

**Draft statement for the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)
to the High-level Safety Conference**

(Montreal, 29 March 2010)

Good afternoon Mr. President, Mr. Secretary General, and distinguished guests.

It is my honour to be here this afternoon to speak to you today on behalf of the African Civil Aviation Commission.

Through collaboration with ICAO and other key partners, continued safety improvements have been achieved within the African civil aviation community over the past several years, in particular since the ICAO DGCA/06 Meeting.

These achievements are significant and provide the foundation for a safe and efficient air transportation system essential to Africa's continued economic development. Nonetheless, more work is needed to enable a successful transition to a more proactive safety approach within Africa. As in the past, attainment of our future safety objectives will require a **cooperative approach**. Therefore, Africa is looking forward to the outcomes of this High-level Safety Conference and is committed to take them into account in furthering its aviation safety efforts.

Many of you may be aware of the significant efforts made by African States and African airlines in order to meet the ICAO's standards relating to safety.

As a result of the very successful Special AFRICAN meeting convened in 2008 by ICAO with the support of AFCAC, over 40 African States have completed the gap analysis process that is the initial step toward implementation of Safety Management Systems (SMS) and State Safety Programmes (SSP). In addition, over 1500 personnel have completed extensive training to establish a comprehensive understanding of safety management principles as well as the means required for effective implementation.

On an operational level, with the support of ICAO, both from Headquarters and the Regional Offices in Africa, reduced vertical separation minimum (RVSM) has now been implemented over the whole of Africa – a positive step to provide the type of improvements that can enhance safety throughout the continent and reduce accident rates in AFCAC Member States that remain above the global average.

The themes of this ICAO conference are of critical interest to AFCAC as they address topics necessary to ensure that proactive safety management practices are implemented on a strong foundation. For many AFCAC Member States, this transition will require improved compliance with international safety Standards and Recommended Practices in order to fully realize the benefits of SMS and SSP implementation.

Africa has benefited over the years from the support of ICAO and of the donor community. In this regards, we look forward to your continued support. I am confident that this support, together with the necessary cooperation between African States, will usher in a significantly improved safety environment in Africa.

In conclusion, AFCAC is indeed honoured to participate in this important conference. We shall continue to work collaboratively with ICAO, partner States, industry and international organizations in our efforts to continually evolve and upgrade safety programmes within Africa.

On behalf of all of my colleagues, we look forward to working with you this week and in the future as we continue to improve aviation safety in Africa.

Thank you Mr President.