



AFRICAN AIRLINES ASSOCIATION

Association des Compagnies Aériennes Africaines

SITA: NBOXA8X

Tel: 254 20 2320144/2320148

Fax: 254 20 6001173

P. O. Box 20116 Nairobi 00200 Kenya

Email: afraa@afraa.org

Web: www.afraa.org

AFRAA Media Brief

08 April 2011

GOVERNMENTS SHOULD SUPPORT AFRICAN AIRLINES

Growing competition and the uncontrolled granting of market access in Africa by some governments is putting untold pressure on local airlines, some of which are undercapitalized, poorly resourced and incapable of standing up to the competition. It is against this background that AFRAA welcomes the statement of Mr. James Michel, President of Air Seychelles on March 18, 2011 on the occasion of his visit to the beleaguered Airlines headquarters during which he assured the management and staff of the Airline that, ‘he will not let down the Airline’ and of the committed government’s continued support for Air Seychelles.

Air Seychelles has been one of the successful African airlines over the past several decades. It has made significant contribution to development, tourism and the economy of Seychelles and provided employment opportunities to hundreds of people directly and indirectly. The Airline is a long standing member of AFRAA and has contributed significantly to air transport development work in Africa.

It will be a major blow to the African air transport industry in general and Seychelles in particular if the airline is to go down. The role that foreign international carriers can play in increasing tourist travel in a small island country such as Seychelles is undeniable, but one needs to critically consider the long term adverse effect that the loss of home based airlines will have not only on tourism but the whole of the country due to the knock on effect.

Examples abound in the continent where governments either under pressure from donors and development partners or tempted by the immediate and short term, perceived or real possibilities of increased traffic, allow a situation which results in the demise of the country’s airline. Such a situation includes the sudden and uncontrolled opening up of market access without adequate preparation of the local airline which puts the home based airlines at a competitive disadvantage from the bigger and stronger international carriers leading to financial losses and to the eventual collapse of the indigenous airline. These countries have found to their regret that it is near impossible to have a strategy for growth in tourism and trade relying on foreign carriers alone without a home based airline. Experience has also demonstrated that attempts to re-establish a

new airline or resurrect the old one after it has been let to go down has proven to be more costly and almost impossible.

The loss of an airline has a knock-on effect and with long term damage to growth prospects of an African country under the current economic reality. AFRAA therefore calls on all stakeholders, the government, the management Board and employees of Air Seychelles to work together to ensure that the airline is once again profitable and has sustainable growth. AFRAA strongly advocates closer cooperation among African carriers to address some of the major challenges they face and together ensure growth and sustainability.

Notes to the Editor

About AFRAA

The African Airlines Association (AFRAA), is a trade association of airlines from African states. Founded in Accra, Ghana, in April, 1968, and headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, the primary purposes of AFRAA are to foster commercial and technical co-operation among African airlines and to represent their common interests.

AFRAA membership cuts across the entire continent and includes all the major intercontinental African operators. The Association members represent 83% of total international traffic carried by African airlines.