

YD-Day 2022: Africa Kick-Starts Liberalization, Integration With 15 Pilot States

- Togo, Senegal Ministers To Launch Club of Ready And Willing States



Ms. Adefunke Adegemi, Secretary General, AFCAC



Mr. Silas Udahemuka, President, AFCAC

The African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and the aviation community in Africa are set to jump-start liberalized air transport services under the Single African Air Transport (SAATM) concept with the launch of the historic SAATM Project Implementation Pilot (PIP) at the 23rd Anniversary of the Yamoussoukro Decision Day (YD-Day) celebration in Dakar, Senegal, on November 14, 2022.

The PIP, aimed at accelerating SAATM implementation, involves 15 African States that possess "requisite SAATM implementation enablers," out of 35 States that have signed the SAATM, and include Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo and Zambia, as well as Senegal and Cameroun. About 13 African Ministers are expected to launch the PIP and 'Club of Ready And Willing States', led by the Minister of Air, Rail and Road Transport of Togo, HE Affoh Atcha Dédji, who is the Champion State of SAATM, and the Host State Minister of Air Transport and Airports

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AFCAC Secretary General, Adefunke Adeyemi (5th from left), and AFCAC President, Silas Udahemuka (5th from right) with Africa's Representatives at ICAO during the 41 ICAO Assembly in Montreal, Canada

Infrastructure Development, HE Alioune Sarr, to open up the free flow of traffic among these 15 African States.

"This is a tremendous moment in the history of Africa's air transport development. Interestingly too, these States have domestic airlines that will actively drive interconnectivity and integration. This readily opens a new vista of economic activities building remarkably Africa's integration and cohesion. We are confident of a resounding success, and I invite other States to join and open up immediately," says Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General, AFCAC.

The 35 States that have signed for SAATM already account for over 85% of intra African traffic and over 800 million of African population, and AFCAC is further utilizing newly appointed SAATM Ambassadors to drive advocacy and implementation of SAATM in States and regions. The high-level event will feature dignitaries from the African Union, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Air Transport Association (IATA), African Airlines Association (AFRAA), Airports Council International (ACI), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), African Civil Aviation Authorities, Airlines, and other institutions and operators.

Excelling With SAATM

The launch of the SAATM as the first flagship project of the AU Agenda 2063 on 28th January 2018 is considered as a turning point towards the full liberalization of air transport market on the continent. While the YD came into effect in July 2000 following its endorsement by the African Heads of State and Government in Lomé, Togo, to enhance interconnectivity and integration in Africa through

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liberalization of air transport services, various challenges, particularly, the non-availability of institutional and regulatory texts, impeded its implementation over the years. SAATM now provides the institutional and regulatory texts, the updated African Civil Aviation Policy (AFCAP) and the harmonization of economic regulation among African States.

A recently published Continental Study on the benefits of SAATM and Communication Strategy for SAATM Advocacy commissioned by the African Union (AU) assessed the level of the YD implementation and the efficacy of SAATM operationalization for each member State and arrived at a "preparedness" rating using the SAATM enablers, which are a standalone air transport feature or policy that contributes to the holistic aviation framework which act as essential ingredients that lead to a successful aviation sector.



What Will YD-Day 2023 Achieve?

The YD-Day 2022 aims to move Africa closer to achieving AU Agenda 2063, and therefore will encourage Member States, eligible airlines and all partner institutions to jointly accelerate the implementation of SAATM, and expand their operations across Africa. YD-Day 2023 will provide occasion to solicit the all-important political will among States to spearhead immediate SAATM implementation subject to the relevant provisions of YD and its regulatory instruments. The event will also strengthen safety, security and use of ICAO-based policies on taxes, charges and fees, and the submission of relevant air transport data to the Executing Agency by State Parties, among other objectives.

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AFCAC Secretary General Builds Bridges At ICAO 41st Triennial Assembly

AFCAC participated at the 41st ICAO Triennial Assembly from 27 September to 7 October 2022, during which Africa worked cohesively, contributing to a number of key decisions at the Assembly.

During the Assembly, AFCAC Secretary General, Ms. Adefunke Adeyemi, engaged extensively with global and regional stakeholders including the AUC Commissioner for Infrastructure & Energy, HE H.E. Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, and various international partners, reaching various agreements on capacity building and technical assistance.



Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner, Energy and Infrastructure AUC, and Adefunke Adeyemi, Sec Gen AFCAC at ICAO 41 Assembly

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Particularly, the agreement between AFCAC and Qatar will drive training for young aviation professionals.

The ICAO Assembly was a resounding success for Africa as 8 African States including Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Mauritania, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe were elected into the ICAO Council after an

earlier endorsement by the African Union (AU). The Assembly resolved to work together to achieve the collective Long-Term Global Aspirational Goal (LTAG) for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The Assembly reached remarkable decisions to guide the aviation industry activities over the next 3 years.

AFCAC Calls For Smarter Use Of Technology



Adefunke Adeyemi, AFCAC Secretary General, with Patricia Reverdy, ECAC Executive Secretary at the Seminar on Cyber Security and Innovation in Morocco early September 2022

Ms. Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General of the AFCAC, says the aviation industry in Africa should embrace closer partnerships at all levels as the fulcrum for driving innovation and accelerated aviation development in Africa. The Secretary General was a co-host at the Second Interregional ECAC-TSA-AFCAC-ACAO seminar on Innovation & CyberSecurity in Marrakesh, Morocco, early September 2022.

She says: "CAAs, airlines and airports must remain agile in

response by continually assessing the threat landscape and exploring innovative, yet cost-effective solutions, to mitigate wide-ranging threats and make smarter use technology to create capacity, raise efficiency and even possibly design different concepts of operations for the future."

Ms. Adeyemi assumed office on September 1, 2022, and has since held consultations, emphasizing stronger collaboration, with industry institutions and organizations in Africa and the global aviation community.