

## Maritime lawyer commends stakeholders on Abuja crisis parley

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**A**ssociate Convener of the Standing Conference of Mediation Advocates (SCMA), Barrister Valentino Buoro, has commended maritime stakeholders for their joint meeting in Abuja recently where the public re-affirmation of support of the Nigerian Shippers' Council as Commercial Regulator was made.

In a statement issued in Lagos, Barrister Buoro said that the decision to meet and chart a way forward in the resolution of current challenges facing the maritime industry was a significant step towards the institutionalization of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) culture in the industry.

According to him, "ADR does not in any way mean the absence of law and the enforcements of legal rights, but a collective decision to explore amicable resolution of such disagreements whenever they arise. The option of litigation will always be available when parties seek judicial interpretation of legal documents or the setting of a binding precedent in some questions of law".

Barrister Buoro pointed out that the decision of the Nigerian Shippers' Council to deploy Alternative Dispute Resolution as the preferred option of resolving commercial disputes and civil enforcement in the industry could only be seen as an acknowledgement of the fact that wisdom did not reside in any one person or organization but in the collective.

"Nigerians therefore look forward with great optimism that the popular acceptance of this fast and amicable method of resolving maritime disputes will eradicate business lock-downs and protracted litigations which foist additional costs of goods on the buying public", Buoro stated.

He expressed the opinion that the Nigerian maritime industry had more than enough intellectuals and technocrats in all areas of its operations that could turn the seaports around to become the preferred destination of global maritime interests.



Idris Umar, Minister of Transport