

First Meeting of Directors General of Civil Aviation of Western and Central African States

(Abuja, Nigeria, 19 - 21 March 2002)

DECLARATION

The Directors General of Civil Aviation of Western and Central African States at their first meeting held at Abuja, Nigeria from 19 to 21 March 2002 convened by the ICAO Western and Central African Office, and which was attended by other high-ranking Officials representing 27 States and 9 international Organizations,

- **Conscious** that the need for a scheduled, adequate and efficient African air transport remains a tremendous challenge to take up;
- **Having** reviewed the serious deficiencies which affect civil aviation in their respective countries and hamper its orderly development at regional level;
- **Considering** the vital role which civil aviation plays in the socio-economic development, exchanges, trade and regional integration;
- **Considering** States obligation to shoulder their national and international responsibilities in the field of civil aviation, in particular, the effective implementation of ICAO Standards, Recommended Practices and Procedures;
- **Mindful** of their national responsibilities and the confidence that their Governments have in them;
- **Recognizing** that it is essential to adopt a joint approach when resolving problems of common interest;
- **Conscious** that deficiencies in any part of the world might have adverse repercussions on other regions;

DECLARE their determination to enhance the general situation of civil aviation in their region;

DECLARE their commitment to:

- a) make efforts for the implementation of ICAO Standards, Recommended Practices (SARPs) and Procedures as well as the ICAO Air Navigation Plan for Africa and Indian Ocean (AFI);
- b) co-operate among them by establishing or becoming party to existing mechanisms or joint or regional arrangements aimed at eliminating deficiencies in the aviation safety and security fields.

- c) implement the conclusions and recommendations of the present meeting, inter alia;
 - 1. accept and implement effectively the recommendations of ICAO audits and evaluations.
 - 2. give the highest priority to the elimination of the most serious deficiencies in aviation in the AFI Region;
 - 3. co-ordinate among them and co-operate in the conduct of all their aeronautical activities, including the harmonization of their regulations;
 - 4. resort to existing aviation training centres in the Region to train their personnel and make joint contacts with a view to obtaining training fellowships from donor organizations;
 - 5. conclude bilateral/multilateral cooperative arrangements aimed at optimizing the use of the expertise available in the Region and facilitate the exchange of personnel;
 - 6. become party and provide support (financial, material and/or in human resources) to the regional AVSEC partnership advocated by ICAO and AFCAC for the uniform implementation of Annex 17 provisions (Aviation Security);
- d) Meet their financial obligations to AFCAC and ICAO;
- e) Sign and ratify where necessary, international air law instruments, in particular protocols amending Articles 50a) and 56 of the Convention on international civil aviation.

DECIDE to institutionalize, under the aegis of ICAO, the convening of DGCAs meetings for Western and Central African States for the purpose of discussing all matters of common interest and strengthening co-ordination and their co-operation bonds for the elimination of identified deficiencies.

EMPHASIZE the need to:

- a) establish autonomous entities to manage aeronautical activities;
- b) strengthen existing authorities/agencies vested with limited autonomy, by granting them full financial, operational and administrative autonomy free from bureaucratic procedures and political pressure;
- c) create/strengthen regional or sub-regional operating agencies for the joint management of air navigation facilities and services;

- d) create regional or sub-regional regulatory authorities;
- e) organize regular and systematic consultations between users and service and facility providers to discuss financial and operational issues relating to all civil aviation fields so as to ensure that the facilities and services provided remain fully responsive to users' needs/requirements and that charges are determined on the basis of fair and reasonable costs, **in accordance with ICAO policy on charges.**

REQUEST ICAO and AFCAC to:

- a) coordinate the identification of regional aviation projects and assist States in their search for funding such projects;
- b) suggest cooperative mechanisms to States in the various civil aviation fields;

COMMEND the adoption by the 33rd Session of ICAO Assembly of the International Financial Facility for Aviation Safety (IFFAS) concept;

REQUEST ICAO to speed up the implementation of the IFFAS mechanism.

NOTE the tendency to resort to the private sector for the funding and management of aeronautical activities and **REQUEST ICAO** to organize seminars/workshops on commercialization;

URGE States to endorse all measures taken by ICAO with a view to enhancing aviation security following the high level Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security, in particular the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on regional partnership.

Done in Abuja on 21 March 2002
