

## New infrastructures for Sub-Saharan Africa

In the next two years, Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to see a significant increase in infrastructure development. This includes projects such as new roads, airports, and power plants, as well as the expansion of existing infrastructure. One of the most notable infrastructure projects in the works is the construction of a new network of highways and expressways in several countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, and South Africa. These new roads will greatly improve transportation and logistics in the region, making it easier for businesses to move goods and services across borders. Additionally, several new airports are also being built in the region, including a new international airport in Nigeria, which will greatly improve the country's ability to connect with the rest of the world.



*Ms. Chat GPT started working with The African Post. Let us know what do you think about this new collaboration and which topic would you like to see her to address: [info@africalogisticsnetwork.com](mailto:info@africalogisticsnetwork.com)*

Another area where infrastructure development is expected to take place is in the power sector. Several new power plants are being built in the region, including a new hydroelectric power plant in Ethiopia and a new coal-fired power plant in South Africa. These new power plants will help to meet the growing demand for electricity in the region, which is expected to double by 2030.

Overall, the next two years are expected to see a significant increase in infrastructure development in Sub-Saharan Africa. This will greatly improve the region's ability to connect with the rest of the world and will help to spur economic growth and development. As such, it is an exciting time for the region and its people, as they look forward to a brighter future.

## “AfCFTA IS A GREAT IDEA”

*Interview with Mr. James C. W. Ng, President of African General Chamber of Commerce (Greater China) a non-profit organization based in Hong Kong and partner of Africa Logistics Network.*

*Mr. C.W.Ng had a long experience in Africa, especially in Nigeria, and he crossed his paths with ALN and ALNA. Thanks to Mr. Sandy Cheng, Managing Director of Global Cargo (Far East) and Vice President of AGCCGC. Since 2019, the Chairman of ALN, Marcello Saponaro, is also honorary advisor of AGCCGC.*



**Dear Mr. C.W. Ng, our job are very similar as both of our organizations trust in connections and in a fair cooperation between people and Countries. What is in your opinion the future of Africa into the world trade?**

**Is it changing or already changed?**

Yes, the change is happening but very slowly.

Of course the trade with Africa for the rest of the world is always important but unfortunately the developed countries mainly focus to explore and tap the primary resources such as crude oil, diamond, timbers etc and built very few industries in Africa.

Let's hope the entrepreneurs as well as the State own companies from China will continue to inject more capital and to build more significant industries in this Continent. One interesting development is that in order to counter the Chinese influence several other Western countries and Japan also started to take the Continent more seriously than previously and injecting more money to help the economy growth and in fact that's a good thing for Africa.

In the future, Africa will become the geopolitical focus of the major powers and groups of countries in the world. With the increasing demand of invest-

ment, trade and internal consumption markets, Africa's economic growth will be the fastest in the world.

**What do you think about the AfCFTA, the african continental free trade area? Is this going to reduce the trading with the other continents?**

Of course AfCFTA is a great idea, it will significantly increase the trades among the countries involved and will definitely boost the economy in the same region and in long term it will definitely reduce trading with other continents but this is not going to happen overnight. It will take years.

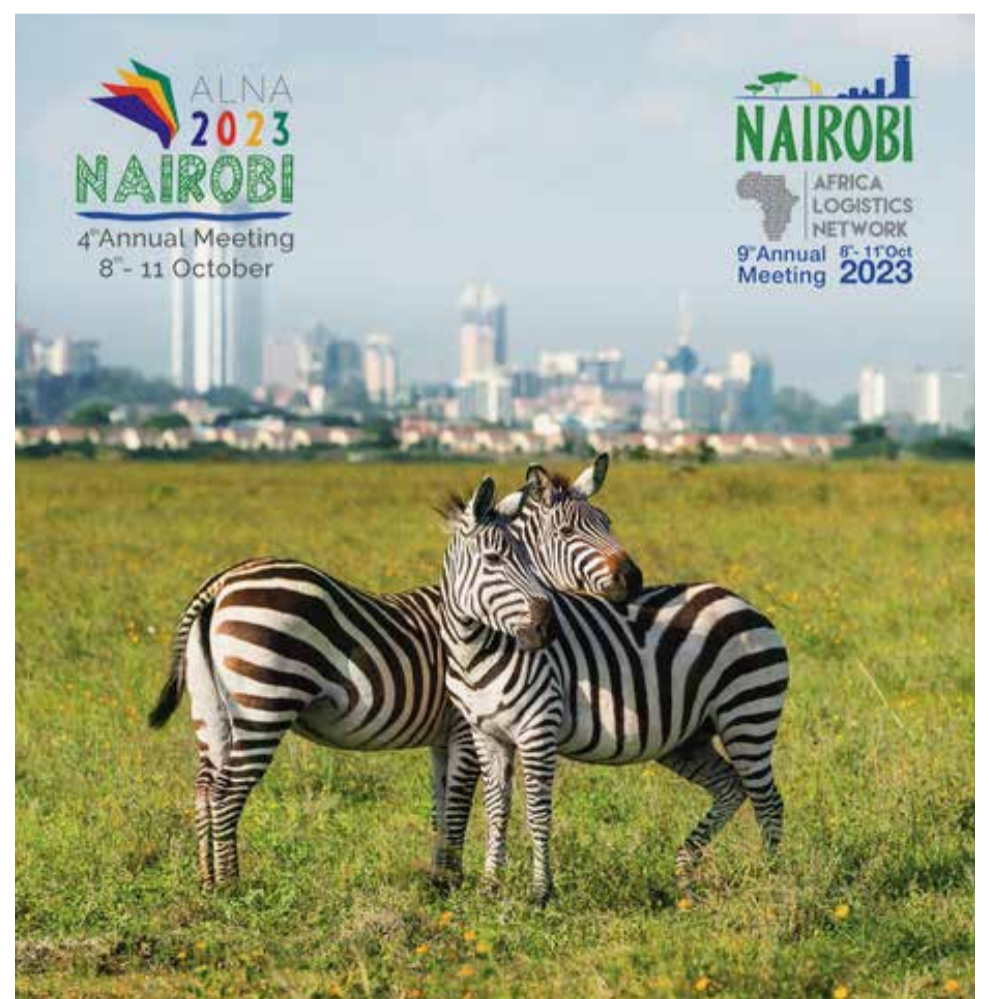
AfCFTA will significantly enhance Intra-African trade and drive the improvement of manufacturing and people's livelihood in Africa. It will also enhance Africa's position in the world.

**Can you briefly explain to our fellow readers what your organization does? And what are the advantages of being your Member?**

Our chamber African General Chamber of Commerce (Greater China) was founded as a no profit organization in 2014 in Hong Kong. AGCCGC is organized by enterprises and individuals with African investment and commercial activities.

Our Chamber fully responds to "One Belt One Road Initiative" and "Declaration of Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, FOCAC" in order to assist the Greater China enterprises and organizations step forward and invest in Africa. Different media such as internet platform, road show, forum and African survey tour are introduced to help interested parties to understand the continent and to provide business opportunities.

The Chamber act as a facilitator between the Public and Private sectors, to serve the community as core value. This aims to contribute to the Sino-African Cooperation in Economic and Culture development.



# “DIGITALIZATION AND NETWORKS HELP SMEs”

*Exclusive interview to the founder of Varamar and CEO of Shipnext, Alexander Varvarenko.*

**ALN and ALNA started an agreement for one-year free access to Shipnext for all their members!**

Alexander Varvarenko is one of the main actors in shipping, as a founder of Varamar, the Carrier of breakbulk and dry-bulk cargo, and now also for his role in the digitalization of transportation in general, and shipping in particular.

**Mr. Varvarenko, until a few years ago, when digitalization was starting, it seemed that it was only for containers.**

**The fact that you founded Shipnext shows that it's spreading in every logistics field. Do you agree?**

Each company is different in its approach and business-case in transportation. There are trading companies that own their own fleet, forwarding companies that work with containerized and non-containerized transport, agency companies that are active in brokering, shippers with or without in-house transport divisions. This is why digitalizing transportation industry is so complex. And yet, some basic principles should be taken into consideration, which were always important for Shipnext and on which the platform is based:

- The main objective of shipping and transport is to provide efficient and safe delivery of cargo. Cargo comes in all shapes and forms. Packed or bulk. Container is just one the many types of cargo.

- Maritime transportation (shipping) is the most important in international transportation. 82% of international



They all have different ways of interacting and participating in transportation, and to do that they can either employ inhouse/internal specialists (shipping managers, heads of transportation, chartering managers, etc), or

**Talking about small and medium businesses, how will digitalization help them grow?**

Small and Medium-size forwarding and agency companies feel immense pressure from their rivals with greater international coverage. With shipping sector in particular, and transportation industry in general being a global market, with round-the-clock work, with over 110 countries taking an active role in maritime transportation, keeping track of all the necessary data and providing international coverage to customers becomes problematic.

Larger companies can afford to build up international teams, global presence, 24/7 coverage, flexibility on the types of trades and sectors, and, most importantly – to invest larger amount of

money.

Over the last 5-6 years some of the companies have invested millions, and in some cases hundreds of millions of dollars in the digital solutions that were aimed on process-automation, digital documentation-flow, internal and external communication, and supply-chain management.

Investing in building a solution for individual use has not been so successful for many, though. And yet many cases are finding their place on the market. Large forwarding companies and Shipping Agencies have launched their platforms with the aim of targeting their existing and potential customers.

Smaller and Medium-size companies cannot afford to spend or invest at such pace.

And they don't have to. But what they



trade is covered by Sea, the rest by land, air and pipes. Only 20+% of cargo is containerized, the rest is shipped in bulk/breakbulk. Many cargoes are never containerized.

- The key players in transportation are fleet owners, carriers, forwarders, freight-brokers, traders, shippers/receivers.

external specialists – brokers.

This concept is very similar to the legal industry.

This is why we at Shipnext consider limiting one's company to containerized cargo only, or building a digital solution for international transportation as a short-sighted strategy.



- Port data (including restrictions, facilities, suppliers/agents, congestion, weather, etc)
- Contract Management
- Analytics, Data-management and process automation
- Internal collaboration and networking

**Shipnext, ALN and ALNA made an agreement with you and all their members have one-year free access to your platform.**

**How do you think digitalization is changing logistics in Africa?**

Our cooperation with ALN and ALNA is related to our strategy in helping companies have a better and faster access to international shipping data. We believe that a lot of our solutions could help create customized solutions with small additional investment. Customizing a digital solution and automating routine work-flows inside

a company or group of companies has never been as easy as it is with Shipnext. Having said this, Shipnext gives a powerful tool to any shipping professional irrespective of his place of business to be strong, efficient, flexible and successful in global trades and international transportation. This should open up new opportunities for remote teams in particular and companies located in Africa in general to be part of an efficient ecosystem on Shipnext.

can certainly benefit from is being faster in adopting existing SaaS (software as a service) solutions, as early adaptors.

A relatively small investment can help them become more efficient, flexible in covering different trades, scalable and successful.

Being part of an international network also helps, as long as the network helps consolidate efforts to in helping their members achieve their goals and remain competitive.

**In few words can you describe how Shipnext works?**

Shipnext was created to help transform the shipping sector in general, and the transportation industry in general. With the shift of the industry from telex and fax onto email in the 90s, the work ever since has not changed much. Emails continue to play the dominant role in how information, freights, trade is exchanged between millions of managers involved in global trade and transportation. 80+% of transportation companies still do their daily business through Outlook.

With messengers the problem has become worse, and critical data/information is scattered as never before.

Shipnext patented the process of bringing the transportation industry from emails onto a platform-based communication and trade. In particular the process of decrypting emails, messages and other shipping-related information for the purpose of extracting cargo and fleet-related data for instant freight-matching (cargo-to-ship, ship-to-cargo).

The key solutions and tools that Shipnext offers include:

- Instant cargo-to-ship and ship-to-cargo matching
- Freight search and Freight negotiations (tendering)
- Chat/Emailing/Tagging for Internal and external communication
- Cargo tracking
- Fleet search and compliance checks
- Freight calculations

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