



AFRICAN AIRLINES ASSOCIATION

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AFRAA Media Brief

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AFRAA RESPONDS TO EU BAN OF MOZAMBICAN AIRLINES FROM EUROPEAN AIRSPACE

It is with great disappointment and concern that the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) received the disturbing news that the European Commission has included the Republic of Mozambique and all its airlines in the infamous EU list of banned airlines – the blacklist. Mozambique is the 14th African State to be included in the list and this brings to 26%, the number of African States now on the banned list. The number reaches 15 when counting Madagascar, whose national airline, Air Madagascar, is slapped with a partial ban.

LAM Mozambique Airlines' safety record is impeccable. Since the company was established in 1980; it has not had a single major accident. And since 1989 there have been no accidents of any kind involving LAM Mozambique Airlines aircraft. Major European airlines can make no such claim. For example, according to the Flight Safety Foundation, Air France has had 23 major accidents (involving substantial damage to aircraft, serious or fatal injuries) since 1990, three of them with fatalities, and a total of 348 deaths.

LAM Mozambique Airlines has worked hard and invested significant resources to attain industry best practices on safety which enabled it attain the IATA Safety Audit Certification in 2007 which was renewed in 2009.

However, the airline's impeccable safety record, and dual achievement of the internationally reputed IOSA Certification and ISO 9000 Certification, has not spared it from the EU blanket banning. AFRAA fails to see how such blanket banning contributes to encourage African carriers which strive to achieve industry best practices in safety standards.

The banning of an airline not only prohibits the airline from operating to the EU but also impacts its ticket sales to other destinations including on code shared routes as travel agents and other code share partners in EU are required by regulation at the time of sales or booking to notify passengers that the airline is blacklisted.

Irrespective of what the European Commission public relations exercise of attempting to pass blanket banning as a solution to safety concerns is, it amounts to nothing either than a blunt instrument that constrains the development of a viable African air transport industry in Africa. While the net losers are African carriers, the net beneficiaries are always the EU Community carriers that swiftly step in to fill the

vacuum and take the market share of the banned airlines. Despite the blacklisting of Mozambique, EU carriers will continue to operate with increased frequencies and higher yields to Mozambique and the other States that are the subject of the ban. If the airspace of an African country is unsafe, it is unsafe also to European carriers who continue to fly the African skies for commercial benefit.

African governments, the African Union (AU) and African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) should not allow this state of affairs to continue as the continent's air transport industry is being progressively destroyed. AFRAA calls upon all African stakeholders including governments, the AU, AFCAC, AFRAA to address the serious safety oversight deficiencies and concerns in the States blacklisted and to seriously and meaningfully engage with the EU to establish a mutually acceptable, fair and transparent mechanism to address safety concerns in place of the unilateral blanket banning, which has so far not yielded any meaningful achievement in advancing safety in the continent.

Once again AFRAA' reiterates its call which it made on its 42nd Annual General Assembly Resolutions in November, 2010 which deplored the continued unilateral practice of blacklisting of mainly African States and airlines with no visible benefits in enhancing safety on the continent whilst having a huge negative commercial implications not only on the carriers concerned but on African aviation in general. The AFRAA Assembly Resolution called upon the AU and AFCAC to engage the EU with the view to find a mutually acceptable and agreed approach to jointly addressing safety issues.

Notes for Editors

About AFRAA

The African Airlines Association (AFRAA) is a trade organization of airlines from the member states of the African Union (AU). Founded in Accra, Ghana in April 1968, and today headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. AFRAA's primary purpose is to foster commercial and technical cooperation among African airlines and to represent their common interests. AFRAA membership cuts across the entire continent and includes all the major intercontinental African airlines. The Association members represent 83% of total intercontinental traffic carried by all African airlines.