

**SPEECH BY MANAGING DIRECTOR, SHELTER AFRIQUE, MR. ALASSANE BÂ,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 33RD AGM &
SYMPOSIUM OF SHELTER AFRIQUE IN IVORY COAST ON 3rd June 2014**

**Your Excellency; The Prime Minister of Ivory Coast, Mr Daniel Kablan
Duncan;**

**Members of the Executive & Parliamentary Branches of the Government of
Ivory Coast**

Ministers & Head of Delegations of the 44 member countries;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

The Chairman, Board of Directors, Management and Staff of Shelter Afrique;

Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Press Corps;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I cannot but express my pleasure at seeing you all here today; to stand here and look around the room reaffirms my belief that we are on the right track to finding lasting solutions to the housing deficit in Africa. With that said, I welcome you officially to the 33rd AGM & Symposium of Shelter Afrique.

This year's theme is **ALTERNATE BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS – Sustainable Solution to alleviating housing deficit in Africa??** It is a reflection of our focus on finding new and sustainable methods of providing housing in Africa.

As you may know, over the last 5 to 6 years the construction sector has been growing, largely on the housing side; it is also true that Africa for the



most part has shed its history of conflict and violence and is growing, it is a continent that presents many opportunities for the housing sector and indeed all the industries connected to the housing sector.

This growth is quite important and timely, because we note that many African countries are putting in place better and more conducive policies that will help more citizens access affordable and decent housing; we are happy to note that a few months ago, Nigeria one of the largest markets on the continent established its National Mortgage Refinance Company; Tanzania also has a similar institution and we hope to record more of these types of stories.

While we look to the growth on the continent and success stories, we would be remiss if we didn't also acknowledge the great deficit of affordable housing on the continent; we must also acknowledge that if we continue with the same approach, the same methods and the same practices we are not likely to bridge that gap.

It is therefore imperative that we find new approaches, new methods, new practices aimed solely at the production of affordable housing and aimed at allowing the forces of demand catch up with supply; it is therefore very important that we, with the help of our partners, friends and shareholders agree to promote alternative building technologies. That is why we are here today and hopefully by the end of today's proceedings we will be a closer to finding the solution.

Today, you will hear discussions from different speakers spanning three different continents; each brings with them a novel approach to construction and each at the core of their business harbours a belief that there are better, more affordable ways to provide affordable housing on the continent. It is for those reasons and a lot more that we have asked them to speak to us today and to present. I encourage all delegates to engage; to ask questions; too often we fall into the habit of having people speak at us instead of with us.



I will encourage you to let your voices be heard, as we may not always have all the answers but if we ask the right questions then we are not too far off the mark.

I must give my express gratitude to the government of Ivory Coast for hosting us; as are all aware Ivory Coast went through a very painful situation but over the last 4 to 5 years they have started recovering; so it was very important for Shelter Afrique to invite all its shareholders to support that recovery and to be witness to the potentials of Ivory Coast.

Most especially, it was very important for us to shed light on the potential of the housing industry which we know firsthand having backed a number of projects here ourselves.

Once again, on behalf of the Board of Directors and the Staff of Shelter Afrique, we welcome you the 33rd AGM & Symposium, thank you all for being a part of the programme today.

Thank You