation, today formally launched a five-year regional capacity building programme aimed at promoting greater awareness of the strategic importance of Port State Control and encouraging sustained policy support for its effective implementation.

The programme seeks to enhance the knowledge, skills, and operational capabilities of Port State Control Officers throughout the region, thereby reinforcing efforts to uphold maritime safety, safeguard seafarers' welfare, protect the marine environment, and strengthen the effectiveness and integrity of the Port State Control regime across West and Central Africa.

The project commenced with an inaugural ceremony and the official opening of the Abuja MoU Regional Workshop for Directors-General/ Chief Executive Officers and Heads of Port State Control, taking place from 29 June to 1 July 2026 at Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos.

The workshop brings together senior maritime leaders, Director Generals and Chief Executive Officers of Maritime Administrations, Heads of Port State Control, technical experts and regional partners to agree on practical actions for building a future-ready Port State Control regime anchored on leadership, people, governance and performance.



Supported by Lloyd's Register Foundation and led by Abuja MoU, the project responds to practical challenges affecting Port State Control in the region, including uneven inspection coverage, inconsistent inspector capability, regulatory implementation gaps, and the need for stronger transparency, data quality and quality assurance systems.

Over the five-year period, the project will support targeted training based on the train-the-trainer model for up to 200 Port State Control Officers, establish a regional mentorship model between high-performing and developing inspection administrations, and further support national roadmaps for the ratification, domestication, implementation and enforcement of key International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions.

"For too long, Port State Control in Central and West Africa has been characterised by knowledge gaps in the implementation and enforcement of relevant conventions and in the understanding of international best practices. By ensuring that ships calling at the region's ports comply with internationally recognised safety, environmental and labour standards, we can build resilient marine supply chains, create safe and sustainable jobs, and support local ocean economies."

- Captain Sunday M. Umoren, Secretary-General, Abuja MoU

Port State Control is a critical second line of defence against unsafe, polluting and non-compliant ships. While the Abuja MoU region has made important progress, inspection activity and compliance with the regional minimum target of inspecting 15% of foreign ship calls remain uneven across Member States.

The workshop marks the first major implementation step under the programme. Sessions will focus on strategic leadership, IMO regulatory frameworks, PSC enforcement, labour compliance, data systems, emerging risks, human capacity, integrity, regional harmonisation and post-workshop implementation commitments.

The programme will also strengthen regional coordination, inspectors' professional development, regulatory harmonisation, inspection consistency, integrity in maritime operations and data-driven decision-making. It will draw lessons from mature Port State Control regimes, including the Paris and Tokyo MoUs, while adapting them to the legal and institutional realities of West and Central Africa.

"Nearly half of Africa's population is under 20 years old. To support this large, young demographic in entering the seafaring workforce, we need to ensure we are developing a skills base that can keep pace with the demands of a rapidly transitioning maritime industry. By facilitating safer outcomes for vessels and seafarers, we hope this project with Abuja MoU will contribute to wider system transformation, helping Africa realise its potential within the wider ocean economy."



- Sam Megwa, Africa Lead, Lloyd's Register Foundation

Project focus

Inspector capability: Targeted training for up to 200 Port State Control Officers to strengthen inspection quality and practical enforcement of international safety, environmental and labour standards.

Mentorship and peer learning: A regional mentorship model to facilitate structured knowledge exchange between high-performing and developing Port State Control administrations.

Regulatory alignment: Support for national implementation roadmaps to improve ratification, domestication, enforcement and audit readiness under key IMO and ILO instruments.

Data-driven oversight: Improved use of Abuja MoU inspection data, AMIS, analytics and risk-based targeting to support better regulatory decision-making.

Integrity and transparency: A stronger focus on ethical inspection of environments, transparency, accountability and collaboration with maritime stakeholders.

Future readiness: Leadership dialogue on emerging risks including decarbonisation, environmental compliance, cybersecurity, automation and future maritime skills.

Inaugural workshop details

Event	Inaugural Ceremony and Abuja MoU Regional Workshop for Directors-General/CEOs and Heads of Port State Control
Theme	A Future-Ready Port State Control Regime: Leadership, People, Governance, and Performance for Safer Maritime Systems
Date	29 June - 1 July 2026
Venue	Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos
Expected focus	Strategic leadership, IMO regulatory frameworks, PSC enforcement, labour compliance, data systems, emerging risks, human capacity, integrity, regional harmonisation and implementation commitments

About Lloyd's Register Foundation

Lloyd's Register Foundation is an independent global safety charity that supports research, innovation and education to make the world a safer place. Its mission is to use the best evidence



and insight to help the global community focus on tackling the world's most pressing safety and risk challenges.

About the Abuja MoU

The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control for the West and Central African Region (Abuja MoU) is a regional Port State Control regime covering 22 countries from Mauritania to South Africa. Its purpose is to strengthen maritime safety, security, environmental protection, and seafarer welfare across the West and Central African region. It seeks to eliminate substandard shipping by promoting effective and harmonised implementation of Port State Control among member states. The Abuja MoU supports the adoption and enforcement of relevant IMO and ILO instruments as the basis for regional inspection standards. Its broader vision is to position the region as one of the leading MoUs globally, committed to a lasting culture of safe, compliant, and environmentally responsible shipping.

Media Contact

Capt. Sunday M. Umoren

Secretary-General, Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control for the West and Central African Region (Abuja MoU).

1 Joseph Harden Street, off Marina, Lagos, Nigeria.

Tel: +234 703 417 2913

Email: sunday.umoren@abujamou.org | secretariat@abujamou.org

Website: www.abujamou.org

Notes to Editors

The Abuja MoU

The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control for the West and Central African Region (Abuja MoU) was signed on 22 October 1999 in Abuja, Nigeria, and currently has 21 full members: Angola, Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Togo. The Secretariat of the MoU is provided by the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy 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, designed to provide information exchange on PSC inspection data within the region.

Port State Control



Port State Control (PSC) is the inspection of foreign ships in national ports to verify that the condition of the ship and its equipment comply with the requirements of international Conventions and that the ship is manned and operated in compliance with these rules.

Although the primary responsibility for enforcing these standards lies with the flag State, Port State Control provides an essential complementary oversight function, serving as a critical safety net to detect and deter substandard shipping and to promote the effective implementation of international maritime regulations.