



International Civil Aviation Organization

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ASSEMBLY — 37TH SESSION

PLENARY

Agenda Item 2: Statements by delegations of Contracting States and of Observers

STATEMENT PRESENTED BY SWAZILAND

STATEMENT BY MINISTER HON. N. DLAMINI ON BEHALF OF SWAZILAND GOVERNMENT TO THE ICAO ASSEMBLY

1. It gives me honour and pleasure to present this paper to the 37th Assembly. My appreciation goes towards you for affording me and my delegation this opportunity. In addition, I would also like to congratulate you for your election as the President of the Assembly.
2. The Kingdom of Swaziland as a member state of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) successfully stood for election into the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). We would like to thank all those States who supported us during the elections and we take the opportunity to congratulate all States that won the elections. Swaziland will also represent SADC States in the same way as has been successfully done by the other individual States in the region, the last one being Namibia who did so well.
3. Swaziland is a land-locked country with an area of 17,363 square kilometres. It shares land borders with other SADC members, namely, the Republic of South Africa on the southeast, south west and north; and Mozambique on the east. It is a compact size with a minimum distance of 190km from north to south and 135 km from east to west. The terrain is mostly mountainous and hilly with some moderately sloping plains.
4. There is currently one international airport with a 2,600 x 45m runway located in an area where the terrain has resulted in the glide slope to the instrument runway being a steep 3.4 degrees. Government consequently decided to construct a new international airport with a 3,600 x 45m runway at an area where there are no restrictions. The construction of the new category 1 airport that will accommodate Code E aircraft up to the Boeing 747-400 is expected to be complete by December 2010 and fully operational by March 2011. Swaziland has intensified its marketing drive to attract airlines to operate at the new airport. ICAO's and all delegations' contribution in this effort is warmly welcome.
5. Swaziland has been a member of ICAO since ratifying the Convention on International Civil Aviation in 1973. The Kingdom is committed to the objectives and aspirations of ICAO in the discharge of its obligations. Admittedly, ICAO's Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) identified many deficiencies in Swaziland's civil aviation.

6. The country is making good progress in this regard. Government assented to and approved the Civil Aviation Act No. 10 of 2009 which entered into force on the 7th December 2009, coinciding with the “Aviation Day”. Through this Act, Government established a semi-autonomous Civil Aviation Authority – the Swaziland Civil Aviation Authority (SWACAA). The SWACAA board was appointed on the 14th December 2009 together with the Director General and the Finance Director.

7. The CAA Act No. 10 addressed the first critical elements of the Audit, namely primary legislation. The regulations (secondary legislation) have been drafted and will shortly be tabled to parliament as per Swaziland’s Constitution.

8. The course of action being followed is also towards satisfying the European’s requirements bearing in mind that they banned airlines registered in Swaziland due to the deficiencies. The initial ban involved more than twenty registered air companies. These were initially narrowed to six after cancellations. In December 2009, the EU was given copies of Certificate of Cancellation of Air Operating Certificate’s (OAC’s) related to five of these. We will continue to work hard so as to ensure that the ban is finally lifted and hope that ICAO will assist us.

9. Activities currently taking place are: training of Government Safety Inspectors at ATNS and training on Human Factors in Aviation; ICAO ESAF office advised that we adopt the ICAO compliant aviation regulations developed and implemented in the Eastern Africa Community – Our Legal Advisor and the drafting officer from Attorney General’s chambers will be proceeding to Uganda with a view of bringing back copies of the whole 18 Annexes before the end of October. The documentation will include regulations, implementing standards and inspectors manuals. This will address Critical Area No. 5 of the State Safety System. All in all Areas 1 – Legislation; 2 – Regulations; 3 – Structure; 4 - HR and training; 5 – Technical guidance documentation should 90% addressed by December 2010. The implementation of Critical Areas 6 – Certification; 7 – Continuing safety oversight and 8 – Resolving of safety issues will automatically follow from January 2010 onwards.

10. As regards licensing of Sikhuphe International Airports (SIA) and Manzini International Airport (MTS), recruitments have been implemented for AVSEC and ARFFS personnel. Training will be commencing within the next week. Training for Air Traffic Controllers on Radar control are on-going at ATNS. Some more recruitments will be occurring shortly to ensure both SIA and MTS control towers have adequate manpower.

11. Swaziland intends to address the deficiencies related to personnel licensing, aircraft operations and airworthiness, etc through the ICAO-SADC- COSCAP project commenced in Botswana in April 2008. The country will benefit from the project since the programme is designed to assist States in overcoming deficiencies in their aviation systems in order to ensure and enhance safety in air transport. We look forward to the establishment of a Regional Safety organization.

12. Swaziland successfully hosted the African Routes Conference that was held in the Kingdom at the end of May 2010. This is part of the International Conference that is held annually in different countries where representatives of airports and airlines especially, meet to promote their individual services and facilities, among other things. Swaziland will be hosting the annual general meeting of airlines in SADC from the 8-9th October 2010. In November 2010, Swaziland will also be hosting the meeting of Directors General of Civil Aviation of Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa being organized by the two Regional Offices of ICAO.

13. May I take this opportunity to invite you your Excellencies – the President of the Assembly, the President of the Council, Hon. Ministers, and distinguished delegates and participants to the DG's meeting in Swaziland to the official opening of the Airport in or around March 2011. I thank you.

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