



**SPEECH BY THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE
DEPARTMENT FOR SHIPPING AND MARITIME**

**TOPIC: ROLE OF WOMEN IN DECARBONISATION IN THE SHIPPING AND
MARITIME INDUSTRY**

Our Host for today, the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre for Africa (MTCC-Africa);

The Vice Chancellor, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

Director, IMO International Maritime Law Institute, Malta

President, World Maritime University, Malmo - Sweden

International Maritime Organization Women in Maritime gender programme

Director, Climate Change Directorate, Kenya

Chairlady, Women in Maritime Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa (Kenya Chapter)

Distinguished Panelists and Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning, Good afternoon and Good evening, in your respective jurisdictions during this webinar.

It gives me great pleasure to be part of this significant event, being the first (1st) webinar in the region on the Role of Women in De-carbonization in the Shipping and Maritime Industry. Allow me at the outset on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kenya acting as host of the MTCC-Africa to express my sincere gratitude to the European Union (EU) for the unwavering support and for providing the funding for this very important initiative and the financial support in establishing the MTCC-Africa. I would also wish to appreciate and thank the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for the technical guidance that the Organization has so consistently extended towards the implementation of this project so far, as we also look to a future together.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme of this Webinar encompasses two topical matters in the maritime sector, one being the role of women in the maritime industry, and the second one being the need to decarbonize the shipping industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although current statistics indicate that women represent only two percent (2%) of the world's 1.2 million seafarers, ninety-four percent (94%) of female seafarers work in the cruise industry. However, it is not all doom and gloom as efforts to promote gender-equality are experiencing a positive momentum worldwide. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its Review of Maritime Transport of 2018, notes that "there is an increasing number of women are entering the shipping industry in all roles, including seafaring and operations, chartering, insurance and law. More women are also enrolling in maritime-related studies." This has been no doubt, due to the concerted efforts by many players, to advance the role of women in the maritime industry, not least the IMO through initiatives and concerted effort to help the industry move forward and support women to achieve a representation that is in keeping with

the twenty-first century expectations.

Gone is the myth that **'women are bad luck at sea'**.

And today the global shipping industry embraces the various roles that women play in the sector, as workers and as leaders in the industry, whether at sea or in shore-based operations, in the offices of shipping companies or as policymakers. But we must do much more to bridge the gender gap.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In this context, we must acknowledge that climate change is a global reality that affects every corner of the world. In the last century, there has been a rise in carbon dioxide level right across the globe. This has reversed food patterns, occasioned adverse weather conditions, sporadic wildfires, sea level rise and ocean coral bleaching, among many others.

The second IMO Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Study indicates that carbon dioxide is the main issue related to GHG emission in shipping. These emissions are directly related to fuel oil consumption by ships. Although CO₂ emissions from shipping represents approx. 3% of the world carbon dioxide emissions, it is estimated that world trade will increase, and therefore, there will be a drastic increase of GHG emission from shipping.

We laud and appreciate the leadership of IMO in taking several steps towards addressing climate change in the shipping and maritime industry:

1. Beginning with the adoption of Annex VI MARPOL to address Air Emissions from ships. Chapter Four (4) of MARPOL Annex VI provides the technical and operational approaches to enhance energy efficiency of ships. As It also emphasizes the importance of technical cooperation and transfer of technology to support energy efficiency improvements.
2. IMO has also adopted a mandatory Fuel Oil Data Collection System (DCS) for international shipping, requiring ships of 5,000 gross tonnage or above to start collecting and reporting data to an IMO database from 2019.
3. And the third notable action, IMO has developed the Initial Strategy on

Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships. This Strategy sets the future targets of IMO. The idea is to reduce CO₂ emissions per transport work as an average across international shipping by at least 40% by 2030, pursuing effort towards 70% by 2050, compared to 2008 levels.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Women can and do play a key role in addressing de-carbonization as policy makers, naval architects, marine engineers and in onshore operations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Gender equality is a fundamental condition to achieve a just and efficient transition to a decarbonized shipping sector and in this transition, the participation of women cannot be understated. A successful inclusion of women in the sector means achieving greater diversity and complementarity as well as expanding the pool of talent to better address the demand for skills. Although varying along with differences in socio-economic and cultural settings, there are specific opportunities for women.

ILO warns that there is an elevated risk that de-carbonising the economy will only confirm the current gender gap, if considerable effort is not taken to narrow gender segregation at the educational and occupational levels

*As Oprah Winfrey once said “**Challenges are gifts that force us to search for a new center of gravity. Don't fight them. Just find a new way to stand**”.*

We must start by addressing the issue of training. to make concerted efforts to address one of the major factors contributing to the occupational segregation in the shipping industry, due to the Gender gap in STEM fields in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) at advanced career levels (graduate and research), due to the fact that it hinders the achievement of gender equality in the maritime sector. Ultimately, this lack of presence in STEM translates into a limitation in size and diversity of the pool of talent available to each country for satisfying the demand for skills and reaching the maximum development potential. Female role models must rise up so as to help

young women develop the right self-perception for different career paths, apart from the traditional, stereotypical ones they have been conditioned to embrace.

Most important, we must also take important steps to include the integration of women in the maritime sector at the design and planning of policies, programmes and projects, as well as financing, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

In conclusion, Distinguished Participants, Ladies & Gentlemen, Climate change represents the most complex challenge of our time – it requires a concerted, proactive and holistic response.

We acknowledge and laud IMO's relentless efforts towards the global initiatives to address climate change in the shipping and maritime industry in line with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 13 and the Paris Agreement (2015) calling for urgent action to combat climate change and its impact particularly, through addressing greenhouse gas emissions from ships.

Allow me to once more thank MTCC-Africa for organizing and hosting this webinar. I wish you all very fruitful deliberations

Thank you all for your attention.

God bless you.

Nancy Karigithu