



BOOSTING NATIONAL POWER: SHIPPERS' COUNCIL FACILITATES RELEASE OF 150+ CONTAINERS FOR GRID PROJECTS

...Recovers Over 100 Million for Shipping Lines
 ...Directs Carriers to Suspend Blacklisting of TCN
 ..."We Are Grateful to the Shippers' Council" - TCN
 ..."Shippers' Council Is Truly a Trade Facilitator" - Shipping Companies



In a landmark intervention aimed at supporting Nigeria's power sector, the Nigerian Shippers' Council brokered a resolution between the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) and some Shipping Companies over the delayed clearance and release of critical power project cargoes.

The mediation session, held on March 24th,

2026, at the NSC Headquarters in Lagos, addressed lingering disputes involving delayed shipments, rising demurrage charges, communication gaps, and operational blacklisting affecting the movement of essential electricity infrastructure equipment into the country.

The intervention facilitated the release of over 150 containers carrying power



AKUTAH PIUS UKEYIMA, Esq, MON, FCILT, Ph.D,
 Executive Secretary/CEO - NSC

AUCTION: NIGERIAN SHIPPERS' COUNCIL INTERVENES TO HALT STANDOFF OVER MULTI-MILLION NAIRA JIGAWA MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

...Mandates Tripartite Meeting; Sets Seven-Day Deadline for Resolution

The Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC) stepped into a high-stakes maritime dispute involving Skamos Enterprises Nigeria Limited and Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), issuing a directive to de-escalate tension and allow the Allottee access to auctioned medical equipment valued at millions of naira.

The intervention follows a formal complaint concerning 2X40FT containers; MSDU4177714 and MSDU4816271, laden with healthcare equipment originally consigned to the Jigawa State Government. The cargo was reportedly acquired by Skamos Enterprises through a duly verified auction conducted by the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS). However, access to the containers was allegedly

restricted by the shipping line, prompting regulatory intervention.

Representing the Executive Secretary/CEO of the Council, Dr. Akutah Pius Ukeyima, Head, Complaints Unit, Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed, who presided over the mediation session, reiterated the NSC's commitment to neutrality and the use of globally recognized Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms.

"The Nigerian Shippers' Council operates as an impartial mediator, relying strictly on verified documentation to deliver fair outcomes," Dr. Ambi stated. "Our services are provided at no cost, as part of our statutory mandate to facilitate trade and resolve commercial disputes efficiently. We aim to transform friction into cooperation through professionalism and

regulatory expertise."

According to the case handler, Barr. Musa Mohammed, the complainant, stated in their submission that despite full compliance with auction procedures and fulfillment of all payment obligations, the Terminal and Shipping Line had failed to facilitate the release of the cargo.

In response, MSC Nigeria's Customer Care Manager, Mr. Dimeji Gbadebo, requested a short extension, citing the absence of key liaison personnel due to seasonal leave. He explained that additional time was required to reconcile documentation discrepancies with the consignee, the Jigawa State Government. Gbadebo reaffirmed the company's willingness to resolve the

matter amicably, especially given the sensitive nature of the medical supplies.

On the other hand, the terminal, Tin Can Island Container Terminal (TICT), attributed its refusal to release the containers to previous experiences where the terminal was taken to Court and the Police because of auctioned cargoes. For the cargoes to be released, the beneficiary must produce a clearance letter from the Jigawa State Ministry of Health and evidence of the Court condemnation of the subject cargo.

After exhaustive deliberations and review of submissions from parties, the meeting arrived at the following resolutions that;

continue on page 2



Editorial MESSAGE



Dr. Bashir Ambi

Editorial TEAM

CHAIRMAN, EDITORIAL BOARD

Dr. Bashir Ambi

EDITOR:

Hassan Aminu

SENIOR CORRESPONDENT:

Vincent Nkwocha

CORRESPONDENTS:

Wachiko Yahaya;
*Shipping Companies,
Barge Operators Desk*

Obewu K. Onumah;

De-Consolidators (Groupage Desk)

Soniya Hassan-Akinbode;

*Terminals, Truckers,
Freight Forwarding Desk*

Jessica Jonathan;

*Air Freight Cargo Desk
Government Agencies Desk*

Data Analyst:

Ojo Oluwatoyin

GRAPHICS/TYPIST

Stoneview Production

TURNING FRICTION INTO FUEL, GRIEVANCES INTO GROWTH: HOW THE NSC RESOLVES PORT SECTOR DISPUTES

While many sectors treat consumer complaints as administrative burdens to be managed or suppressed, Nigeria's maritime industry is increasingly transforming them into instruments for economic growth and regulatory reform. Through the strategic oversight of the Nigerian Shippers' Council, everyday grievances are being converted into valuable data that reveal service inefficiencies, operational bottlenecks, and emerging economic opportunities.

This evolution, transforming friction into market intelligence, is quietly reshaping and strengthening Nigeria's global trade. Established in 1978 and designated as Nigeria's Port Economic Regulator in 2014, the NSC plays a central role in trade facilitation, economic regulation, stakeholder advocacy, and dispute resolution within the port sector.

At the heart of this mandate is an agile complaints-handling framework supported by digital platforms such as the Port Service Support Portal (PSSP). These systems capture and document operational friction points ranging from arbitrary charges and excessive demurrage to contractual breaches and service failures.

Beyond grievance management, however, the framework now functions as a strategic intelligence mechanism, generating real-time data that reveals how the port sector responds to systemic pressures and market disruptions.

The scale of complaints handled by the NSC demonstrates the institution's growing analytical and economic significance. Between 2015 and 2020, the Council successfully resolved over 1,123 disputes, securing financial recoveries exceeding ₦759 million and \$1.1 million for shippers and port users.

Recent figures indicate significant growth in both operational intervention and economic impact. In 2025 alone, the Council resolved 108 high-value complaints, recovering over ₦197 billion for port users. These figures represent far more than routine agency performance indicators. Each complaint serves as a signal pointing to pricing distortions, operational inefficiencies, infrastructure gaps, regulatory failures, or contractual breaches within the port sector.

By systematically analyzing complaints, the Council identifies recurring trends such as:

- Arbitrary surcharges and tariff irregularities;
- Port congestion and cargo delays;

- Shortages of empty containers affecting export trade; and
- Regulatory non-compliance by shipping lines and terminal operators.

For instance:

- Pricing anomalies become visible through repeated complaints involving arbitrary charges, excessive storage fees, and unjustified tariff increases.
- Operational bottlenecks are exposed through persistent delays in container returns, cargo evacuation, and prolonged dwell times.
- Supply chain disruptions emerge through complaints relating to shortages of empty containers and restricted export capacity.
- Regulatory non-compliance is identified through recurring breaches of service standards by terminal operators, shipping companies, and logistics providers.

A notable example occurred in 2026 when widespread complaints from exporters highlighted severe shortages of 20TEUs empty containers across Nigerian ports. Rather than addressing the grievances individually, the NSC engaged shipping lines collectively, which led to commitments by shipping companies to improve container availability nationwide.

This demonstrates that the Council's role has evolved beyond dispute resolution into evidence-based regulatory intervention.

The NSC's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms have also strengthened its strategic role within the port sector by resolving disputes outside court litigation. Major industry stakeholders, including shipping firms and terminal operators, have increasingly embraced the NSC's mediation framework, resulting in a notable reduction in formal maritime litigation.

In this context, ADR is no longer merely a legal mechanism; it has become an economic stabilization tool that supports trade efficiency and enhances Nigeria's competitiveness in international commerce.

Across West Africa, maritime regulatory systems differ in capacity, enforcement, and the use of data. While neighboring institutions handle cargo-related complaints, many do not have strong systems for turning complaint trends into useful policy decisions.

- The Ghana Shippers' Authority handles cargo disputes but still faces challenges in using complaint data to improve wider trade policies.

- The Port Autonome de Cotonou mainly resolves operational disputes through administrative procedures instead of using data-based market analysis.

In contrast, the Nigerian Shippers' Council performs several roles at the same time; serving as an industry mediator, economic regulator, and real-time market intelligence body.

As the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) continues to expand, the NSC model provides a strong example of how complaints data can improve regional trade facilitation systems.

One of the most important values of the NSC's complaints framework is its ability to identify problems before they become major crises.

Complaints often appear before wider system failures become visible.

For example:

- A rise in demurrage complaints may signal growing port congestion and cargo evacuation problems.
- An increase in fraud-related complaints may expose weaknesses in regulations or documentation processes.
- Rising export complaints may reveal supply chain problems that could affect national trade performance.

By treating complaints as early warning signals, regulators can take quick and targeted action before operational problems grow into wider economic risks.

In conclusion, the transformation of the NSC's complaints framework offers an important lesson for regulators around the world: the market is always communicating through operational challenges and stakeholder complaints. The real challenge is whether institutions can listen, understand, and respond effectively. Through its data-driven approach, the Nigerian Shippers' Council has developed a proactive regulatory model that turns dispute resolution into real-time market intelligence for the Port Sector.



continue from page 1

- The NSC formally recognized the auction status of the two containers in dispute.
- It reaffirmed the legal backing of cargo auctions under the Nigeria Customs Service Act (NCSA) 2023, noting that goods uncleared after 30 days are eligible for disposal under Section 30(1) and Section 119 of the Act.
- NSC engaged the Jigawa State Government and confirmed that the cargo was abandoned due to high demurrage accrued.
- The Council confirmed that a total

payment of ₦4.3 million, inclusive of VAT, had been duly remitted to the Federal Government's account for the purchase.

- MSC was granted a one-week extension to obtain and reconcile critical documentation with the consignee on all procedures required for the timely release of the containers.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Ambi emphasized the importance of regulatory compliance and transparency within Nigeria's maritime sector.

"Compliance remains the bedrock of a functional and competitive maritime industry," he said. "All stakeholders must operate within the bounds of the law to ensure efficiency, fairness, and sustainable growth in the blue economy."

The Council urged all parties to cooperate fully and comply with the resolutions of the meeting, warning that failure to align with regulatory directives could undermine both trade facilitation efforts and investor confidence in the nation's port system.

Continues from page 1

equipment needed for ongoing national electricity projects, while also helping to decongest the ports.

Representing the Executive Secretary/CEO of the Council, Akutah Pius Ukeyima, Esq, MON, FCILT, Ph.D, the Head, Complaints Unit, Dr. Bashir Ambi, welcomed stakeholders and stressed the urgent need for practical resolutions to prevent further operational disruptions.

Dr. Ambi urged all parties to move beyond dialogue and strengthen collaboration while adhering strictly to agreements reached during previous engagements in August 2025.

Key issues identified during the mediation included persistent delays linked to the B'Odogwu digital Customs platform, mounting demurrage and storage charges, and the blacklisting of TCN by some shipping companies over unresolved financial obligations.

The Executive Director, Finance of TCN, Mr. Ochije O. Chucks, who led the TCN delegation, commended the Council for its timely intervention. According to him, earlier mediation efforts by the NSC had already facilitated the release of several shipments and prevented further blacklisting of the Company by the Shipping Companies.

He reiterated TCN's commitment to improving communication and operational coordination with shipping companies and contractors to fast-track the delivery of critical electricity infrastructure across the country.

The TCN delegation also included the Director of Engineering, Engr. Akintola M.A.; Head of Internal Audit, Mrs. L.B. Yusuf; Engr. Aluko Joshua; Dare Adekunle; and Akinwande Friday.

Also present at the meeting was the Managing Director of Lagace Power, Mrs. Rhoda Afolabi, who raised concerns regarding disputes involving one of the shipping companies and terminal operators.

Representatives of shipping companies participated actively during the session.

Officers of COSCO Shipping, Esther Uche and Shadrack Ogeigbe, expressed concerns over four outstanding shipments that remained undelivered despite prior notifications. They noted that although TCN paid over ₦2 billion in Customs duties, 119 containers remained under detention, including 104 containers for which duties had already been confirmed.

Similarly, Mr. Vincent Opreh of PIL Shipping highlighted several operational challenges affecting cargo delivery and formally requested the intervention of the Council.

Representing Ocean Network Express (ONE), Mr. David Audu disclosed that the company had previously blacklisted TCN over unresolved transaction defaults, stressing that the decision became necessary due to prolonged non-compliance with agreed obligations.

Other stakeholders at the meeting included representatives of CMA CGM and Lagos & Niger Shipping (LANSAL), who raised concerns over abandoned containers,

documentation bottlenecks, auctioned cargoes, and the accumulation of demurrage charges.

The shipping companies collectively emphasized the need for faster documentation processing, timely communication, and improved coordination between TCN, contractors, and shipping companies to avoid avoidable delays and financial losses.

Responding to the concerns, TCN reaffirmed its national mandate to ensure a stable electricity supply across the country, stressing that delays in releasing critical equipment directly impact ongoing efforts to improve power transmission and national grid stability.

Following extensive deliberations, the Nigerian Shippers' Council announced a series of resolutions aimed at ensuring the seamless flow of project cargoes and reducing port congestion.

The resolutions include:

1. COSCO Shipping Nigeria was directed to release forty (40) newly cleared TCN containers on or before March 27, 2026.
2. TCN is to submit a formal appeal regarding 119 delayed containers, outlining challenges associated with the B'Odogwu platform and referencing the outcomes of the mediation.
3. All shipping companies are required to appoint dedicated liaison officers to coordinate directly with TCN and the NSC for real-time issue resolution.
4. TCN was directed to expedite the

payment of ₦245 million owed to PIL Shipping, covering several outstanding container transactions.

5. Shipping Companies were urged to consider waivers of accrued demurrage charges in the national interest.

6. No shipping company is permitted to place liens on TCN cargoes or containers containing critical national infrastructure equipment.

7. TCN and all shipping companies agreed to sustain continuous engagement to proactively resolve future challenges.

8. Shipping companies whose disputes were resolved during the mediation were encouraged to formally document their appreciation to the Council.

9. Stakeholders were advised to engage directly with TCN and NSC officials on matters relating to infractions, rather than relying solely on third-party clearing agents.

10. CMA CGM was requested to conduct a final review within one week regarding 15 containers that were inadvertently excluded from the August 2025 resolution and subsequently auctioned.

Stakeholders at the meeting praised the Council for its professionalism, neutrality, and commitment to trade facilitation.

The representatives of both TCN and the shipping companies expressed appreciation to the Nigerian Shippers' Council, describing the Council as a reliable mediator and a critical driver of efficiency.

TRADE PROTECTION: NSC, NDLEA CLEAR SHIPPING FIRM, RENEW CRACKDOWN ON ILLICIT CARGO

...Intervention Saves Shipping Firm from Mounting Charges, Affirms Commitment to Ease of Doing Business

In a move underscoring Nigeria's commitment to safe and efficient maritime trade, the Nigerian Shippers' Council had on Thursday, February 5th, 2026, intervened to secure the release of a detained container belonging to Sharaf Shipping Agency after it was cleared of any illicit contents by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA).

The 1X40FT container with number: PIDU4412821, was held at the APM Terminals (APMT), Apapa, following an administrative directive by the NDLEA for a comprehensive physical examination. The container was originally discharged on January 3rd, 2026, and had completed documentation for transfer to Clarion Bonded Terminal by January 13th, 2026 before the hold was imposed.

Sharaf Shipping Agency raised concerns that the NDLEA's insistence on 100% physical inspection at the mother terminal conflicted with standard groupage (consolidation) procedures, potentially disrupting logistics efficiency. The

examination, eventually conducted on February 4th 2026, confirmed that the container carried no contraband.

However, further delays arose when a secondary system hold was reportedly placed by multiple agencies, including Customs and Maritime Police, even after the clearance. By this stage, the shipping firm had incurred over ₦1.28 million in terminal storage charges, with additional demurrage and operational losses affecting several consignees linked to the consolidated shipment.

The Management of Sharaf Shipping led by Michael Ayinde Abayomi, paid an unannounced visit to the NSC's Complaints Unit to formally file for regulatory intervention and were immediately led to NDLEA Office at Apapa port for on-the-spot resolution of the impasse.

The Council and the Shipping Agency were received by the Commander of the NDLEA, Apapa Port Command, Mohamed Tukur. During the meeting, the NSC reaffirmed its commitment to Cargo security and stakeholder protection, ensuring that

legitimate trade thrives in a safe environment. Dr. Ambi conveyed fraternal greetings from Dr. Pius Akutah to the NDLEA Chairman, Brig. Gen. Buba Marwa (Rtd), applauding the agency's strides in ridding the port sector of illicit drugs.

In response, Commander Tukur summoned the Terminal Commander for an immediate briefing. Upon confirming that the agency had concluded its legitimate inspection, he ordered the Container to be released forthwith. He attributed part of the misunderstanding to the complexities associated with handling Less-than-Container Load (LCL) shipments but maintained that due process had been followed.

Representing the Council's Executive Secretary/CEO, Dr. Bashir Ambi emphasized the regulator's zero-tolerance stance on procedural lapses and illicit trade.

"We are committed to a transparent investigation," Ambi said. "Any Stakeholder found violating established protocols will face appropriate sanctions. At the same

time, legitimate businesses must not be subjected to avoidable bottlenecks."

Despite the resolution, the NDLEA issued a stern warning to operators within the port sector. Commander Tukur reiterated the agency's resolve to clamp down on narcotics trafficking through Nigerian ports.

"No one will be allowed to turn our ports into a hub for illegal drugs," he stated. "We will continue to track, intercept, and prosecute offenders without hesitation."

The meeting concluded with both the NSC and NDLEA reaffirming their shared objective to eliminate illicit cargo while safeguarding legitimate trade. Authorities stressed that maintaining the integrity of Nigeria's ports is essential to sustaining investor confidence and advancing the Ease of Doing Business.

The intervention is seen as a signal to stakeholders that while enforcement remains stringent, regulatory agencies are equally committed to protecting compliant operators from undue hardship.

BOX DIVERSION: NSC MEDIATES, RESOLVES AUCTIONED CONTAINER DISPUTE BETWEEN AGAMA LAFIYA LIVESTOCK FARMS AND MAINLAND BONDED TERMINAL

...Council Safeguards Shippers' Interests, Restores Confidence in Port Operations

...Intervention Prevents Protracted Litigation and Further Financial Losses to Stakeholders

In the exercise of its mandate as the Port Economic Regulator, the Nigerian Shippers' Council successfully resolved a dispute involving an auctioned container between Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms and Mainland Bonded Terminal, Iddo, Lagos.

The mediation meeting, held at the Complaints Unit's Meeting Room, 1st Floor, B-Wing, NSC Headquarters, Apapa, Lagos, was presided over by Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed, Head, Complaints Unit, on behalf of the Executive Secretary/CEO of the Council, Akutah Pius Ukeyima, Esq., MON, FCILT, Ph.D.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Ambi clarified that while the Council is not a Court of Law, it remains the Port Economic Regulator, responsible for resolving commercial shipping disputes with decades of

experience. He emphasized that criminal matters remain within the jurisdiction of courts and urged all parties to maintain decorum throughout the mediation.

He further warned that the Council would not hesitate to invoke relevant regulatory measures against any operator found recalcitrant or unwilling to comply with resolutions reached during mediation. During the session, he also introduced Mrs. Juliana Obiageli Saka as the Assistant Director and Head of Complaints (Designate).

Presenting the case overview, the case handler, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Ojo, disclosed that the Council received a complaint from Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms alleging the diversion of Container number: GCXU5818883, which had been statutorily allocated to the company through a Nigeria Customs Service auction process.

According to the Complainant, despite completing the required documentation and formalities at APM Terminals (APMT), the container was subsequently transferred to Mainland Bonded Terminal, thereby preventing them from taking delivery of the cargo. Following the complaint, the NSC intervened by directing APMT to place a hold on the container pending the resolution of the dispute.

Representatives of the Allottee, A. Abubakar, Frank Alaku, and the clearing agent, Lucky Egbeiyi, maintained that the container was legally allocated by the Nigeria Customs Service and that import duties amounting to ₦2 million had been duly paid following the opening of an overtime file at the Apapa Command.

They explained that temporary financial constraints caused delays in processing the

delivery, which necessitated a swap arrangement with Maersk Nigeria, valued at ₦1.7 million, to secure the Delivery Order (DO). However, upon attempting to take delivery at APMT, they discovered that the container had already been transferred to Mainland Bonded Terminal, a facility they claimed they were previously unaware of.

The Complainant further alleged that initial efforts to locate the container were unsuccessful until Customs Officials later confirmed its presence at the bonded terminal.

Responding on behalf of Mainland Bonded Terminal, the Founder, Mr. Olahide Fowosire, and the Executive Director, Operations, Mrs. Oyinkan Akangbe, stated that the terminal is a duly licensed bonded facility serving as a nominated holding location for Maersk Nigeria's overtime cargoes under an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

They explained that the transfer process followed a tripartite arrangement involving the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), APMT, and Maersk Nigeria, with the NPA responsible for collecting the Transfer Delivery Orders (TDOs) for evacuation purposes.

Mr. Fowosire also expressed reservations concerning the validity of the Allottee's documents, noting that the auction documents were dated November, 2025 and carried a mandatory 10-day evacuation window, arguing that the Claimant's appearance in April 2026 suggested that the documents may have lapsed.

He added that the terminal's strict security protocols, including mandatory video-

recorded examinations, were necessary to prevent the unauthorized movement of illicit or improperly documented cargoes.

Providing expert guidance during the deliberations, Mrs. Juliana Saka acknowledged Mainland Bonded Terminal's adherence to internal security and contractual obligations. However, she stressed that such procedures could not supersede valid statutory releases issued by the Nigeria Customs Service.

She noted that once the Allottee presented authentic allocation documents duly verified by the Customs release desk, the terminal was under a commercial obligation to facilitate the release of the cargo.

Following extensive deliberations, the meeting resolved as follows:

1. The Council confirmed that the auctioned container was legally transferred to Mainland Bonded Terminal in line with existing overtime cargo handling protocols.
 2. The actions taken by Mainland Bonded Terminal were found to be consistent with its safeguarding agreements with APMT and Maersk Nigeria.
 3. Mainland Bonded Terminal was directed to release the container upon presentation of the previous TDO and evidence of payment, with the process to be concluded on or before the close of business on Monday, May 4th, 2026, and proof of compliance forwarded to the Council.
 4. Both Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms and Mainland Bonded Terminal were advised to register as stakeholders with the Nigerian Shippers' Council on or before May 15th, 2026.
 5. Mainland Bonded Terminal was also directed to improve its website functionality by ensuring that accessible contact numbers and official email addresses are available for public inquiries.
 6. Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms was encouraged to prioritize professional engagement with the Mainland Bonded Terminal in future transactions.
- The Council commended both parties for their cooperation and commitment to achieving an amicable resolution, reiterating its dedication to promoting trade facilitation, port efficiency, and the Ease of Doing Business at Nigerian ports.



PILLARS BEHIND THE SUCCESS OF COMPLAINTS UNIT

Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed
Juliana Obiageli Saka
Clara Enwefah (Unit Secretary)
Hassan Aminu
Ijeoma A. Ugwu
Funmilola Afolabi
Vincent I. Nkwocha
Musa Mohammed
Wachiko A. Yahaya
Obewu K. Onumah
Soniya Hassan-Akinbode
Oluwatoyin Ojo
Jessica Jonathan
Mubarak Abubakar

SUPPORT STAFF

Favour Sado
Zainab Abdullahi Suleiman
Fashanu Opeyemi David
Adebayo Ayodele
Victory Oyindenepre Okubokekeme
Mohammed Tanimu



ENERGY SECURITY: NSC RESOLVES ₦150M PORT STORAGE DISPUTE, FREES POWER EQUIPMENT

...Saves Over ₦90 Million in Terminal Storage Costs

...Directs COSCO to Refrain from Placing Liens on National Project Cargoes

...TCN Commends NSC for Timely Intervention

A commercial dispute involving over ₦150 million in terminal storage charges on power equipment imported for the national electricity grid has been resolved by the Nigerian Shippers' Council, thereby saving more than ₦90 million for the Transmission Company of Nigeria.

The resolution was reached during a mediation meeting convened by the Council involving the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), COSCO Shipping Nigeria, and Samsung Heavy Industries/Mega Construction Investment (SHI/MCI) Terminals.

The mediation session was presided over by Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed, Head, Complaints Unit, who commended Samsung Terminals for embracing the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism championed by the Council.

Speaking on behalf of the Executive Secretary/CEO of the Council, Akutah Pius Ukeyima, MON, FCILT, Ph.D., Dr. Ambi reiterated that the Council remains a neutral commercial dispute resolution platform within the port sector, empowered to intervene in port and shipping disputes in the interest of trade facilitation.

He further warned that non-compliance with resolutions reached could attract sanctions in line with the Council's Port Economic Regulatory mandate. According to him, Stakeholders must maintain professionalism and prioritize national economic interests, stressing that "no cargo means no port," while emphasizing the Council's commitment to achieving mutually beneficial

outcomes for all parties.

The dispute centered on the importation of power infrastructure equipment belonging to TCN, for which over ₦2 billion had already been paid in Customs duties. However, despite the strategic national importance of the Cargo, COSCO Shipping Nigeria placed a lien on the consignments over unresolved obligations linked to previous shipments.

As a result, Samsung Terminals issued terminal storage invoices amounting to over ₦150 million after the cargo remained at the terminal beyond the approved free storage period.

Representing TCN, Engr. Aluko Joshua and Engr. Adegboyega Dare informed the meeting that persistent technical challenges associated with the Nigeria Customs Service's B'Odogwu platform throughout 2025 significantly hindered documentation and cargo clearance processes.

TCN maintained that the detained cargoes were covered under separate Bills of Lading and should not have been subjected to restrictions arising from earlier transactions. The Agency appealed for the release of the break-bulk cargoes in view of their strategic importance to the national power grid.

Also participating virtually, the Executive Director, Finance of TCN, Mr. Ochijie O.C., formally requested the Council to intervene and persuade Samsung Terminals to grant substantial waivers on the accrued storage charges to facilitate the prompt deployment of the equipment for national power infrastructure projects.

In response, representatives of COSCO Shipping Lines Nigeria, Esther Uche and Asagwara Uche, stated that TCN had been repeatedly notified since August 2025 regarding overdue shipments and unreturned empty containers. According to COSCO, several warnings on accruing demurrage had been communicated through the joint NSC/TCN/COSCO engagement platform without adequate response from TCN and its contractors.

The shipping company maintained that the lien imposed on the cargoes was exercised strictly in line with the terms and conditions stipulated in the applicable Bills of Lading.

Providing clarification on the terminal operations, the General Manager, Operations of Samsung Terminals, Cyril Amaefule, explained that the company operates from the LADOL Free Trade Zone and offers a 30-day free storage window alongside complimentary barge transfer services to approved inland jetties, including Standard Flour Mills and Kirikiri NPA Phase II.

Amaefule disclosed that while other consignees successfully cleared their cargoes within the stipulated free period, TCN's equipment remained at the terminal for an additional 27 days after expiration of the free period. He, however, noted that in recognition of the Federal Government's strategic interests and existing partnerships on national projects, Samsung had already granted a 40 percent reduction on the initial invoice, bringing the figure down from over ₦150 million to approximately ₦105 million.

Following over three hours of extensive deliberations and review of relevant documents, the parties reached the following resolutions:

1. The Council confirmed handling of TCN's heavy power equipment under Bill of Lading number: JXS87QDLOS01, which was transported by COSCO Shipping Lines and discharged at Samsung Heavy Industries/Mega Construction Investment Terminal, Victoria Island, Lagos.
2. The Council established that the accrued terminal storage charges totaling ₦150,508,443.59 arose primarily due to the lien placed on the cargo by COSCO Shipping Nigeria.
3. In the spirit of commercial cooperation and national interest, Samsung Heavy Industries/Mega Construction Investment Terminals granted a 40 percent waiver on the disputed charges.
4. TCN was directed to pay the negotiated settlement sum of ₦60,203,377.44 to Samsung Terminals on or before April 21, 2026, and forward evidence of payment to the Council.
5. The Council advised COSCO Shipping Nigeria and other service providers to refrain from placing liens on sensitive national project cargoes and instead promptly refer such disputes to the appropriate regulatory authorities to avoid unnecessary accumulation of demurrage and storage costs.
6. COSCO Shipping Nigeria was further directed to provide updates on other pending national project cargoes to prevent further delays and liabilities.
7. The Council encouraged both TCN and COSCO Shipping Nigeria to continue utilizing the specialized facilities of Samsung Heavy Industries/Mega Construction Investment Terminals for the handling of heavy-duty power infrastructure equipment.
8. Parties were urged to maintain a cordial working relationship to ensure seamless execution of strategic national infrastructure projects.

Reacting to the outcome of the mediation, officials of the Transmission Company of Nigeria expressed profound appreciation to the Nigerian Shippers' Council for its timely intervention and commitment to protecting national economic interests through effective dispute resolution mechanisms.



CONTAINER SHORTAGE: NIGERIAN SHIPPERS' COUNCIL INTERVENTION SECURES COMMITMENTS FOLLOWING AWAEMAP COMPLAINTS

...We are committed to Equipment Supply...Shipping Lines

Friday, 9th January 2026, the Nigerian Shippers' Council, through its Complaints Unit, successfully secured commitments from international shipping lines to improve the availability of empty TEUs for Nigerian Exporters.

This intervention followed an urgent complaint submitted by the Association of West African Exporters and Maritime Professionals (AWAEMAP) regarding persistent shortages of 20FT empty containers. The shortages have significantly disrupted export operations, vessel bookings, and shipment schedules. The Association also alleged that restrictions on the movement of empty equipment into Nigerian ports have destabilized the export value chain.

Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed, Head, Complaints Unit, who represented the Executive Secretary/CEO, Akutah Pius Ukeyima, Esq., MON, FCILT, Ph.D., welcomed the Association and reaffirmed the Council's commitment to protect stakeholders' interests and resolve grievances within the Marine and Blue Economy sector. He assured exporters of fair treatment and invited the Association's leadership to present their concerns formally. The meeting was held at the Complaints Unit Meeting Room, 1st Floor, B-Wing, NSC Headquarters, GRA, Apapa, Lagos.

Mr. Olumekun Olubunmi, President of AWAEMAP, explained that the Association comprises over 200 export groups, many of whom have faced critical container shortages for over two months. He noted that under previous Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), exporters could confirm container availability at the point of booking. Previously, Carriers addressed local shortages by

repositioning empty containers from neighboring hubs such as Cotonou via inbound vessels.

However, he alleged that many shipping lines have abandoned this practice, prioritizing commercial interests over Nigeria's export competitiveness. He further stated that vessels scheduled for Nigerian export cargo are increasingly diverted to ports such as Cotonou, Abidjan, or Tema, where they load containers and bypass Nigerian exporters. For example, at PTML Terminal, large volumes of containers reportedly reserved for CMA CGM export stuffing were instead evacuated as empty repositioning (re-exports), without serving local needs.

Alhaji Nafiu, Trustee of AWAEMAP, clarified that while the Association was not targeting specific companies, the scarcity primarily involved MSC, CMA CGM, COSCO, ONE, and Maersk Nigeria. He acknowledged that Maersk had attempted to assist by diverting containers to Lekki Deep Sea Port, though the volume remained insufficient. He urged the government to compel carriers to ensure adequate equipment supply during peak seasons to prevent contract breaches and cargo diversion to competing countries.

In response, Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed immediately led the delegation to MSC for direct engagement with the company. At MSC, Dr. Ambi formally presented AWAEMAP's complaints to the Management, emphasizing that while shipping lines continue to confirm bookings and the failure to provide ready-for-use containers affects contractual obligations, it poses a challenge to Nigeria's export trade reliability.

Mr. Olumekun Olubunmi highlighted that seasonal commodity such as soybeans, sesame seeds, and shea butter are currently stranded in warehouses due to a shortage of 20FT General Purpose (GP) containers. With the cashew season approaching, he warned of a potential escalation in the logistics crisis.

Mr. Jesse Chege, General Manager, MSC Nigeria, acknowledged the trade imbalance, noting that declining import volumes have reduced the availability of empty container returns. While the 60-day backlog had not been previously escalated to senior management, he confirmed a surge in booking requests within the last 72 hours. He outlined the following remedial measures:

- MSC is exploring all internal avenues to increase the supply of ready-for-use containers.
- Immediate internal solutions have been identified to ease operational pressure.
- Mr. Chege announced plans to travel to MSC Global Headquarters in Geneva from Monday, 12 January 2026, to negotiate a dedicated equipment repositioning strategy for the Nigerian market.

The delegation subsequently visited Hapag-Lloyd Nigeria Shipping Limited.

At Hapag-Lloyd, Dr. Ambi expressed appreciation for the company's responsiveness and appealed to all carriers to support the Federal Government's export drive by prioritizing the provision of 20FT containers.

Mr. Olumekun Olubunmi reiterated that the appeal was industry-wide, stressing

the urgency of moving agricultural bulk products, including sesame seeds, soybeans, and shea nuts, before year-end. He noted that the upcoming cashew season would further increase demand for both 20FT and 40FT containers.

Alhaji Nafiu expressed concern over the lack of a clear timeline for equipment availability, noting that shipment delays of two to three weeks are leading to increased warehouse costs and reduced profit margins.

Mr. Oladimeji Femi, Equipment Dispatch Officer at Hapag-Lloyd, apologized for the delays, citing factors beyond the company's control, particularly the decline in inbound imports. He disclosed that 116 units of 20FT containers are currently available at Onne Port and suggested that exporters should consider diverting cargo there, although inter-port trucking costs exceed ₦1.8 million per unit.

He further noted that Hapag-Lloyd has directed terminals to halt the outward evacuation of 20FT containers and instead channel them to holding bays for export stuffing. He referenced a previous repositioning of 500 empty containers from Johannesburg, South Africa, of which 460 remained unused, highlighting the need for improved demand forecasting. He assured the NSC that these concerns are being reviewed at the company's weekly global operations meetings.

Summary of Resolutions Reached.

1. Carriers will halt the export of empty containers and prioritize local export stuffing.
2. Repositioning of empty containers from international hubs such as Geneva and Johannesburg to Nigeria.
3. Exporters are encouraged to improve demand forecasting to prevent underutilization of repositioned equipment.
4. The Nigerian Shippers' Council will continue engagements with other shipping companies.

At the end of the tour of shipping companies, the Association expressed deep appreciation for the Nigerian Shippers' Council's prompt and effective intervention.

NSC INTERVENTION ENDS STORAGE CHARGE DEADLOCK INVOLVING PIL, APMT, AND MULTIFREIGHT

...Intervention Saves Diplomatic Mission Over N100 Million in Shipping and Storage Costs

...We Waived All Freight Charges on the Return Leg Following the Shippers' Council's Intervention - PIL

The Nigerian Shippers' Council resolved a dispute involving Multifreight Nigeria Ltd, APM Terminals, and Pacific International Lines (PIL) over accumulated storage charges on a diplomatic consignment.

The dispute centered on an Out-of-Gauge (OOG) module with Bill of Lading No. BNE500289900 and Container No. JTLU0038861, which incurred storage charges amounting to approximately ₦46 million following operational and logistics complications linked to cargo handling and transshipment.

Representing the Executive Secretary/CEO of the Council, Akutah Pius Ukeyima, Esq., MON, FCILT, Ph.D, the Head, Complaints Unit, Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed, assured stakeholders that the mediation process would be guided by fairness, transparency, and professionalism.

Dr. Ambi subsequently invited the Case Officer, Mrs. Afolabi Funmilola, a Principal Operations Officer of the Council, to provide an overview of the matter.

Presenting the case, Mrs. Funmilola explained that the dispute originated in

December 2025 following allegations by Multifreight Nigeria Ltd that the diplomatic cargo had been discharged into the APM Terminals yard. However, records from the Terminal Operating System (TOS) and vessel tallies reportedly indicated that the cargo remained onboard the PIL vessel as "Remain on Board" (ROB).

The mediation identified several operational challenges responsible for the dispute.

According to the findings, the paired half-height modules were intended to be

handled and transported as a single unit. However, inadequate operational coordination resulted in a split shipment, with one-half of the cargo inadvertently over-carried back to the Port of Loading in Australia.

The missing component was eventually returned to Nigeria on February 27, 2026, aboard the vessel *Lestari 0279W*, resulting in significant delays in cargo clearance and delivery.

The Council further noted that terminal storage charges had accumulated to ₦46

Continues on page 10

ANALYSIS OF STAKEHOLDERS' COMPLAINTS HANDLED IN THE FIRST QUARTER (JAN - MAR. 2026)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS COMPLAINTS HANDLING MANAGEMENT — PERFORMANCE 2 Q4 2025

TOTAL COMPLAINTS RECEIVED: 32	CLOSED COMPLAINTS: 1 (3%)	RESOLVED COMPLAINTS: 19 (59%)	ONGOING COMPLAINTS: 12 (38%)	AMOUNT SAVED THROUGH INTERVENTIONS: ₦348,813,072.06
--------------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--

TYPE OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED WITHIN THE FIRST QUARTER

Types Of Complaints	No. of Occurrences
Delay in Cargo Transfer	1
Breach of Trust	1
Invoice Cancellation	1
Lack Of Telex Release	1
Delay in Releasing the Export Document	1
Export Fraud	1
Unsettled Demurrage	2
Missing Cargo	2
Breach of Contract	1
Waiver	2
Demurrage/Detention of Vessel	1
Container Deposit Refund	5
Arbitrary Charges	4
Service Failure	2
Damaged Cargo	2
Wrong Port of Discharge	2
Unjustified Demurrage charges	1
Non-release of Auction cargo	2

STAKEHOLDERS COMPLAINED AGAINST

S/N	Group Of Organizations Complaint Against	No. Of Complaints Against
1	Shipping Companies/Agents	22
2	Seaport Terminal Operators	1
3	Government Agency	3
4	Exporter	1
5	Importer	1
6	De-consolidators	1
7	Freight forwarders/Clearing Agent	3



STATUS OF COMPLAINTS

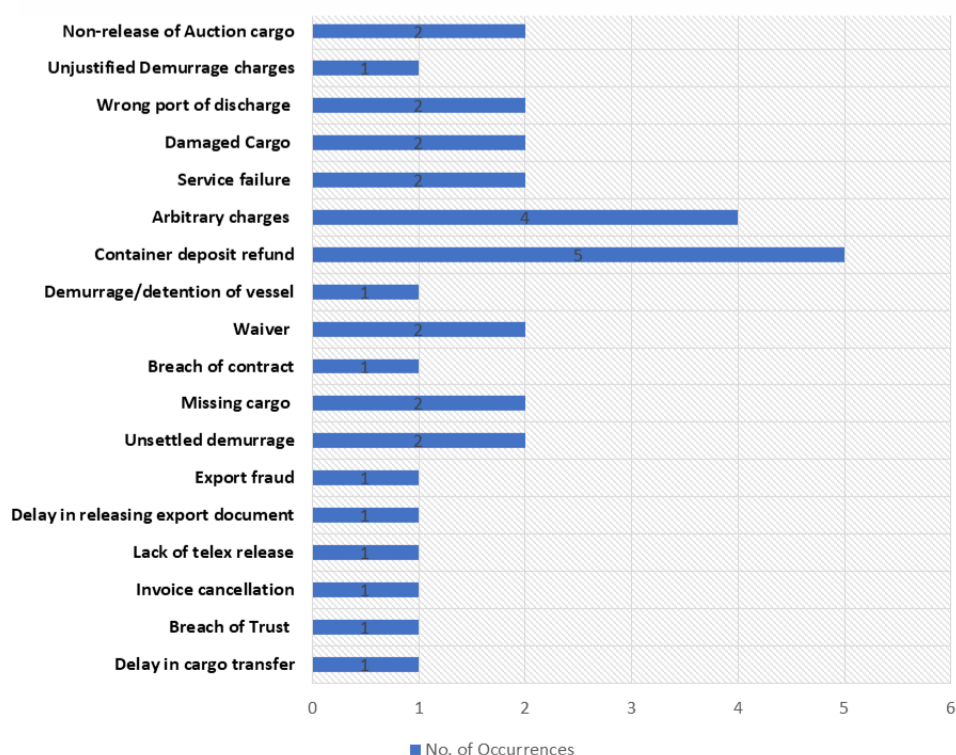
Status of Complaints	No of Complaint
Resolved	19
Ongoing	12
Closed	1



ANALYTICAL REPORT

- Shipping Companies/Agents accounted for the highest number of complaints (22 out of 32), indicating that they remain the major source of disputes within the sector.
- Container deposit refund issues were the most frequent complaint type with 5 occurrences, followed by arbitrary charges with 4 occurrences.
- The Complaint Unit achieved a strong resolution rate of approximately 59.4%, reflecting active intervention and dispute management.
- Only one complaint was formally closed, while 12 cases remain ongoing, suggesting a need for continuous follow-up mechanisms.
- The interventions of the Complaint Unit resulted in financial savings of over ₦348.8 million for stakeholders during the quarter.

Type of Complaints Received within the first quarter



CARGO DISPUTE: NSC RESOLVES OVER N500 MILLION AUCTION IMPASSE, DIRECTS ₦40 MILLION REFUND

...Consignee directed to return empty containers promptly after de-stuffing

...Parties commend Council's professionalism and swift intervention

In a major boost to trade facilitation and dispute resolution within the port sector, the Nigerian Shippers' Council successfully resolved a protracted dispute involving a 40FT High Cube Groupage Container valued at over ₦500 million.

Acting in its capacity as the Port Economic Regulator, the Council convened a decisive mediation meeting on Monday, March 16th, 2026, at its headquarters in Lagos. The hybrid session linked stakeholders from Istanbul, Kano, Abuja, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to facilitate a final resolution of the dispute.

Representing the Executive Secretary/CEO of the Council, Akutah Pius Ukeyima, Esq., PhD, MON, the Head, Complaints Unit, Dr. Bashir Ambi, welcome parties to the mediation session.

Dr. Ambi reiterated the Council's commitment to Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), noting that the NSC's mediation framework provides stakeholders with a cost-free and efficient platform for resolving commercial disputes outside lengthy court processes. He emphasized that the initiative aligns with the Federal Government's drive to enhance trade facilitation and improve the Ease of Doing Business at Nigerian ports.

Providing a summary of the complaint, Oluwatoyin Ojo informed the meeting that the dispute stemmed from a breakdown in the logistics supply chain involving cargo imported from Turkey.

She informed that, according to the complainant, Mr. Shamsudeen Abdullahi, who acted as the primary consolidator for the shipment, the container arrived at the Lagos Port Complex but was not cleared by his designated clearing agent. The delay resulted in over six months of cargo abandonment and the accumulation of substantial demurrage and storage charges.

Mr. Abdullahi further alleged that in an effort to salvage the cargo, he transferred the Master Bill of Lading to the respondent, Hajiya Amina Jamilu, believing her professional ties with the Nigeria Customs Service would

facilitate the release of the container. He claimed that the respondent later informed him that the container had been auctioned and subsequently demanded ₦100 million as a buy-back fee for the release of the goods.

Counsel to the respondent, Barrister David Adeyeye of Adeyeye & Co. Chambers, Abuja, presented a counter-position, stating that Hajiya Amina Jamilu's cargo was initially intended for a 20TEU Full Container Load (FCL), but was consolidated into a 40FT Groupage Container without her consent, thereby increasing her financial burden.

He explained that due to the complainant's inability to settle terminal and shipping charges, the container was declared overstayed and subsequently listed on the Customs Electronic Auction Portal.

Joining the meeting virtually from Madina, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Hajiya Amina Jamilu stated that she independently intervened to recover the container from a third-party auction winner after settling auction fees, government charges, duties, and associated logistics costs. According to her, the ₦100 million demand represented recovery and salvage expenses rather than a punitive charge.

In an emotional appeal during the proceedings, counsel to the Complainant, Barrister Abdullahi of Fago Chambers, Kano, urged the respondent to exercise leniency in the settlement terms.

"These are young entrepreneurs trying to establish themselves," he said, adding that his clients were prepared to obtain loans to resolve the dispute and retrieve the cargo. He commended the NSC for providing a transparent and fair mediation platform.

Similarly, Barrister David Adeyeye praised the Council's professionalism and efficiency in handling the matter.

"Truly, you are Professionals," he remarked, noting that although the dispute had lingered for nearly two years, the Council successfully resolved it within seven days of intervention. He described the NSC's ADR mechanism as a model for objective and effective trade dispute resolution.

Following an extensive review of relevant shipping documents, including the Manifest, Bill of Lading, and Customs Auction Certificates, the Council made the following observations:

- Both parties contributed to the dispute through varying degrees of administrative lapses and lack of transparency.
- The Respondent's intervention prevented the complete loss of the cargo to a third party through the auction process.
- The Council adopted a "No Victor, No Vanquished" approach aimed at preserving the long-term commercial relationship between the parties.

At the conclusion of the mediation, the following resolutions were adopted:

1. The Council affirmed that all parties shared responsibility for the dispute.
2. Mr. Shamsudeen Abdullahi was directed to pay ₦40 million to Hajiya Amina Jamilu as full and final settlement for recovery costs and logistics services rendered.
3. Payment was to be made via bank transfer on or before March 24, 2026, with proof of payment submitted to the Council.
4. Upon receipt of payment, Hajiya Amina Jamilu was directed to release the House Bill of Lading and the container to the Complainant.
5. Mr. Abdullahi was mandated to return the empty container immediately after de-stuffing and provide an Equipment Interchange Receipt to the Council as evidence of compliance.
6. The Council commended Hajiya Amina Jamilu for preserving the integrity of the cargo during the recovery process rather than disposing of the goods.
7. Both parties were encouraged to resume their commercial relationship while adhering strictly to International Shipping best practices.

The parties expressed appreciation to the Council for its professional, transparent, and impartial intervention, noting that the Council's timely mediation saved them years of litigation and substantial legal expenses.



CARGO MISROUTING: SHIPPERS' COUNCIL RESOLVES DISPUTE ON DIVERSION, SAVES CONSIGNEE EXTRA COST ON 40FT CONTAINER

...We Appreciate the Council's Intervention... Complainant

The Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC) resolved an import-related dispute arising from the misrouting of a 1X40FT container belonging to Century Industrial FZE Ltd, thereby saving the shipper from incurring avoidable additional logistics and delivery costs.

The complaint, filed against Hapag-Lloyd Nigeria, concerned a container covered by Bill of Lading No. HLCUTPE241155560, which was originally destined for APM Terminals (APMT), Apapa, but was instead discharged at Sifax Ijora Terminal. According to the complainant, the unplanned diversion resulted in extra delivery charges, transire fees, and related logistics expenses that negatively impacted its business operations.

In line with its statutory mandate as Nigeria's Port Economic Regulator and Protector of

Stakeholders' Interests, the Nigerian Shippers' Council, through its Complaints Unit, promptly intervened to investigate and mediate the matter.

The case was handled by Mrs. Funmilola Afolabi, a Principal Operations Officer (POO) of the Council, who engaged both parties through a series of email correspondences and consultative meetings aimed at clarifying the circumstances surrounding the container's discharge and resolving the dispute amicably.

Providing clarification on behalf of Hapag-Lloyd, Mr. Charles Uche Onuegbu, Senior Coordinator, Customer Service/Documentation, explained that the container was diverted to Sifax Ijora Terminal due to space allocation constraints at APMT Apapa during vessel discharge operations.

He further stated that Sifax Ijora Terminal falls within the Apapa Customs Command and is recognized as an acceptable alternate discharge terminal when operational exigencies arise.

Following the Council's intervention, representatives of Century Industrial FZE Ltd visited the terminal to seek clarification on the invoicing structure and nomenclature. This engagement, facilitated by the NSC, led to a clearer understanding of the charges and the eventual amicable resolution of the dispute without further financial burden on the shipper.

Speaking at a brief mediation session held at the Complaints Unit Meeting Room, Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed, Head, Complaints Unit, noted that the case highlights the importance of effective coordination and timely

communication between Shipping Lines and Terminal Operators to prevent operational disruptions and avoidable costs to shippers.

Expressing satisfaction with the outcome, Century Industrial FZE Ltd commended the Nigerian Shippers' Council for its swift, transparent, and professional handling of the complaint.

"We appreciate the Nigerian Shippers' Council for its timely intervention and commitment to protecting shippers from avoidable costs," the complainant stated.

The resolution further reinforces the Nigerian Shippers' Council's role as a neutral arbiter and effective regulator, committed to promoting fairness, efficiency, and stakeholder confidence within Nigeria's port sector.

NSC INTERVENTION SECURES RELEASE OF CARGO, RESOLVES DISPUTE OVER ALLEGED DOUBLE CHARGES

...Council's Complaint Handling Mechanism Delivers Timely Relief to Us...Cargo Owner

Excerpt:

The Nigerian Shippers' Council has once again demonstrated its commitment to protecting the interests of port users through the successful mediation of a dispute involving Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms and a bonded terminal operator over alleged double charges imposed on a consignment.

Speaking during an interview, the Operations Manager of Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms, Mr. Lucky Egbeyen, narrated how the company was compelled to pay over ₦1.2 million in additional charges before its cargo could be released, despite having already paid the statutory 25 percent charge prescribed by the Federal Government.

Also, the Manager of the company, Commander A.D. Abubakar (Rtd.), commended the Nigerian Shippers' Council for its timely intervention and mediation efforts. He explained that following the complaint, the Council convened a meeting involving all parties and facilitated discussions that ultimately led to the release of the cargo.

Sir, please introduce yourself?

Mr. Lucky Egbeyen: My name is Mr. Lucky Egbeyen, and I represent Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms.

Why are you at the Nigerian Shippers' Council today?

Mr. Egbeyen: I am here to lodge a complaint regarding what we consider double charges imposed on our consignment. We seek the intervention of the Nigerian Shippers' Council to recover the money we paid. We had already paid the statutory 25% charge required by the Federal Government. However, additional charges amounting to over ₦1.2 million were demanded by the bonded terminal. We believed those charges were unjustified, but we had to pay them because our container would not be released otherwise. We paid under protest, collected our cargo, and subsequently reported the matter to the Nigerian Shippers' Council because we believe the Council is the appropriate institution to seek redress.

What exactly is the commercial dispute between you and the service provider?

Mr. Egbeyen: We do not have any commercial dispute apart from the issue of the additional charges imposed on us.

What led to these additional charges?

Mr. Egbeyen: We had already paid the prescribed 25% charge as directed by the Federal Government, and evidence of payment was attached to our complaint.

The additional amount of over ₦1.2 million was, in our view, a duplication of charges. Had we refused to pay, our cargo would not have been released.

At this point, what would you like the Nigerian Shippers' Council to do for you?

Mr. Egbeyen: We want the Council to help us recover the ₦1.2 million we paid. We fulfilled all legitimate obligations required for the release of our cargo. If there are any other issues, they should be addressed with the parties responsible for transferring our consignment to the bonded terminal without our consent.

Do you have evidence of payment?



Commander A.D. Abubakar (Rtd.)

Mr. Egbeyen: Yes. All payment records and supporting documents were attached to our complaint.

What can you tell us about the swap arrangement involving Maersk Line Nigeria?

Mr. Egbeyen: The arrangement arose because one of our associates had funds due from Maersk Line. We agreed that the amount could be offset through a swap arrangement involving our clearing agent.

Was the arrangement documented or communicated verbally?

Mr. Egbeyen: The instruction was communicated verbally, but receipts and payment records were issued accordingly.

Did Maersk Nigeria acknowledge the

arrangement?

Mr. Egbeyen: Yes. Otherwise, they would not have processed the release of the consignment.

Were you satisfied with the mediatory role played by the Nigerian Shippers' Council?

Mr. Egbeyen: Very satisfied.

What was the key outcome of the mediation process?

Mr. Egbeyen: The Council invited all parties to a meeting and facilitated discussions aimed at resolving the matter.

Commander A.D. Abubakar (Retired):



Mr. Lucky Egbeyen

The first objective was to secure the release of our consignment. We reported that the cargo had not been released despite our compliance with all required procedures. The Nigerian Shippers' Council invited both parties for mediation and directed that the consignment be released.

Although there was a slight delay of a few days, the cargo was eventually released. Our concern remained the additional ₦1.2 million charge, especially since we had already paid the statutory charges to the relevant agencies.

The ₦1.2 million demanded by the terminal, what service was it meant to cover?

Commander Abubakar: We were not

given a clear explanation.

Mr. Egbeyen: We were not informed of the basis for the charge.

Were you issued an invoice for the ₦1.2 million?

Commander Abubakar: Yes, we received an invoice and ultimately paid the amount because the cargo would not have been released otherwise.

Mr. Egbeyen: We initially refused to pay, but we had no practical alternative if we wanted to recover our consignment.

Were you informed before your container was transferred to the bonded terminal?

Commander Abubakar: No, we were not informed.

Mr. Egbeyen: In fact, it took us several weeks to locate the container after it had been moved.

Commander Abubakar: We appreciate the intervention of the Nigerian Shippers' Council. Following the Council's directive, the consignment was eventually released, although the process extended over a few additional days due to the timing of the meeting and the weekend.

Were you charged any fee by the Nigerian Shippers' Council for its mediation services?

Commander Abubakar: Not at all.

Mr. Egbeyen: No. The Council did not charge us any fee. In fact, we wrote a letter of appreciation because we were genuinely grateful for the assistance provided.

Please confirm your name and designation.

Mr. Egbeyen: My name is Mr. Lucky Egbeyen, Operations Manager, Agama Lafiya Livestock Farms.

And you, sir?

Commander Abubakar: I am Commander A.D. Abubakar (Retired), a former Nigerian Navy officer and the manager of the company.

Thank you very much for your time.

Mr. Egbeyen: Thank you.

Commander Abubakar: You are most welcome. We appreciate the opportunity.

NSC RESOLVES FPIS/PIL DISPUTE, STRESSES PEST CONTROL TO SAFEGUARD NIGERIA'S EXPORT REPUTATION

...Mandates Single Revenue Account for FPIS, Orders Payment Upon Verification of Claims

A commercial dispute between the Federal Produce Inspection Service (FPIS) and Pacific International Lines (PIL) Nigeria was resolved by the Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC) through a mediation process.

The resolution meeting, held at the NSC headquarters, was presided over by Dr. Bashir Ambi Mohammed, Head, Complaints Unit, who represented the Executive Secretary/CEO, Akutah Pius Ukeyima. He called for cooperation and strict compliance with the Council's statutory mandate, emphasizing that the NSC is empowered by law to mediate disputes across Nigeria's port sector.

Dr. Mohammed noted that the Council has a track record of resolving complex commercial disputes, including cases withdrawn from Courts by senior legal practitioners for amicable settlement. He reiterated that the NSC's primary objective is to promote economic growth, strengthen stakeholder confidence, and sustain business relationships within the port.

The dispute arose from a formal complaint filed by PIL Nigeria over disinfection charges levied by FPIS on containers used for exporting agricultural produce between April and December, 2024.

Presenting the overview of the complaint, the case handler, Mrs. Toyin Ojo, informed the meeting that the Council received a formal complaint from PIL Nigeria regarding spraying/disinfection charges raised by FPIS on PIL-owned Containers intended for the export of agricultural produce. The complaint covered the period April 2024 to December 2024, referenced FPI/HQ/GEN/VOL.II/005, dated 28 November 2025.

The disputed invoices issued in November 2025 amounted to a total of **₦24,030,160.00** broken down as follows:

- 1,607 units of 20FT containers billed at ₦10,670,480.00
- 1,006 units of 40FT containers billed at ₦13,359,680.00

Representing PIL, Mr. Dhanesh Nair, General Manager (Commercial), insisted that detailed documentation including container numbers, service locations, dates, and beneficiary exporters was necessary for verification and accountability. He described the charges as arbitrary and lacking prior notice, raising concerns over missing container-level details, delayed billing, and unclear cost allocation.

Responding on behalf of FPIS, Mr. Patric K. Amesi appreciated the Council's intervention but disagreed with PIL's assertion that no services were rendered. He stated that FPIS possessed sufficient documentary evidence to substantiate the disinfection activities carried out on PIL containers. He explained that prior to Port concessioning, FPIS conducted disinfection operations within Port premises at the request of Shipping Lines, with containers laid out by the Carriers.

However, following Port concessioning, operational practices changed, and disinfection activities are now conducted primarily at points of loading, including; Exporters' Warehouses, Crushing Plants, Bonded Terminals, Dry Ports, etc.

These operations cover major logistics corridors, including Lagos, Port Harcourt, Kano, and Maiduguri. He further advised that if PIL maintains dedicated container Holding Bays where empty containers can be aggregated for disinfection, FPIS could deploy officers to such locations to improve operational efficiency. Mr. Amesi clarified that the correct technical term applicable to Shipping Receptacles is disinfection, which is distinct from fumigation.

- Fumigation applies to agricultural commodities and is the responsibility of exporters to ensure pests are eliminated before shipment.
- Dis-infection applies to receptacles and logistics infrastructure, including

containers, Warehouses, Bonded terminals, Vessels, Barges, Railcars, Trailers, and related environments.

The purpose of disinfection is to prevent pest build-up, cross-infestation, and the export of pests beyond Nigeria's borders. He noted that repeated interceptions of infested Nigerian produce at destination ports negatively affect the Country's credibility in international markets.

At the final tripartite mediation session, Mrs. Nwachukwu V. N, Deputy Director, FPIS, commended the NSC for its consistent dispute-resolution role. She noted that frequent changes in Shipping Line management often result in renewed questions regarding FPIS operational procedures. She explained that FPIS services are rendered at sea and at terminals, and that operational challenges often arise due to insufficient information provided by Shipping Lines regarding container loading points. She cited past experiences at SIFAX Terminal, where significant manpower and equipment were required to access stacked containers for disinfection, thereby increasing operational costs.

Based on industry-wide consultations, it was agreed that disinfection should be conducted at loading bays, Exporters' warehouses, and other logistics facilities. Consequently, FPIS personnel are deployed daily across multiple locations nationwide, including Lagos, Port Harcourt, Kano, and Maiduguri. She emphasized that FPIS's objective is to ensure that no container is loaded for export without undergoing disinfection. She noted that Shipping Lines typically become aware of container usage only during documentation, creating a timing gap between FPIS operations and container handover.

Mrs. Nwachukwu further disclosed that

companies such as Golden Oil, Dufil Prima Foods, Crown Flying Oil, and Avara (Abia State) have utilized PIL containers for export activities. She presented archival evacuation documents with container numbers, dates, and locations as evidence of work done. Other FPIS officials present included Zakar S.A., Omotosho R.A., Nwosu Ajamma H.I., Mambo Y., and Suleiman.

After extensive deliberations, the parties reached the following resolutions:

- PIL Nigeria will settle the outstanding ₦24,030,160.00 upon receipt of complete and verifiable documentation from FPIS.
- Billing shall be issued quarterly, accompanied by full supporting documentation.
- Both parties shall appoint designated desk officers to improve coordination and communication.
- FPIS is to accelerate automation of its processes to enhance efficiency.
- PIL shall provide export booking information to FPIS for harmonization of operations.
- FPIS shall intensify stakeholder engagement, including town hall meetings, to educate industry players on its mandate and procedures.

The NSC emphasized that effective pest control through proper disinfection is essential to protecting Nigeria's international market standing. Repeated cases of pest-infested exports, officials warned, could undermine the country's credibility and competitiveness in global trade.

The Council commended both parties for their cooperation and reaffirmed its commitment to resolving disputes amicably while promoting transparency, accountability, and ease of doing business in Nigeria's port.

Continues from page 6

million as of March 12, 2026, while the clearing agent also incurred approximately 30 days of truck detention charges between December 21, 2025, and January 20, 2026, due to the inability to release the complete cargo unit.

The delay also reportedly resulted in a project default involving the Australian High Commission, with attendant reputational and diplomatic implications.

While Multifreight Nigeria Ltd maintained that the cargo units were sighted during an inspection conducted on December 16th, 2025, representatives of APM Terminals insisted that the unit was never reflected on the official discharge list provided by the Shipping Line.

The Terminal Operator clarified that, as a stevedore and terminal operator, it executes discharge operations strictly in line with the stowage plan and instructions

issued by the Carrier. APMT also maintained that the cargo arrived as a single non-stackable unit, disputing allegations that the separation occurred during discharge operations at the quay.

In recognition of its operational role in the over-carriage incident, Pacific International Lines granted a 100 percent waiver on all ocean freight charges and associated surcharges for the return leg of the missing module following the intervention of the Council.

Similarly, APM Terminals initially offered a 30 percent concession on the accumulated storage charges, citing adherence to its Standard Operating Procedures and maintaining that the original non-discharge was outside its operational control.

Following further deliberations and mediation by the Council, APMT subsequently approved 70% waiver on the ₦46 million storage invoice to ease the

financial burden on the Diplomatic Mission and facilitate prompt cargo clearance.

At the conclusion of the mediation, the meeting reached the following resolutions:

1. The Council confirmed that the diplomatic cargo was properly accounted for within the APMT facility following its eventual discharge from the second vessel.
2. The NSC formally acknowledged the cooperation of APMT in granting a 70 percent waiver on the accumulated storage charges at the Council's instance.
3. Multifreight Nigeria Ltd was directed to settle the adjusted balance and immediately complete formalities for the release of the cargo.
4. The Council warned that failure to

comply with the agreed timeline would result in the withdrawal of the waiver and reinstatement of the original invoice.

5. The NSC appealed to the Australian High Commission and its logistics partners to sustain confidence in Nigerian port operations while encouraging all stakeholders to strengthen communication and coordination to avoid future operational bottlenecks.

Stakeholders at the meeting commended the Nigerian Shippers' Council for its professional and transparent intervention, noting that the mediation helped prevent further diplomatic complications and saved the Mission from shipping, storage, and related logistics costs.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING: STAKEHOLDERS APPRECIATE THE COUNCIL

LETTER OF APPRECIATION FOR RELEASE OF CONTAINER NO: 2X40FT GCXU 6308246 & CAAU 9021410

“We write to appreciate your kind gesture in facilitating the release of the above-mentioned container on transit to APM Terminal.

Thank for your cooperation”.

Yours faithfully,

Nnamdi Woke
FOR: GOSICTRENDS INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

APPRECIATION FOR PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION OF OUR COMPLAINT AGAINST MSC NIGERIA LTD

“We write to express our sincere gratitude to the Nigerian Shippers' Council, particularly the Complaints Unit, for the exemplary professionalism displayed in handling and resolving our case against MSC Nigeria Ltd regarding the release of auctioned containers.

The Complaints Unit demonstrated exceptional competence, fairness, and efficiency throughout the process.

This intervention has reinforced our confidence in the regulatory framework governing the shipping industry in Nigeria. We commend the Nigerian Shippers' Council for living up to its mandate.

Thank you once again for your outstanding service.”

Yours faithfully,

Aliyu Atiku Mustapha
FOR: SKAMOS ENTERPRISES (NIG) LTD

LETTER OF APPRECIATION FOR RELEASE OF CONTAINER NO: 1X40FT FFAU5667982

“We write to appreciate your kind gesture to have assisted us on the release of the above mentioned container on APM Terminal.

Thanks for your cooperation”.

Yours faithfully,

Chinedu Chukwueni
Manager
FOR: AMAUC EXPRESS LOGISTICS



APPRECIATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLAINT RESOLUTION AND CLOSURE OF CASE FILE

I wish to formally acknowledge the resolution of the complaint lodged with the Nigerian Shippers' Council against Maersk Line holding on to my shipment covered by two (2) Bills of Lading because of booking cancellations while the two (2) B/L are not owing.

Following the Council's mediation, I am pleased to inform you that the 2 BL's have been released after like 2-week demurrage incurred.

I hereby state that any further assistance will be corresponded.

I sincerely appreciate the Nigerian Shippers' Council, particularly Dr. Bashir, Mr Mubarak and Mrs. Funmi Afolabi of the Complaints Unit and other team members for their professionalism, patience, and commitment in ensuring justice, transparency, and fairness in the resolution process.

Their efforts and follow-up brought this matter to a peaceful conclusion, for which I am truly grateful.

Thank you for your intervention and for upholding the rights and confidence of shippers in Nigeria.

Yours Faithfully,

FOR: PRECIOUS TRENDS SERVICES LIMITED.

APPRECIATION FOR YOUR SWIFT ASSISTANCE AND PROMPT INTERVENTION ON APPROVAL OF THE CANCELLATION OF THE EXCESS DEMURRAGE WHICH WAS WRONGLY ISSUED TO OUR COMPANY, QUEENA INVESTMENT LTD BY MAERSK LINE SHIPPING COMPANY LIMITED

“I am writing to express my heartfelt appreciation for the Council's swift intervention in cancelling the excess demurrage issued to QUEENA INVESTMENT LIMITED BONDED TERMINAL/ICD by Maersk Line Nigeria Limited with invoice bill no 7607792844 Amount, ₦33,829,083.63,

TOP 100 FLAG STATES IN GLOBAL MARITIME SHIPPING

Y	A	U	G	U	R	U	S	E	N	I	P	P	I	L	I	H	P	
M	A	I	N	A	Z	N	A	T	U	K	L	S	C	Y	G	K	O	
A	Y	J	G	F	N	C	M	N	U	T	A	A	U	N	A	V	L	R
G	N	E	M	E	Y	H	O	Z	I	M	B	A	B	W	E	N	T	
H	H	A	D	J	J	L	A	A	D	G	H	J	E	R	E	S	U	
F	D	E	W	A	E	R	O	K	H	T	U	O	S	O	D	M	G	
D	W	N	L	S	D	N	A	L	A	E	Z	W	E	N	T	K	A	
S	Z	F	A	H	T	Q	W	E	A	M	A	N	A	P	Y	H	L	
A	S	A	W	L	A	O	H	G	N	K	H	L	W	E	R	N	S	
U	I	D	M	V	I	M	B	J	H	F	R	D	K	A	E	E	E	
D	N	R	F	B	Q	A	A	D	N	E	K	R	T	W	T	W	Y	
I	G	W	E	V	I	E	H	G	H	E	U	A	L	A	P	G	C	
A	A	D	G	G	D	A	H	T	L	T	Q	Q	R	J	L	U	H	
R	P	A	S	X	I	S	E	Z	A	N	Z	I	B	A	R	I	E	
A	O	O	R	G	E	N	E	T	N	O	M	W	R	T	Y	N	L	
B	R	M	O	D	G	N	I	K	D	E	T	I	N	U	M	E	L	
I	E	K	Y	O	U	O	J	F	B	H	U	T	A	N	H	A	E	
A	S	F	N	C	G	D	N	A	L	R	E	Z	T	I	W	S	S	
Q	A	I	N	A	M	O	R	E	A	L	E	U	Z	E	N	E	V	
G	W	R	F	H	X	A	T	U	V	A	L	U	F	N	H	R	I	
Y	Q	G	H	J	D	G	K	L	S	L	O	V	A	K	I	A	E	
E	Z	I	L	E	B	N	I	A	P	S	L	J	J	H	F	F	T	
J	W	E	T	Y	O	A	K	N	A	L	I	R	S	W	F	H	N	
U	N	I	T	E	D	S	T	A	T	E	S	A	S	D	D	K	A	
K	N	I	C	A	R	A	G	U	A	S	A	M	A	H	A	B	M	
U	K	R	A	I	N	E	A	C	I	R	F	A	H	T	U	O	S	

MONTENEGRO	NETHERLANDS	NEW ZEALAND	NICARAGUA
NIGERIA	NORWAY	PALAU	PANAMA
NEW GUINEA	PHILIPPINES	PORTUGAL	QATAR
ROMANIA	RUSSIA	SAMOA	SAUDI ARABIA
SEYCHELLES	SINGAPORE	SLOVAKIA	SOUTH AFRICA
SOUTH KOREA	SPAIN	SRI LANKA	SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND	TANZANIA	THAILAND	TOGO
TURKEY	TUVALU	UKRAINE	UNITED STATES
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	URUGUAY	VANUATU	VENEZUELA
UNITED KINGDOM	VIETNAM	YEMEN	ZANZIBAR
ZAMBIA	ZIMBABWE	BAHAMAS	BELIZE
		BHUTAN	BOTSWANA

bill of lading no: MAEU215435267,
container no: MRKU5298479.

Your dedication to promoting a conducive business environment and protecting the interests of shippers is truly commendable.

We would like to specially acknowledge and extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mrs. Funmi Afolabi whose exemplary professionalism, diligence, and dedication towards follow-up to Maersk Line Nig. Ltd; that ensured the cancellation of the wrongly issued excess demurrage to us. Her dedicated process led to the successful cancellation and conclusion in peace.

Her immense willingness to go extra miles, demonstrate zealous dedication to her duties, character wise, and integrity.

Thank you once again for your continued attention, support to shippers and stakeholders across the country. Do accept the assurance of our highest regards."

Yours Faithfully,

Ibe Samuel Blankson
FOR: QUEENA INVESTMENT LIMITED
(BONDED TERMINAL)

LETTER OF APPRECIATION FOR RELEASE OF CONTAINER NUMBER TRHU-6388572

"We write to appreciate the Nigerian Shippers' Council for your intervention on the illegal detention of our container."

Yours faithfully,

FOR: BRITISH STANDARD NG. LTD

APPRECIATION LETTER FOR RELEASE OF CONTAINER NO: MSNU7811484

"We write to appreciate your effort towards the release of our above mentioned container.

Thanks, we appreciate it once more."

Yours faithfully,
For: PAMBA INTEGRATED SERVS. LTD

APPRECIATION LETTER

"On behalf of Sharaf Shipping Agency, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to your esteemed office for the invaluable support provided in resolving the recent issue concerning our container (PIDU 4412821) at the Apapa port.

Your timely intervention, professionalism, and dedication ensured that the matter was addressed efficiently. We deeply acknowledge the commitment your team demonstrated throughout the process, especially in facilitating clear communication, coordinating with relevant stakeholders, and ensuring that the said container was released without further delays.

The assistance we received from your office not only helped us overcome a critical challenge but also reinforced our confidence in the effectiveness of your leadership and the responsiveness of your agency.

We are truly grateful for your support and look forward to continued collaboration in future as we work together to promote seamless trade and port operations.

Thank you once again for standing by us."

FOR: Sharaf Shipping Agency Ltd

LETTER OF APPRECIATION FOR RELEASE OF CONTAINER NO: MRSU7825083 1X40FT AND FROM MARITIME POLICE

"We write to appreciate your kind gesture to have assisted us on the above mentioned containers on transit to our bonded terminal from maritime police.

We guarantee them our cooperation to refer the importer or her agent to go for their (police maritime) clearance before the terminal will be affected.

Thanks for your cooperation."

Yours Faithfully,

FOR: SEPGOLD LOGISTICS NIGERIA LIMITED

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

"It is with profound joy and gladness that I submit this letter of appreciation to this honorable Council with respect to its legal and professional handling of the matter between my company- Gabthop Exclusive Resources Limited (Importer) and Clarion Shipping West Africa Limited (Terminal owner) in respect to the damaged 2017 Mercedes Benz GLE43 AMG Coupe.

I sincerely want to appreciate this honorable Council in the way and manner they have professionally handled the mediation process which marked the successful end and closure of the matter having seen the damaged vehicle replaced by the Clarion Shipping West Africa Limited.

I once again commend this organization in your professionalism in handling disputes and say may the good LORD bless each and every department and staff of your organization.

Once again, please accept my heartfelt appreciation."

Yours Faithfully,

FOR: GABTHOP EXCLUSIVE RESOURCES.

APPRECIATION LETTER

"We were informed by the Viva Metal factory this morning that the third payment of ₦7,221,867 was successfully received on 10th March, 2026.

We would like to sincerely thank you for your strong support and dedicated efforts in handling this matter. This challenge could not have been resolved without your kind assistance and professional intervention.

Once again, we deeply appreciate your professionalism, commitment, and willingness to support individual cases. Your approach truly reflects the Shippers' Council's service-oriented spirit and dedication to fair resolution.

With our sincere appreciation."

Alex
FOR: VIVA METAL & PLASTICS INDUSTRIES LTD.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION FOR RELEASE OF CONTAINER NOS: MSKU0885536 AND FANU1916247 FROM MARITIME POLICE

"We write to appreciate the Nigerian Shippers' Council for your intervention on the illegal detention of our container.

Yours faithfully,

FOR: HABIB LAMINA LOGISTICS LTD



The Complaints Unit Staff of Nigerian Shippers' Council have pledged to adhere strictly to our organization's policy of neither asking nor taking gift in the course of resolving Stakeholders' complaints.

Kindly assist us by **NOT** seeking to influence our complaint handlers with your favours. We need only Letter of Appreciation to be forwarded through the Office of the Executive Secretary/Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian Shippers' Council.

However, in a situation where gratification is pressed on the Complaint Handlers, they are to declare it to the Management.

Our passion is to resolve complaints fairly without inducement from Stakeholders. Please, report anyone who engages in unethical conduct. Send an SMS or call; 07035250035, 08023021173, 07040955718, 08053030010, whatsapp - 08099858537 or email to: complaints@shipperscouncil.gov.ng

