

Ministerial Declaration on Air Transport and Tourism Development in Africa

We, the Ministers of Member States of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Representatives of the African Union Commission (AUC), the Representatives of international and regional organizations, as well as the private sector entities, attending the first ICAO/UNWTO Ministerial Conference on Tourism and Air Transport in Africa, held from 27 to 29 March 2019 in Santa Maria, Sal Island, Cabo Verde, gathered to a) advance innovative, sustainable solutions to foster the development of air connectivity and seamless travel in the African continent; b) enhance common understanding and responses to the business imperatives through strengthening dialogue between the two sectors; c) raise political willingness to the highest level to mainstream the priorities of the two sectors in the national, regional and global development agendas; and d) seek to address critical issues related to bridging air transport and tourism policies, including the current regulatory framework, taxation, cost of travel and the way forward in facilitating travel, in order to contribute to the development of tourism in the African continent in line with:

- a) the *African Union (AU) Agenda 2063*, and especially its goal to drive inclusive growth, sustainable development, and the accelerated integration of African economies; and
- b) the United Nations (UN)'s *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, and especially its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all and 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; and
- c) the *AU–UN Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, adopted on 27 January 2018 at the 30th AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, having a harmonized and integrated approach to the implementation of the two Agendas in order to minimize duplication, optimize resource use and mobilize the support of domestic and external stakeholders and development partners;

Recalling:

- a) the *ICAO/UNWTO Joint Statement Aviation and Tourism: Hand in Hand for Sustainability* adopted in Montréal, Canada on 18 March 2013; and
- b) the *Medellín Statement on Tourism and Air Transport for Development* adopted at the Joint UNWTO/ICAO High-Level Forum on Tourism and Air Transport for Development, held concurrently with the Twenty-first session of the UNWTO General Assembly in Medellín, Colombia on 14 September 2015;

Recognizing the AU framework related to air transport and tourism, including:

- a) the *Decision relating to the Implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration concerning the Liberalization of Access to Air Transport Markets in Africa* endorsed at the Thirty-Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, in Lomé, Togo on 12 July 2000;
- b) the *African Civil Aviation Policy (AFCAP)* adopted at the Second Session of the AU Conference of Ministers Responsible for Transport, in Luanda, Angola on 24 November 2011 and endorsed at the Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

of Heads of State and Government of the AU, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 January 2012;

- c) the *Declaration on the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa* (Assembly/AU/Decl.2(XVIII)) adopted at the Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 January 2012, which i) approved the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) as the single policy and strategic framework for the development of infrastructure in Africa and ii) invited the AU Commission to define the modalities of Member States to contribute to the special fund of the New Partnership For Africa's Development (NEPAD) Infrastructure Project preparation facility;
- d) the *Declaration on Boosting Intra-African Trade and the Establishment of a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)* (Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XVIII)) adopted at the Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 January 2012, and the *Agreement Establishing the African CFTA* adopted at the Tenth Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, in Kigali, Rwanda on 21 March 2018;
- e) the *Declaration on the Establishment of a Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM)* (Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XXIV)) adopted at the Twenty-Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 31 January 2015, with the official launch of SAATM on 29 January 2018 by the *Decision* (Assembly/AU/Dec.665(XXX)) at the Thirtieth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 29 January 2018;
- f) the *Declaration and the Plan of Action 2017 – 2019 on Air Transport, PIDA and Tourism* adopted at the First Ordinary Session of the AU Specialized Technical Committee on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIET), in Lomé, Togo on 17 March 2017 and endorsed in Addis Ababa on 1 July 2017 at the Thirty-First Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council through Decision EX.CL/Dec.970(XXXI); and
- g) the *Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment* adopted at the Thirtieth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 29 January 2018, which calls for the adoption, production and issuance of the African Passport;

Bearing in mind:

- a) the *UN General Assembly Resolution 72/212 of 29 January 2018* on strengthening the links between all modes of transport to achieve the SDGs, which calls for “efforts to promote regional and interregional economic integration and cooperation, including by improving the planning of transportation infrastructure and mobility, enhancing connectivity and facilitating trade and investment”; and
- b) the *UN General Assembly Resolution 73/245 of 17 January 2019* on the Promotion of Sustainable Tourism, including Ecotourism, for Poverty Eradication and Environment Protection, which recognizes that “sustainable tourism, including

ecotourism, represents an important driver of sustainable economic growth and decent job creation, that it can have a positive impact on income generation and education, and thus on the fight against poverty and hunger, and that it can contribute directly to achieving the internationally agreed development goals”;

Further recalling:

- a) the *Declaration of the G20 Ministers of Tourism (T20)* adopted at the fourth T20 Meeting, in Merida, Mexico on 16 May 2012, calling for priority to be given to facilitating travel as a means to boost economic growth and create jobs;
- b) the *Luanda Declaration on Tourism and Air Transport Connectivity* adopted at the Regional Seminar on Tourism and Air Connectivity in Africa, in Luanda, Angola on 29 April 2014 in the framework of the 56th UNWTO Regional Commission Meeting for Africa;
- c) the *Marrakesh Declaration on Tourism and Climate Issues in Africa* adopted at the African tourism Ministers meeting on 10 November 2016, at the occasion of the 22nd UN Climate Change Conference (COP 22) in Marrakesh, Morocco;
- d) the *Declaration on the Development of Air Cargo in Africa* adopted at the First ICAO Meeting on Air Cargo Development in Africa, in Lomé, Togo on 7 August 2014, as well as the *Roadmap for the Implementation of the Lomé Declaration and Action Plan* adopted at the Second ICAO Meeting on Air Cargo Development in Africa, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 29 June 2017;
- e) the *Declaration on the Sustainable Development of Air Transport in Africa* adopted at the ICAO Meeting on Sustainable Development of Air Transport in Africa, in Antananarivo, Madagascar on 27 March 2015, as well as the *Statement on the Implementation of the Antananarivo Declaration* adopted at the Second ICAO Meeting on the Sustainable Development of Air Transport in Africa, in Accra, Ghana on 30 March 2017;
- f) the *Windhoek Declaration on Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa* and targets adopted at the Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa, in Windhoek, Namibia on 7 April 2016 and endorsed at the Thirty-First Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council through Decision EX.CL/Dec. 970 (XXXI);
- g) the *Outcome Document of the Special Event on Promoting Air Links between African States and the Diaspora*, Accra, Ghana on 30 March 2017 and the follow-up discussion at the Special Event on the occasion of the ICAO Air Transport Meeting, Georgetown Guyana on 23 November 2018 in the framework of the *AU Declaration of the Global African Diaspora Summit*; and
- h) the *Declaration and Framework for a Plan of Action for Development of Aviation Infrastructure in Africa* adopted at the third ICAO World Aviation Forum, in Abuja, Nigeria on 22 November 2017;

Noting:

- a) the *Cooperation Agreement between the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group and ICAO* which entered into force on 20 August 1984;

- b) the joint UNWTO/ICAO study on Essential Service and Tourism Development Routes (ESTDR) published in 2005;
- c) the *Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation between the AUC and ICAO* which entered into force on 2 April 2008;
- d) the *Memorandum of Cooperation between the AU and ICAO Providing a Framework for Enhanced Cooperation* which entered into force on 27 September 2010;
- e) the *Memorandum of Cooperation between the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and ICAO providing a Framework for Enhanced Cooperation* which entered into force on 27 September 2010;
- f) the *Memorandum of Understanding between the AUC and UNWTO* which entered into force on 15 July 2014;
- g) the *Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) Implementation Arrangements between ICAO and AFCAC* which entered into force on 5 December 2014;
- h) the *Memorandum of Understanding between UNWTO and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), now African Union Development Agency (AUDA)*, which entered into force on 19 April 2016;
- i) the *Memorandum of Understanding between UNWTO and the Economic Community of African Central States (ECACS)* which entered into force on 19 April 2017; and
- j) the *Memorandum of Understanding between ICAO and the NPCA-AUDA* which entered into force on 8 May 2018;

Recognizing challenges facing African States, inter alia, that:

- a) while the African aviation market has the most potential for growth out of all global regions with a large and increasing population, this potential has not yet been fully translated into strong and uniform air traffic growth within the continent;
- b) despite the synergies, there are inconsistencies between tourism and aviation policies due to the difficulties of States in balancing the interests of their air transport industry and the optimum development of their tourism and travel industry;
- c) the development of tourism and air transport in Africa is hampered by negative perceptions and misconceptions of Africa, which are deleterious to the African States' ability to attract tourists and its overall potential as a tourism region, and changing such negative perceptions involves a long process;
- d) some African States, especially Least Developing Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), are too small or remote to achieve structural transformation for economic development;
- e) the uncertainty about continuation of air services has an adverse effect on a tourism and travel industry's inward investment and the opportunity for inbound tourism, and thus the actual loss of a service could have a much greater cost;

- f) a well balanced mix of domestic, intraregional and international tourism is important to ensure that tourism development is resilient towards negative events, whether man-made or natural disasters;
- g) it remains difficult for African States and aviation and tourism stakeholders to access funds and/or ensure financing for the modernization and expansion of their infrastructure;
- h) skills shortages are posing a considerable short-term obstacle to growth, with a lack of adequate aviation, tourism and travel professionals; and
- i) while significant visa facilitation improvements took place over the past decade, visa facilitation still needs to be a priority area for African countries by improving visa policies for citizens of the continent and to the world;

Declare the following in the framework of the Declaration and the Plan of Action 2017 – 2019 on Air Transport, PIDA and Tourism adopted at the First Ordinary Session of the AU STC-TTIET:

Reaffirm the need to:

- a) support the realization of the *AU Agenda 2063* and the *UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, especially its SDGs 8 and 9, in line with the *AU–UN Framework for the Implementation*;
- b) mainstream and reflect the priorities of the tourism and aviation sectors in States’ economic development planning so that tourism and aviation can be used as an effective economic development driver;
- c) establish good governance, i.e. the institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks in which air transport and tourism are designed, implemented and managed;
- d) build a strong “Brand Africa” in an increasingly competitive marketplace and a constantly changing business environment to unlock the natural and cultural tourism potential and generate sufficient air traffic demand;
- e) further liberalize intra-Africa and intercontinental air transport services especially through the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision and SAATM;
- f) enable exploration of innovative funding and financing systems to develop quality aviation and tourism infrastructure;
- g) enhance and ensure the availability of human capacity with the appropriate technical skills in the tourism and aviation sectors;
- h) maximize the efficiency of border clearance formalities while strengthening aviation safety, security and the resilience of tourism development; and
- i) accelerate the regional integration and facilitate the movement of people by air and goods in the African continent;

Urge African States in cooperation and coordination with the AUC, African Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the AFCAC, the NPCA, the AfDB, private sector, international partners and other stakeholders to:

- a) promote cooperation and compatible decision-making among transport authorities, tourism authorities and other ministries in charge of related portfolios, including finance, economic planning, energy, environment, and trade;
- b) consolidate planning and development efforts for aviation, tourism and trade infrastructure, whenever possible, while harmonizing regulatory frameworks and balancing the benefits of these economic sectors;
- c) pursue a destination management strategy based on a “smart product mix”, i.e. the establishment of a good integration between tourism and travel, aviation and other service and commodity sectors, to break a vicious circle of economic and logistical disadvantages and enhance structural transformation;
- d) institutionalize SAATM at the State level by developing necessary domestic legal and regulatory framework to fully implement it;
- e) align and integrate major aviation and tourism infrastructure projects with national and/or regional development plans and budgets, the PIDA Priority Action Plan (PAP) for 2020 – 2030, the AU infrastructure development agenda, as well as forging-African economic cooperation and international assistance platforms such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC);
- f) include and prioritize capacity building projects for trade within the framework of the *MoveAfrica* initiative launched by the NPCA and using and contributing to the HRDF;
- g) adopt the visa openness solutions as part of a policy reforms for free movement of people across Africa, through the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme (TRIP) Strategy and the maximum use of information and communication technologies in improving visa procedures; and
- h) harmonize domestic laws, policies and procedures to accommodate the issue and use of African Passport;

Encourage African States to:

- a) take pragmatic measures to build a transparent, stable and predictable investment climate to support quality infrastructure development related to aviation and tourism, for example, by engaging multi-stakeholders, diversifying funding sources, using domestic funds and increasing the participation of the private sector, including through private investment, business reform, private finance initiatives, public-private partnerships and various incentive schemes;
- b) provide necessary incentives, environment and support for the private sector for its effective participation in African tourism and aviation development;

- c) assure certain air services of a public service nature, such as lifeline provision for remote and peripheral destinations, and provide support for the development of international routes linking tourism source markets with LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS using the “essential air service and essential tourism development route” concept developed by ICAO and UNWTO;
- d) share and exchange knowledge, experience and best practices with appropriate data and statistics, including among themselves (South-South cooperation) in order to benefit from regional experiences;
- e) demonstrate and promote the socio-economic benefits of tourism and aviation, and foster an informed and engaged public as a crucial partner through public awareness campaigns and education programmes to raise business confidence and obtain buy-in from the wider audiences;
- f) draw up a marketing and promotion strategy to support the tourism product developments in conjunction with air transport services, and highlight what Africa can give to the world which the rest of the world does not have; and
- g) promote better air connectivity for more efficient use of resources with the aim of contributing to the attainment of the SDGs and beyond.

Call on ICAO, the UNWTO, the AUC, the African RECs, the AFCAC, the NPCA the AfDB, international assistance partners, donor communities, as well as financial institutions, consistent with their respective mandates, to provide technical expertise, resources and support for the implementation of the above actions;

We hereby extend our sincere gratitude to our host, Cabo Verde, for its warm hospitality and support for the organization of this first ICAO/UNWTO Ministerial Conference for Tourism and Air Transport in Africa, as well as for its contribution to advancing the agenda of tourism and air transport for development in Africa.

Done and adopted in Santa Maria, Sal Island, Cabo Verde on this 29th day of March 2019.