

THE INDUSTRY LAST WEEK

Shippers' Council Workers Pulls Out Of Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria

THE face-off between the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN) and one of its affiliates has snowballed to further crises. The Nigerian Shippers' Council district of the union has pulled-out of the mother union.

Shipping Position Daily recalls that the district had late last week accused the MWUN of acting in bad faith by its letter to the Minister of Transport in which it threatened to go on strike unless the Nigeria Shippers' Council reverses its directive to terminal operators on charges.

The MWUN had in a letter that was signed by its secretary general; Comrade Aham Ubani, accused the Shippers' Council of taking a unilateral decision and that the council's action would affect its members, who are the employees of the terminal operators.

But in a swift reaction penultimate Friday, the Shippers' Council's district accused its mother union of acting without

consultation and without taking the interest of Shippers' Council employees into consideration.

In the letter dated November 13, 2014, it noted that: "As you are aware members of our district, being employees of the organisation you have dared in carrying out its stator function viewed this posture of the union with grave concern".

"Accordingly, an emergency meeting of this district is being called to review its membership of the union, given that the body which is expected to protect her members would fight against an organisation that employs them", the shippers council branch stated in the letter.

The letter was signed by both Comrades S Otiyongo and KP Lawson.

True to its word in the first letter, a meeting was held and it was at that meeting that the decision to disengage from the MWUN was taken.

A copy of the district's letter to the

MWUN, which was sighted by our correspondent and which was dated November 18, 2014 confirmed that it has dissociated from the MWUN.

The district said that it took the decision based on the fact that, the union has failed to refute the report of its purported support for the terminal operators.

In the letter dated November 18, 2014 and signed by Comrades S Otiyongo and KP Lawson and addressed to the MWUN President General, the Shippers' Council district noted that: "We want to state clearly that unionism is not synonymous with slavery and detest the flagrant way and manner our members were treated vide the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria publication and letter ref: WMUN/HMT/FMOT/WDR/360 to the Honourable Minister of Transport

It also specifically stated that, its withdrawal was with immediate effect.

However, when our correspondent got in touch with a senior member of the union,

who pleaded anonymity, he said as much as the district had reasons for its action, it has no choice tha to continue to be an affiliate of the MWUN.

"Yes, we may not have consulted them, we may not have called them for a meeting, but the trade union law does allow for pulling out, we will resolve the issues", he assured.