



Press release

AFRAA leads landmark laboratory for the sustainability of the air transport sector in Africa

Nairobi, 04 July 2022: Experts and key stakeholders from African air transport, trade, and tourism industries converged in Nairobi from 27 June – 01 July at the first-ever African aviation laboratory to develop roadmaps for the sustainability of the air transport sector in Africa.

Led and hosted by AFRAA in collaboration with the African Aviation Group (AAIG), the laboratory's deliberations were grouped into 5 projects dedicated to seek out-of-the box solutions on specific subject areas, including: fuel and customs taxes, high taxes and charges, navigation – Free Routing Area (FRA), implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and partnerships between airlines, hospitality and tourism bodies to improve intra-African tourism.

The overall objective of the Laboratory was to address the root cause of challenges facing the air transport industry in Africa and develop relevant solutions to revamp the sector. Africa's global air traffic market share declined from 3.5% in the early 1980s to 2.5% in 2019, and African airlines' contribution to this market share plummeted from 45% to 20% in the same period. The COVID-19 pandemic which aggravated the situation of African air transport sector, has seen Africa's traffic market share drop to less than 2%. This marginalization trend is a strong wake-up call to all stakeholders to take necessary actions.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Laboratory, AFRAA Secretary General, Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé stated: "The Laboratory provides a constructive opportunity to share views and build transformative solutions necessary to address sustainability and competitiveness of Africa's air transport. AFRAA will continue to spearhead the Laboratory outcomes with the relevant stakeholders to ensure that Africa achieves the survival in the short-term and its sustainability in the long-term."

At the conclusion of the Laboratory, stakeholders committed to coordinate efforts on the roadmap actions to:

- i. Increase the number of fifth freedom city pairs in Africa to enhance intra-African connectivity.
- ii. Develop guidelines and economic regulatory framework for rationalization of taxes, charges, and fees.
- iii. Achieve competitive and affordable air travel to boost trade and tourism in Africa.
- iv. Reduce the taxes on fuel and abolish custom duties on spare parts and aircraft in line with the relevant provisions of the ICAO Convention.



- v. Streamline and automate the flight permits acquisition processes across Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs).
- vi. Boost flight operation efficiency in African airspace to attain productivity gains for airlines and air navigation service providers.

The roadmap, which will be tabled for adoption by AU Policy Organs shall be monitored, assessed and reviewed by a multi-sectoral steering committee coordinated by AFRAA. The committee shall be composed of the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), the African Aviation Industry Group (AAIG), African Airlines association (AFRAA), the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), DFIs, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat, ACI Africa, ASECNA, CANSO, the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the African Tourism Board (ATB), Satnav Africa JPO, and African Union of Consumers.

The Laboratory made a call upon States, Development Partners, Financial Institutions and other Stakeholders to support the implementation of the roadmap.

The Laboratory was hosted at the AFRAA Headquarters in Nairobi – Kenya and was attended physically and virtually by 150 participants from AFRAA, African airlines, airports, ACI Africa, Civil Aviation Authorities, Air Navigation Service Providers, AUC, IATA, AFCAC, AAIG, AfCFTA Secretariat, Afreximbank, ASECNA, CANSO, ICAO, UNECA, UNWTO, Tourism Boards, Satnav Africa JPO, the African Union of Consumers, RECs and independent industry experts.

About AFRAA

The African Airlines Association, also known by its acronym AFRAA, is a trade association of airlines from the member states of the African Union (AU). Founded in Accra, Ghana, in April 1968, and headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, AFRAA's mission is to promote, serve African Airlines and champion Africa's aviation industry. The Association envisions a sustainable, interconnected and affordable Air Transport industry in Africa where African Airlines become key players and drivers to African economic development.

AFRAA membership of 44 airlines cuts across the entire continent and includes all the major intercontinental African operators. The Association members represent over 85% of total international traffic carried by African airlines. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).