

Communiqué

13th Aviation and Allied Business Leadership Conference

1. We, African Ministers responsible for Aviation, High level representatives of: the African Union (AU); the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC); the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Airline Industry; the African Airlines Association (AFRAA); International Air Transport Association (IATA); SITA; Airport Council International Africa (ACI); regional and international institutions; civil society and the private sector met in Accra, Ghana, for the 13th Aviation and Allied Business Leadership Conference hosted by the Government of the Republic of Ghana from 27 to 29 August 2007.
2. The Leadership Conference, which was held under the theme, *Air Transport in Africa: The Future in Your Hands*, provided a forum for the Aviation community in Africa to share and disseminate vital information necessary to enhance the role of air transport in achieving economic integration and development as well as strengthen and improve Africa's air transport industry. It also allowed ministers, industry leaders and experts to develop appropriate and innovative strategies to strengthen as well as accelerate the growth of Africa's Aviation industry.
3. Her Excellency, Ms. Gloria Akuffo, Ghana's Minister responsible for Aviation, welcomed all the participants. Capt. Edward Boyo, Publisher, Aviation and Allied Business Publications, made the opening remarks. Goodwill messages were received from: Mr. Christian Folly-Kossi, the Secretary General of AFRAA; Mr. Chris Kuto, the President of AFCAC; Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, the Executive Secretary of UNECA; Dr. Taieb Cherif, Secretary General of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the representative of the African Union Commission.
4. Brief remarks were also made by: His Excellency, Mr. Hamane Kindo, Niger Minister of Transport; His Excellency, Mr. Jeff Radebe, South Africa Minister of Transport; Her Excellency, Mrs. Diezani Alison-Madueke, Nigeria Minister of Transportation. Also present were: His Excellency Mr. Simon Ejua, Ugandan Deputy Minister for Aviation, and His Excellency Mr. Gift A. R. Mwamandwe, Malawi Deputy Minister of Transport.

5. We thanked Her Excellency, Mrs. Mary Chinnery-Hesse, Chief Advisor to His Excellency, Mr. John Agyekum Kuffour, President of Ghana and Chairman of the African Union, for ably representing and delivering the keynote address on behalf of the President.
6. The speeches of the opening ceremony centred on the need for Africans to undertake new and innovative approaches to addressing the challenges facing the industry, particularly in the areas of domination of the African markets by foreign carriers, financing, air safety and security, environment and regulation. They also called on all African countries to fully liberalize air transport on the continent by eliminating all forms of non-physical barriers, including those linked to the granting of traffic rights, tariffs and frequencies as well as improving the capacity of air services. They, therefore, noted the appropriateness and the timeliness of the theme of the Leadership Conference and called on all stakeholders to work together in steering the industry in a direction that seeks to create an enabling environment, which is conducive for viable, efficient, affordable and sustainable air transport operations. They also called for African governments to remove all forms of impediments that prevent market control and access in the aviation industry, particularly air transport, for Africans.
7. We took note of the presentations made on the following topics: Airlines; Airports and Infrastructure; The Environment; Policy; Finance; and Safety. We thanked all the presenters for their insightful expositions.
8. We reemphasized the important role of Air Transport in the social and economic development of our continent, as it contributes significantly, among others, to: mitigating the special transport needs of landlocked African countries; facilitating the movement of goods, people, labour and cross-border investments on the continent, thereby boosting tourism, intra-African commerce and trade; and alleviating the cost of doing business in Africa.
9. We strongly reaffirmed the Declarations made by the African Ministers responsible for Aviation in Sun City, South Africa; Libreville, Gabon; and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to strengthen the Aviation industry and cut the level of airline accidents by half by 2015.
10. After exhaustive and fruitful deliberations we made the following recommendations:

Airlines

- (a) Major airlines should deepen their cooperation by forming regional alliance groupings in which market niches would be reserved for small carriers;
- (b) African Airlines should form strategic partnerships with Africa's private sector. In this regard, the airlines should work with African governments to enact policies that would encourage and attract cross-border investments from African nationals into African Airline Companies;
- (c) Regardless of their ownership, African Airlines should be managed on sound business principles. In this regard, governments should set uniform standards for both private and public airline companies and desist from undue interference in the day-to-day operation of the airlines;
- (d) African governments should embark on accelerated manpower development programmes with the view of addressing the personnel shortage in the industry. These programmes should, among others, provide scholarships for the training of the new personnel. African Airlines should also continue to strengthen their human capacities, including training and development as well as providing competitive remuneration so as to retain personnel;

Airports and Infrastructure

- (e) The use of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) investments should be encouraged in the improvement of some of Africa's airport infrastructure (lighting, navigation equipment, etc.) with a view to reducing the cost of operation of airlines as well as air fares;
- (f) Efforts should be made by governments and airport authorities to make landing fees, navigation fees, ground handling fees and other tariffs associated with the use of airports in Africa very competitive with those of the rest of the world;
- (g) Revenues accruing to Airport Authorities must be re-invested in the aviation industry and not be used by governments for projects unrelated to the industry;

Environment

- (h) ICAO should remain the forum in which global solutions should be found to aviation environmental protection, including aircraft noise and engine emissions taking into account the constraints and interests of each region of the world;
- (i) It is noted that the volume of flights in Africa are relatively low compared to those in the industrialized nations. However, being mindful of the negative environmental consequences, the operation of Air Transport in Africa should be undertaken in a manner that does not impair the environment;
- (j) African Airline Industry supports research and other initiatives being undertaken around the world to make the activities of industry compatible with high environmental standards;

Policy

- (k) African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and African countries, in partnership with the ECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB), should harmonize competition rules with a view to having uniform implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision by all African countries;
- (l) African Union Commission, the RECs and African countries, in partnership with the ECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB), should harmonize national and/or regional air transport policies, with a view of establishing sub-regional domestic markets which cuts across countries;
- (m) African countries should remove all forms of non-physical barriers, including abolishing visa restrictions for Africans travelling within Africa so as to boost air travel;

Finance

- (n) African countries should establish innovative financing mechanisms for the development and strengthening of the aviation industry including, among others, the pooling of resources by African airlines or businesses in the purchase of aircraft as well as governments providing appropriate financial support to the industry such as loan guarantees;

- (o) African countries should create an enabling environment for the participation of the private sector in the Airline industry. In this regard, private-public partnerships as well as trans-boundary investments must be promoted so as to achieve efficiency and economy of regional scale and scope in the African Airline industry;
- (p) African countries should ratify the *Cape Town Convention on Mobile Assets* so as to benefit from improved financing of aircraft acquisition.

Safety and Security

- (q) African countries should implement ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices and ratify international air law instruments concerning aviation safety and security;
- (r) African countries should incorporate in their national and regional sector programmes, aviation safety and security as a matter of high priority;
- (s) African countries should identify and give priority to training in the field of aviation safety and security;
- (t) African Union Commission and the RECs and African countries, in partnership with the ECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB), should harmonize African aviation safety and security procedures so as to promote efficiency, good management of African aviation safety and security systems; and
- (u) African governments should provide adequate funding for aviation security at the national and/or regional levels.

11. We, the Ministers present at this Leadership Conference would bring this communiqué to the attention of our colleagues for their consideration and adoption and thereafter to the leadership of the African Union through the established channels of the Union.

12. We call on the organizers of the Leadership Conference to circulate this communiqué to all key stakeholders in Africa and other interested parties.

13. We thank His Excellency, Mr. John Agyekum Kuffour, President of Ghana and Chairman of the African Union, and the Government and people of Ghana for hosting this Leadership Conference. We

also thank the Ministers, the sponsors and the organisers of the Leadership Conference for all their efforts in ensuring the success of the event.

Done in Accra, Ghana on August 29, 2007.