



**INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN OFFICE**

Address by the ICAO Eastern and Southern African Regional Director

Mr. Meshesha Belayneh

to the Constitutive Assembly of the

Association of African Aviation Training Organizations (AATO)

(Abuja, Nigeria, 10-12 April 2013)

Alhaji Bukar Goni Aji OON, Head of Service of the Federation, Federal Republic of Nigeria;

Honourable Princess Stella Adaeze Oduah OON, Honourable Minister of Aviation, Federal Republic of Nigeria;

Capt. (Mrs.) Chinyere O. Kalu MFR, Rector / Chief Executive, Nigerian College of Aviation Technology;

Mr. Mam Sait Jallow, ICAO Western and Central Africa Regional Director;

Madam Justina Nyaga, AATO Interim Council, Chairperson;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. I am delighted to join you today for what is undoubtedly a significant milestone in the process of harmonizing aviation training in Africa and the creation of the Association of African Aviation Training Organizations (AATO).
2. I deliver greetings and salutations from the President and Secretary General of ICAO, who are not able to attend this assembly due to prior engagements.
3. Ladies and Gentlemen, this journey began over 5 years ago at the Special Africa-Indian Ocean Regional Air Navigation (AFI-RAN) meeting held in Durban, South Africa, 24 to 29 November 2008.
4. The meeting recommend training Strategies for safety in Africa dubbed recommendation 5/8, I Quote:-
“That,
 - ACIP (now AFI Plan), in cooperation with AFCAC and other stakeholders organize Pan African Training Coordination Conferences that will serve as the framework for closer cooperation and harmonization of training requirements as well as standardization and quality assurance;
 - the First Pan-African Training Coordination Conference form a working group of training experts to define a master plan for harmonization of training in the AFI Region;”
5. Based on the special AFI RAN Recommendation 5/8, a Training Expert Working Group (TWEG) was constituted and three Pan-African

Training Coordination Conferences were held in Niamey, Cairo and Cape Town respectively. During the third Conference the framework was developed for harmonization of aviation training in Africa.

6. In April 2012, the consultative assembly held in Nairobi, reviewed the draft constitution for the establishment of AATO, drafted an organizational structure of AATO and identified an initial list of activities to be undertaken by the association once established.

7. To undertake the above activities, an Interim Council, with the support of ICAO, was appointed with a term of one year with the following Terms of Reference:-
 - Distribute all the documentation among all the potential members,
 - Conduct the formal constitutive assembly leading to the signature of the Constitution by the founding members;
 - Carry out Membership drive;
 - Oversee the establishment of the Secretariat and prepare the Business Plan
 - Facilitate the election of the Council in line with the Constitution.

I am pleased to announce that the Interim Council has achieved and surpassed its mandate.

8. It is our hope that this Constitutive assembly will see the signing of the constitution that will mark the creation of the Association of African Training Organisations.
9. Our pledge is to continue to work with all of you — African States and stakeholders, regulators, industry and international organizations — so that together, we can bridge the gap between the training needs and the current capacities for aviation training in Africa.
10. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the responsibility for improving safety in Africa rests with each and every one of you. Under the leadership of ICAO, we are ready to assist, but solutions must continue to be by Africans, for Africans and I must say that the establishment of the Association of African Aviation Training Organizations is a very positive development. So, congratulations!
11. I now wish you a most productive and stimulating Assembly.

Thank you.