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Seychelles Ports Authority  
Public Relations and Communications: Content for Publication

Event: Inauguration of New Tugboat

Component held from Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **New Tugboat Marks Significant Advancement in Maritime Operations.**

On Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October, state-of-the-art tugboat, 'Silwet', was officially inaugurated in a ceremony at the Mahe Quay, Commercial Port by the Minister for Transport, Mr Antony Derjacques, and the Chairman of the Board of the Seychelles Ports Authority, Mr Brian Loveday.

The tug, built by Dutch company Damen Shipyards, is equipped with advanced maneuvering technology including an Azimuth Stern Drive (ASD) system. With its powerful engine, 'Silwet' has a 50-tonne bollard pull, a feature which is crucial for handling the growing influx of larger vessels entering the port.

In his opening remarks, the Minister Derjacques said, "this addition is a substantial investment in the safety and efficiency of our port operations, enabling us to handle vessels with greater precision and control. It is a critical step as we work to expand Port Victoria's services and cater to an increasing number of international shipping clients."

He further reiterated that this acquisition is not just a response to current demands but a proactive step toward ensuring the longevity and resilience of Seychelles' maritime infrastructure.

"The addition of this tug vessel marks not only an investment in our marine assets but also a renewal of our commitment to the continued progress of Seychelles as a regional maritime leader. We are determined to stay ahead, to embrace new technologies, and to build upon the strong foundation that has been laid by those who came before us," he added.

The tug got its name from 9-year-old Ila David hailing from the Takamaka Primary School, who was the winning recipient of a school competition spearheaded by the SPA earlier this year to name the vessel which joined the authority's fleet on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

Chief Executive of the SPA Sony Payet highlighted that the vessel represents a remarkable addition to the authority's fleet and is also a commitment to enhancing maritime capabilities and ensuring the safety and efficiency of our waterways.

The inauguration ceremony included a traditional blessing led by Fr. Eric Leon whilst Miss Ila David, accompanied by First Lady Linda Ramkalawan, were tasked with christening the tug by breaking an alcohol-free bottle of champagne on the hull of the vessel. At the end of the momentous inauguration of 'Silwet', the invitees were fortunate to take a tour of the vessel which was followed by a short tour at sea in the approach channel.

Present at this prestigious event were Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Roger Mancienne, Principal Minister, Mr Jean-Francois Ferrari, Ministers, Chief of Defence Forces Brigadier Michael Rosette, several members of the National Assembly, members of the SPA Board, Secretary General of the Seychelles National Institute for Culture, Heritage and the Arts, Chief of Staff, Principal Secretaries, ports stakeholders and SPA staff.