



First Meeting on Air Cargo Development in Africa (Lomé, Togo, 5-7 August 2014)

Declaration on The Development of Air Cargo in Africa: Key Milestones

Air cargo is a catalyst for economic growth. Roughly 35 per cent of global trade by value is transported via air. Airfreight has allowed otherwise remote African regions to access world markets for agricultural and other products. The success of many economies and operations depends on rapid and reliable delivery in the best possible conditions – and airfreight is often the only transportation means to fulfil these requirements. Air cargo routes provide African countries with quick and efficient access to worldwide supply chains and markets and destinations throughout the continent. It is projected that freight traffic to, from and within Africa will be growing at a pace faster than the world's pace, with emphasis on the international traffic. This trend is indicative of how aviation is helping to expand global market access for African businesses.

The Decision relating to the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration concerning the Liberalization of Access to Air Transport Markets in Africa (YD, Nov 1999), which was endorsed during the Assembly of Heads of African States held in Lomé, Togo, in July 2000, created the fundamental basis of Africa's strategy for the sustainability of air transport, through a harmonized air transport liberalization framework. Taking into consideration the principal features of air cargo transportation, the African States confirmed the goal to liberalize the access to air transport market in Africa in its entirety, including air cargo operations.

Further to the adoption of the YD and in addition to efforts to address fair competition issues at national level, a number of Regional Economic Communities, sub-regional bodies, AFCAC and the AU have contributed over the years, to the development of harmonized fair competition rules. These efforts need to be supported and their products made use of.

In order to identify regulatory and operational solutions for the development of Air Cargo, its industry and services in Africa, ICAO has decided to convene the *Meeting on Air Cargo Development in Africa, from 5 to 7 August 2014*. In conclusion to this Meeting, the Directors General of Civil Aviation of the participating States (the “**Participants**”) have decided, supported by air cargo stakeholders present, to state their common understanding of the vital importance of the contribution of air cargo to economic growth in Africa. They have resolved to affirm their intent for implementation of strategic decisions taken during the said Meeting in support of the sustainable development of air cargo transportation, through the signing of this Declaration.

The Opportunities for the development of Air Cargo in Africa

The Participants have identified a number of opportunities which demand further actions:

1. Considering that the air cargo is a catalyst for economic growth all steps are to be taken to foster air cargo services to allow air carriers to operate freely between points anywhere in Africa and beyond, in conformity with the YD.
2. Under a fully liberalized air cargo services environment, many new “highways in the sky” would be created, which would markedly expand the regional and global linkages between suppliers and customers and increase connectivity. Competitiveness would improve, foreign direct investment would increase, and economic development would accelerate.
3. The air cargo supply chain is a combined set of interconnected parties, locations, procedures, and information exchanges that enables cargo to move from its origin to its destination by air.

The Way Forward

Looking ahead, the Participants intend to optimize the benefits of air cargo through the following initiatives:

1. High priority should be given by States’ policymakers to the development of a favourable regulatory environment encouraging air cargo development as part of broader government sponsored aviation development and economic growth policy, coordinated across national borders in accordance with the ICAO worldwide framework.
2. Further liberalization of air cargo operations should be promoted through removal of restrictions on traffic rights and limitations on capacity in air services agreements and the relaxation of air carrier ownership and control rules. Work should be carried out with the respective bodies to stimulate faster ratifications of the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air signed in Montréal on 28 May 1999 (MC99) laying the foundation for the introduction of the electronic documentation.
3. Cooperation should be promoted between different units of the air cargo supply chain within States and on the international arena and cooperation fostered with our partner organizations: World Customs Organization (WCO), International Air Transport Association (IATA), Airports Council International (ACI), International Air Cargo Association (TIACA) and International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA) and African Airlines Association (AFRAA).

<p>4. Security and facilitation of air cargo need to go hand in hand. All parties have a shared responsibility to ensure that air cargo moves safely and securely throughout this chain. At the same time the cargo flow should not be restricted by the lack of effective implementation of the YD and modern methods, like risk-based cargo security measures, E-freight, electronic air waybill (AWB) and electronic transfer of data should be implemented.</p> <p>5. The infrastructure and intermodal transport services play a vital role in political, economic and social development as well as the integration of Africa. While the access to capital remains an issue, ways exist for making projects attractive not only for government financing, but also for joint ventures, like public private partnerships.</p> <p>6. States should give due regard to the distinct features of air cargo services when exchanging market access rights in the framework of air service agreements and grant appropriate rights and operational flexibility so as to promote the development of these services. The removal of the regulatory restrictions on route rights, capacity and designation will allow the existing air cargo operators and new entrants to serve formerly restricted markets and to compete on the basis of price and improved service.</p> <p>7. The economic benefits of further opening the aviation market, in accordance with the YD, would include the multiplier effects generated by additional air cargo transportation for economic activities and would facilitate the inclusion of remote African countries or regions in international trade. But, if aviation charges and taxes are too high, its ability to be an economic catalyst may be compromised.</p>	<p>4. The current security and facilitation requirements in the national security programmes should be reflected; the risk management and coordination with the partner organizations working in the supply chain should be implemented, in particular national regulations should be aligned with the WCO Kyoto Convention. Wide use should be made of such tools as electronic submission of data on goods passing borders, E-freight and AWB.</p> <p>5. Considering the importance and role of infrastructure to support continued development of airports and intermodal transportation infrastructure to meet the demand for air cargo services, full consideration should be given to the available practices for attracting public and private capital.</p> <p>6. Due consideration should be given to the particular importance of air cargo for economic development in long-haul destinations and landlocked or island countries.</p> <p>7. The impact of taxes, charges and other levies on aviation, and thus on economic growth and jobs should be assessed, and action taken in order to limit their possible adverse impact on the growth and development of air cargo services.</p>
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<p>8. New developments in the cargo sector such as new systems, procedures, aircraft performance capabilities, renewable fuels, new supporting infrastructure, a new way to do business and the dynamic surge of e-Cargo create the need for high level educated and skilled professionals to cope with these developments in order to sustain the economic growth in Africa.</p>	<p>8. The urgent need should be recognized to strengthen the continent's expertise, to invest in qualified personnel and promote gender diversity through training to cater to the needs created by the modernization and growing complexity of the air cargo sector. Active participation should be taken in the ICAO Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) Symposium from 3-4 December 2014 in Montréal, Canada, and fully support the AFCAC initiative Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) for Africa supported by ICAO.</p> <p>9. States that have not done so should be urged to accede to the Protocol to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment on Matters Specific to Aircraft Equipment signed at Cape Town on 16 November 2001 to facilitate the acquisition of modern and fuel efficient aircraft including freighters, to ensure more economical, reliable and more environmentally friendly cargo operations.</p>
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The Participants, supported by air cargo stakeholders, have decided to meet at two year intervals, in order to assess the progress in implementation of the above actions and take new steps in furtherance of the above initiatives.

Adopted by the Meeting in Lomé, Togo, on 7 August 2014



Col. Latta Dokisime Gnama

Chairman of the Meeting