



Sri Lanka Shippers' Council

Sri Lanka shippers' Council salutes the Ghana Minister of Maritime Authority for recognizing the plight of its shippers.....

Stop charging 'killer tariffs' - Minister Orders shipping lines in a statement Friday, the Minister said: “Terminal Handling Charges (THC) cannot be introduced at the ports in Ghana as a local charge.”

Shipping lines such as Pacific International Line (PIL), Maersk Line, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), CMA CGM, Arkas Lines and UASC want to impose an average \$150 as a Terminal Handling Charge for 20-footer container and \$265 for a 40-footer. Shipping lines such as Pacific International Line (PIL), Maersk Line, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), CMA CGM, Arkas Lines and UASC want to impose an average \$150 as a Terminal Handling Charge for 20-footer container and \$265 for a 40-footer. The Minister of Transport Fiifi Kwetey has directed shipping lines operating to and from the seaports of Ghana to halt the introduction of the Terminal Handling Charges (THC).

In a statement Friday, the Minister said: “Terminal Handling Charges (THC) cannot be introduced at the ports in Ghana as a local charge.” He continued: “Terminal Handling Charges may be introduced as part of the freight payable by the shipper at the port of origin in accordance with the appropriate INCOTERMS.” This follows a petition from the coalition of business representing a critical mass of shippers and traders in the country. They include the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), Ghana National Chamber of Commerce (GNCC), Ghana Chamber of Mines, Federation of Associations of Ghanaian Exporters (FAGE), Ghana Union of Traders Associations (GUTA) and the Greater Accra Regional Shippers Committee (GARSC). Shipping lines such as Pacific International Line (PIL), Maersk Line, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), CMA CGM, Arkas Lines and UASC want to impose an average \$150 as a Terminal Handling Charge for 20-footer container and \$265 for a 40-footer. The Transport Ministry earlier ordered a temporary suspension of the THC which the shipping lines failed to comply. In the petition to the ministry, the coalition said the "THC would cost the already burdened Ghanaian shippers over \$78 million per year and, knowing the history of these local charges, this figure will definitely increase astronomically." The directive to stop the THC follows a directive by the ministry to the Maritime Authority to constitute a committee to investigate claims of the shippers and traders.

In fact it was the Sri Lankan Government who in 2014 first recognized this situation and brought about the required laws to ensure that fair trade, and the golden rule of contractual parties been responsible for all charges were honored, according to the International Chamber of Commerce INCO terms 2010 rules.

There are still a handful of individuals who are still trying to bring back the old ways of collecting a so called “THC” cost that is not even mentioned in the port tariffs... paid by shipping lines to the port.

With refer to the recent article in the Daily FT by “NVOCC” operators, clearly misguided or not clear with the local regulations, and they are trying to mislead the authorities once again.

Sri Lankan law is simple and clear. “You can charge any cost in an all-inclusive freight term., be it prepaid or collect”. And the guiding principle is based on the contractual party been the paymaster, where fair trade and transparency is the corner stone.

END.