

Looking ahead into 2022 and beyond



2021 has been a yet another challenging year for the air transport industry. In as much as the industry is not yet out of the woods, some positive trends into recovery have been remarked in 2021. As at October 2021, African airlines had reopened 81.3% of their international routes that has been closed due to the pandemic. African cargo capacity grew by 33% since 2019 and cargo load factors improved by 9% from pre-pandemic levels.

The dawn of recovery is critical time to redefine strategic plans for the next five years. To support the recovery, decision makers at AFRAA's 53rd Assembly set a roadmap for transformation and the economic development of air transport in Africa. The Assembly took three main resolutions that will advance the cause of African aviation.

Firstly, the assembly took a resolution on safe reopening of borders. Recognising that safe reopening of borders in a harmonised manner is critical for the efficient restart of African aviation, the Assembly urged African governments to remove border restrictions and open their markets to restart the industry with support from Industry Restart Plan Standards and guidance documentation. The Assembly further called upon African governments to accelerate the rapid roll out of vaccines across the continent and embrace the use of digital technology health platforms to facilitate the restart of economies and air transport.

Secondly, the Assembly took a resolution on financial support to African airlines. Recognising the importance of financial support for the recovery of the air transport industry, the Assembly called upon African governments to extend the much-needed financial support and relief to African airlines and the African aviation industry at large.

Thirdly, the Assembly took a resolution on Laboratory concept approach for attainment of sustainability of African airlines. Recognising the importance of addressing the sustainability and competitiveness of Africa's air transport, the Assembly called for a laboratory convening all relevant stakeholders as a transformation opportunity for the economic development of air transport in Africa. AFRAA Secretariat in coordination with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), and the African Aviation Industry Group (AAIG) shall convene the LAB by the end of March 2022.

2021 has been a perfect occasion to address the future of African aviation and enhance our commitment to develop a resilient and sustainable perspective for the airline industry. AFRAA will keep by our mission to promote and serve African airlines and champion Africa's aviation industry – Better Skies for Africa – remains the pillar of all our actions.

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