



AFRAA 54th General Assembly

Theme: “Acing the Roadmap to Sustainable African Aviation”

(12 DECEMBER 2022)

GOODWILL MESSAGE BY: MR. PROSPER ZO’O MINTO’O, REGIONAL DIRECTOR, WACAF

The Minister of Transport
The Secretary General of the African Civil Aviation Commission,
The Chief Executive Officer of Air Senegal,
The Secretary General of the African Airline Association,
Chief Executive Officers of Airlines and Aviation Industry,
Aviation Stakeholders and Partners,
Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the ICAO Council President, Salvatore Sciacchitano, Secretary General, Juan Carlos Salazar, and the ESAF, EUR/NAT, MID and WACAF Regional Directors accredited to African States, I wish to express our appreciation for the opportunity to address this General Assembly kindly hosted by AFRAA and Air Senegal on the theme: **Acing the Roadmap to Sustainable African Aviation**. Our gratitude specially goes to the Secretary General of AFRAA, Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé, for inviting us to address this august Assembly.

The presence of many key stakeholders after two years and a half period of severe travel restrictions characterized by the COVID-19 protocols and national measures is an indicator of your dedication to supporting aviation recovery and rebuilding a sustainable resilient future.

As we are all aware, the challenges and impact of COVID-19 pandemic to the air transport sector and our noble objective to connect our world and societies continues to prevail though at a diminishing scale. Despite the unprecedented pandemic effects, it is encouraging to witness the intensive collaboration, cooperation and partnership among aviation stakeholders in the strife to achieve our common goals of recovering and advancing air transport in a sustainable way.

In this regard, I would like to recognize the tremendous efforts and contribution of AFRAA to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic challenges and the impact on civil aviation and support the ICAO ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) recommendations strategies to cope with the situation sustainably recovery, which are highly commanded.

ICAO is delighted with the ongoing dialogue initiated by AFRAA as a contribution to the collaborative approach that is critically needed if the rebuilding of sustainable and resilient networks in the aviation supply chain is to occur in Africa.

The AFRAA Stakeholders Convention held in May this year was instrumental to advancing this dialogue aimed at addressing the challenges of the disadvantaged African operators in a highly competitive environment, making it a necessity to embrace regional initiatives and solutions such as Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

This approach supports ICAO’s advocacy for regional cooperation in all areas towards the implementation of the five strategic objectives and compliance with other requirements, through coordination of better air service provision, safety, security, facilitation, air transport development and growth, improved connectivity and environmental protection as a matter of priority.

This 54th General Assembly of AFRAA is taking place after the 41st Session of the ICAO Assembly which considered, among others, issues pertaining to Economic Regulation of International Air Transport, Economic of Airports and Air Navigation Services, Monitoring and Analysis of Aviation Data, and Economic Development of Air Transport. Especially, the ICAO Assembly noted:

- the developments in the economic regulation of international air transport, including efforts on the improvement of the global economic regulatory environments and activities to facilitate and support the

liberalization process, especially the cross border investments in airlines, as well as the economic and financial measures to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on aviation and the compendium on emergency response planning and coordination in case of aviation system disruption.

- the developments in the regulatory and economic aspects of airports and air navigation services, with focus on new and updated ICAO's policies and guidance on user charges and cost recovery mechanisms for the provision of airport and air navigation services, as well as the economic measures and experiences of States in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Updates were also provided on funding and financing of aviation infrastructure, funding of oversight functions, as well as tools and analysis to support States' investment decisions in aviation infrastructure.
- the priority areas of aviation data and analysis work programme, including the economic impact analysis of COVID-19 on aviation, the customization and updates of the post-COVID-19 traffic forecasts, the development of business analysis tools, the methodological framework of the aviation satellite account to measure the economic contribution of aviation, and the further modernization of the ICAO Statistics Programme. The future work related to big data analytics aimed to support States and aviation stakeholders in using a data driven decision- and policy-making approach to improving safety, operational and economic efficiency of air transport, was also presented; and
- the significant regulatory and industry developments of international air transport since the last Assembly, and adopted *a revised Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies in the air transport field*.

The 41st Session of the Assembly was preceded by the ICAO 2022 Innovation Fair organized to provide a prominent platform for innovations and initiatives that will contribute to a more resilient future for the air transport sector. On that occasion, the President of the Council highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to proposals for numerous technical and policy solutions to help reconnect the world in its aftermath, but a more systematic approach to disaster risk identification and management will be necessary to circumvent the compound impacts of multiple disasters. This is a pre-requisite to building a resilient future for our sector.

In this connection, noting that Africa's global market shares changed from 3.5% to 2.5% in four decades, and African airlines' contribution of 45% in the early 1980s plummeted to 20% in 2019, the African Aviation Industry Group (AAIG) comprising AFRAA, IATA, AASA, CANSO, and ACI-Africa have launched the Air Transport Sustainability Laboratory (LAB) initiative focusing on five key priorities : Taxes (customs and fuel), High Taxes and Charges, Navigation – Free Route Airspace, SAATM, and Partnerships – Airlines and Tourism.

Innovative solutions expected from the related projects will ensure the efficient development of the intra-Africa markets for the manufacturing industry, hospitality, trade, and air transport, and increase the contribution of these sectors to the GDP of African economies.

The 54th General Assembly of AFRAA is also taking place after the celebration – just a month ago – of the Yamoussoukro Decision, the effective implementation of which combined with the full operationalization of the SAATM to support air transport development and airline operations relies on strong partnership of key stakeholders including the Industry, African Union, AFRAA, AFCAC, ACI, CANSO, ICAO, and the industry.

It is critical to involve the airlines and service providers in efforts and initiatives aimed at enhancing connectivity and efficient growth of aviation in Africa, and to secure operators' commitment to support the synergies deployed towards improving public confidence and attracting passenger traffic and cargo growth.

In this process, ICAO strongly encourages digital transformation, globalization, and innovation and appropriate investment by all Stakeholders if Africa is to cope with the global trends, competition, relevance, and dynamics.

“Aging the Roadmap to Sustainable African Aviation” is the theme of this 54th AFRAA General Assembly. Let us commit to collectively address this timely and pressing call made to the entire Aviation Fraternity. At the end of the day, we are the ones to make it happen.

As far as ICAO is concerned, the two regional groups established by the Council, namely RASG-AFI and APIRG continue to promote safer skies, seamless airspace utilization, and convenient facilitation of travellers, and get the

buy-in and support from States, Regional Economic Communities; while the AFI Plans for safety and security which are aligned with Regional and Global priorities aim to support States in resolving aviation safety and security deficiencies and implementation of ICAO SARPs in partnership and coordination with other stakeholders in the region.

ICAO remains confident that enhanced collaboration between aviation stakeholders and partners should drive the resilient recovery and sustainable future growth, and is committed to continue to provide the necessary support to the achievement by Member States of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the AU Agenda 2063.

I wish fruitful deliberations to AFRAA 54th General Assembly.

Thank you.