



IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION OF GHANA

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FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

IEAG MOURNS VOLTA LAKE TRAGEDY, DEMANDS FULL-SCALE INVESTIGATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Importers and Exporters Association of Ghana (IEAG) has received with deep sorrow the tragic news of a boat accident on the Volta Lake near Kete Krachi, which claimed the lives of fifteen (15) individuals, including eleven (11) children aged between two and fourteen years. The Association extends its deepest condolences to the bereaved families, the Kete Krachi community, and all who have been affected by this heartbreaking incident. The psychological trauma and irreplaceable loss suffered by these families are beyond measure. No amount of compensation or consolation can make up for the lives lost in such an avoidable tragedy.

While we commend the Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA) for its swift response and planned interventions, the IEAG demands a thorough, transparent, and independent investigation into the circumstances that led to this unfortunate disaster. Reports suggesting that the boat was grossly overloaded are alarming and raise serious questions about the level of oversight and enforcement by agencies mandated to ensure safety on Ghana's inland waterways. We therefore call on the authorities to ensure that accountability does not end with the boat operators alone, but extends to any officers of the Ghana Maritime Authority, the local assemblies, and other state agencies whose negligence, inaction, or regulatory failure may have contributed to this tragedy.

The Association notes with great concern the increasing frequency of such preventable deaths on the Volta Lake and other inland water bodies. In August this year, several people reportedly lost their lives in a similar accident in Ada, while just a few months earlier, five people drowned at Dambai under comparable circumstances. Over the past two years, Ghana has recorded multiple fatal incidents on the Volta Lake and the Ada estuary, a worrying trend that has now become a national safety crisis demanding urgent attention.

Beyond the human cost, these recurrent tragedies have far-reaching implications for the economy and livelihoods of communities whose survival depends on lake transportation and fishing. The Volta Lake serves as a key commercial and tourism corridor, facilitating the movement of goods and people across several regions. The continuous loss of lives, coupled with the erosion of public confidence in water transport, threatens not only social stability but also trade, commerce, and tourism, sectors that are vital to the nation's economic growth.

It is therefore time for pragmatic, coordinated, and sustained measures to be implemented by the state and relevant stakeholders to bring sanity to Ghana's inland water transport system. These measures should include stricter safety regulations, routine inspections, mandatory use of life jackets, proper licensing of boat operators, and severe sanctions for violations.

The Importers and Exporters Association of Ghana stands ready to support any national efforts aimed at improving safety and compliance within the maritime transport sector, as the safety of every Ghanaian, whether by land or water, must be treated as a matter of national priority.

May the souls of the departed rest in perfect peace!

Samson Asaki Awingobit

Executive Secretary

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