ASC News!

"Winning Together"

Full Report - ASC 2019

The 8th Aviation Stakeholder’s Convention concludes on a high note in Mauritius

In his valedictory speech, AFRAA Secretary General Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé celebrated the success of the 8th Aviation stakeholders’ convention.

He said: “I have no doubt that during these two days we learned a lot about the aviation industry in Africa and have had various opportunities to share our best practices and develop our business. Let us work together, suppliers and consumers of services to take advantage of the opportunities available on the African continent.

We were able to explore the areas we can work in partnerships. The challenge of winning together is now to move forward and implement new ideas to sustain the development of African aviation through collaboration.”

He expressed his sincere gratitude to the government and people of Mauritius for their hospitality and warm welcome to the delegates of the ASC and commended the amazing work of the CEO of Air Mauritius and his dedicated team.

He appreciated in a special way the event sponsors: the Economic Development Board Mauritius (EDB), Bombardier, Rolls Royce, Airports of Maurius (AML), ATNS Air Traffic and Navigation services, Embraer, Jackson Square Aviation, LLC, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, Rogers Aviation, Airbus, Kenya Civil Aviation Authority, Amanzio, Sabre, Omnicane and Air Lease Corporation.

The 9th edition of the ASC

The 8th AFRAA Stakeholders’ Convention has lived up to expectations. Yet again this platform has proved a most valuable opportunity for dialogue, for sharing as well as for building and consolidating partnerships across the industry value chain.

Our shared views on the potential of African aviation and the need to foster an aviation friendly environment for the continent has been abundantly explored and has reached a broader audience with the echoes of the convention in the press and various media. This will be instrumental in sensitizing stakeholders about the crucial issues of aviation in Africa.

Once again, Air Mauritius wishes to thank AFRAA for the opportunity to co-host the 8th Stakeholders’ Convention. We wish to join AFRAA in thanking all delegates for their participation, the organizing teams that have made this event a success and our sponsors and the various government authorities for their valued support.

We wish AFRAA well in the organization of future events and success in fulfilling its crucial role as an instrument of unity and development for African aviation.

Air Mauritius closing remarks

In his closing remarks, he announced that the 9th edition of the Aviation stakeholders’ convention will be held in Ethiopia on behalf of Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mr. Tewolde Gebremariam, Mr. Abdérahmane Berthé - Regional Manager South Africa on behalf of all stakeholders to Ethiopia in 2020 for the 9th edition of Aviation Stakeholders Convention.

CEO keynote interview - Mr. Somaskaran Appavou, CEO - Air Mauritius

"Every country should start from the customer. What is their propensity to travel? In different countries, it will be different. The growth and development of the country will determine the propensity to travel. Also what a country is offering. The more you offer, the more people you will attract.

We are going to Europe but is now moving towards China and India. People traveling from China tend to be more price sensitive. They want to travel more frequency in order to bring more people from China. We are in the world of data and we need to find ways to better serve our data. We want to make sure that we are moving towards better serving our customers but also make operations cheaper.”

We experienced VRAR drop in terms of customer complaints regarding online booking.

"In terms of customer experience technology, the aviation industry is very much market driven. We are using it to help customers get into the airline industry. My advice to others is that you should have a strong technology brand. As you face important government decisions, the technology is just a part of the decision-making. We have to be more strategic in order to bring more people from China. It’s important to have a strong position in China and the African continent. This is a very strategic move for us to start flights to China.”
The 8th Aviation Stakeholders Convention Opening Ceremony

The event kicked off in Blouberg, Mauritius, with a high-profile opening ceremony. Bringing together different players in the aviation industry across the globe, the meeting is being held under the theme of “Winning Together,” and is designed to enable industry players to share views on the immense potential of the African aviation growth through partnerships.

The guest of honour representing the government of Mauritius, His Excellency Colonel Darrade, the Deputy Prime Minister of Mauritius officially opened the event. He noted that Africa must do more to increase its connectivity with the world. “We must work together so we will fall together but of course we want to learn together. Therefore, the only solution is to work together. We want to encourage the reduction of barriers between African states, using approaches that are into account the needs of each country,” said 

Speaking during the opening ceremony, AFRAA Secretary General Mr. Abdonamosse (Bartholomew) noted that air traffic in Africa is forecast to double in every 15 years. He added that the need for the operators must be in line with the growing demand and opportunities for Airlines, Aircrafts, Service Providers, manufacturers, and maintenance organizations, and equipment manufacturers to develop their businesses. He further noted that African governments need to put up aviation developments as a priority in their policies to reduce industry costs and to benefit users of aviation services.

Aviation in Africa is experiencing an unprecedented growth but to enable an even bigger driller of progress across the continent, we must work together and with governments. 

Mr. Samuel Aupaye, Chief Executive Officer of Air Mauritius said “Africa is a continent of boundless opportunities. With a population of 1.2 billion, double digit growth rates in many countries and a fast expanding middle class, our continent has become the new promised land for the development of travel and tourism. Industry partners in Africa will have to take these emerging opportunities and overcome challenges together. This is how we can leverage each other’s strengths and leapfrog the many barriers that no single player can overcome alone.” The convener is bringing together key leaders and experts of the aviation industry from around the world who will share their experiences and expertise to grow the industry.

Matching Capacity & Demand - Improving load factors, yields and profitability by AFRAA

Mr. Abdonamosse, the Executive Director General, Legal & Industry Affairs - AFRAA

Together with AFRAA initiatives, let us make sure that we address this disparity between African airlines and other airlines in terms of intercontinental traffic distribution on a larger scale.

Mr. Itoua took the floor to share strategic insights on the theme issue of the Air financing. There is a lack of transparency of some of the challenges in the industry.

"The most important thing we look at when lending money to African airlines is the balance sheet. As lenders, our principal concerns are credit risk, security, economic value, enforceability and timeliness.”

"Together with the AFRAA initiatives, let us make sure that we address this disparity between African airlines and other airlines in terms of intercontinental traffic distribution, he observed.

A former aviation regulator, an ASBA group, our recommendation would be lending as the best option for the African airlines at the present moment.”

Mr. John Nyaaba, Vice President - Structural Assurance

The single African Air Transport Market: What’s new

Mr. Abdonamosse, Regional Director, Advocacy and Strategic Relations - AFRAA

The African Air Transport Market (SATMM) seeks to create a single unified air transport market in Africa as one of enhancing the continent’s economic integration Agenda. With the liberalization of African skies for African carriers, the African skies was once plagued with greater height that was going to increase African’s share to the common goal of a liberal and prosperous continent. During the presentation, Mr. Abdonamosse, Advocacy, Regulator, Director, Advocacy and Strategic Relations - AFRAA indicated that the participants that should benefit from travel in Africa to be liberalized and to increase African’s share to the common goal of a liberal and prosperous continent. Furthermore, he pointed out that freedom for Africa means to free Africa aviation market so that it can deliver on its promise of bringing the business of freedom.
Mauritius has the potential of becoming the Cargo-Hub between Asia and Africa due to its geographical location and dual-membership of COMESA/SADC. The key challenges for African Air Cargo are high host, regulations, connectivity, infrastructure and foreign carriers.

SAATM will eliminate the need for separate bilateral air service agreements (BASAs) between individual carriers. SAATM will be able to deliver on its promise if airlines actually cooperate with one another and maximise their opportunities.

Aviation has the potential to make an important contribution to economic growth and development within African.

Mr. Hussein Dabbas, General Manager Special Projects- Embraer, recommended, among other key insights, that AFRAA should consider the creation an African alliance where African carriers can collaborate among themselves, coordinate their schedules, frequent flier programmes, among other collaborations.

Driving cross-border cooperation and intra-African connectivity through alliances and partnerships
The need for AFRAA members to train 800 new professionals in the next 5 years in Flight, ground, and maintenance operations, fleet planning, and fuel planning, An additional 1200 professionals in leadership, management and Commercial revenue management.

Addressing aviation skills gap in Africa for economic growth

Insufficient training capacity and an exodus of skilled manpower lead a list of factors that have resulted in a shortage of aviation professionals in Africa. Africa is facing a worsening shortage of aviation professionals with demand outstripping supply for skills needed to keep the commercial fleet flying safely.

AFRAA's Director of Technical & Operations Mr. Gaoussou Konate presented to the delegates some great pointers of the current state of the industry stating that Airline operations costs are high in Africa due to excessive costs for fuel, high cost of maintenance and excessive taxes, all these factors contributing to the non profitability of the Airline industry.

Mr. Konate also updated the delegates on a recent survey conducted by AFRAA on the skills gaps in the industry stating that there exists a clear skills gap in professional areas to improve operational efficiencies, increase load factors, revenues and market share. He further stated that the outcome of the survey suggested the following:

- Regionally focused solutions
- Addressing safety requirements
- Aligning to the best cost effective through exploiting economies of scale, AFRIAMSs do not need to invest in these technologies to the same extent.
- Scalable and flexible enough to adapt to future growth and change in the aviation environment.
- Solutions that are being managed and operated in Africa for Africa.

Among other insights, Mr. Achmed stated that Computer Aided Designs (A-CAD) technology is an enormous improvement on old aviation design as it allows designers to visualize situations in three-dimensionally throughout the design process.

He further explained: "AFRAA's Director of Technical & Operations Mr. Gaoussou Konate presented to the delegates some great pointers of the current state of the industry stating that Airline operations costs are high in Africa due to excessive costs for fuel, high cost of maintenance and excessive taxes, all these factors contributing to the non profitability of the Airline industry. Mr. Konate also updated the delegates on a recent survey conducted by AFRAA on the skills gaps in the industry stating that there exists a clear skills gap in professional areas to improve operational efficiencies, increase load factors, revenues and market share. He further stated that the outcome of the survey suggested the following:"
Aviation taxes and charges in Africa: Implementing cost-efficient structures for all players

According to Mr. Saad Aslam, building cyber security resilience would involve identifying the cyber threat, protection of the transport industry, and having an actionable plan to respond to cyber attacks.

“According to Muhammad Saad Aslam, SITA Cyber Security Lead – MEIA, some of the aviation threat actors include cyber criminals, terrorist organisations and inside threats that are keen on benefiting financially by interfering with the systems, professional revenge and inside threats for personal gains. Cyber-attackers are becoming more sophisticated in the ways they attack aviation systems and companies in the aviation market are leaving no stone unturned to make their systems comprehensively secured to ensure smooth operations and high-quality services to their consumers. Cyber-security is becoming a key enabler for safety, which is paramount in the aviation context. As the burgeoning global aviation industry becomes more dependent on information technology (IT) solutions and digital technologies to meet the continuously rising consumer base and changes in consumer preferences, cyber security has become a serious and urgent concern.

The problem is that Africa is a melting pot of jet fuel yet import nearly 100% of its jet fuel. Indeed, Africa has the lowest GDP in the world which means our economy is low and where there is no economy there is no reason to fly. To develop routes and traffic, there is need to focus on the economy of Africa and the attractiveness of African states. The African aviation industry is at a disadvantage compared to other regions in the world. The problem is that Africa is a melting pot of jet fuel yet import nearly 100% of its jet fuel.

A delegate in the assembly indicated “The Government has to decide if they want to increase trade and plan infrastructure development accordingly. Sometimes the size of the airport matters, as it can determine how governments calibrate taxes and financing for their projects.”

Mr. Saad Aslam pointed out that technology vectors that aid in cyber crime are among others; digital emerging technology, software (IT) solutions and digital technologies to meet the continuously rising consumer base and changes in consumer preferences, cyber security has become a serious and urgent concern. Cyber-attackers are becoming more sophisticated in the ways they attack aviation systems and companies in the aviation market are leaving no stone unturned to make their systems comprehensively secured to ensure smooth operations and high-quality services to their consumers. Cyber-security is becoming a key enabler for safety, which is paramount in the aviation context. As the burgeoning global aviation industry becomes more dependent on information technology (IT) solutions and digital technologies to meet the continuously rising consumer base and changes in consumer preferences, cyber security has become a serious and urgent concern. Cyber-attackers are becoming more sophisticated in the ways they attack aviation systems and companies in the aviation market are leaving no stone unturned to make their systems comprehensively secured to ensure smooth operations and high-quality services to their consumers. Cyber-security is becoming a key enabler for safety, which is paramount in the aviation context.

He categorised the threat vectors into three: technology, people and processes.

Astral Aviation Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Sanjeev Gadhia sharing his views on this big challenge said: “African airline companies can be the highest cost taxiing, handling and queuing class in the world. The cost of jet fuel is coming down globally, but not in African countries, mainly because of the tax component. Taxes on airport services such as ground handling are a major constraint, as well as royalties charged for operating an airline, particularly in countries without national carriers. As a result of shortage of expertise and lack of cyber awareness among the people working in the airlines, cyber-attacks are becoming more frequent. Airlines in Africa are working hard to mitigate these threats, but there are few specialists in the region”.

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Mr. Saad Aslam emphasized that Africa’s aviators are left at the mercy of fuel invoices which directly affect the cost of services that airlines provide. He stated that “African airlines have been working hard to mitigate these threats, but there are few specialists in the region”. Mr. Saad pointed out that technology vectors that aid in cyber crime are among others; digital emerging technology, software (IT) solutions and digital technologies to meet the continuously rising consumer base and changes in consumer preferences, cyber security has become a serious and urgent concern. Cyber-attackers are becoming more sophisticated in the ways they attack aviation systems and companies in the aviation market are leaving no stone unturned to make their systems comprehensively secured to ensure smooth operations and high-quality services to their consumers. Cyber-security is becoming a key enabler for safety, which is paramount in the aviation context.

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in an increasingly digitized industry

This new paradigm? The last panel session of the forum dived into this interesting topic looking at the “Opportunities and challenges in an increasingly digitized industry.”

Chairperson of the Executive Committee of AFRAA.

Mauritius on 12 May 2019. The meeting was kindly hosted by Air Maurius and chaired by Ms. Yvonne Makolo, CEO of RwandAir.

The Executive Committee of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) held its 178th meeting at the Ravenala Attitude Hotel, Mauritius on 12 May 2019. The meeting was kindly hosted by Air Maurius and chaired by Ms. Yvonne Makolo, CEO of RwandAir.

Chairperson of the Executive Committee of AFRAA.

The Executive Committee reviewed the application for membership of Safarilink Aviation Limited and Air Djibouti.

The 11th meeting of the Route Network Committee (RNCC) was held on the 12th May 2019 at the Ravenala Attitude Hotel in Mauritius.

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The Executive Committee reviewed and approved the application of Civic Petroleum Limited and Hit Computer Service. The AFRAA Partnership programme is a medium through which companies in the aviation industry collaborate with AFRAA to cater to the needs of African airlines and support their growth.

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