



Republic of Zambia

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

**STATEMENT BY H.E. BRIAN MUSHIMBA MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND
COMMUNICATION, REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA AND GLOBAL CHAIR OF THE GROUP
OF LLDCS**

**“Delivered at the side event on
“Aviation partnerships for sustainable development”**

Sunday, 27th November, 09:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Side-Event room

ASHGABAT, TURKMENISTAN

Excellences

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am honoured to participate in this side event on “Aviation partnerships for sustainable development” as chair of the group Land Locked Developing Countries and also share Zambia’s experiences within the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Even before we commence discussion on this important matter, allow me to state that the development of aviation infrastructure and investment required for the aviation sector needs international and regional support. This area for instance is not well covered by the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). The PIDA initiative aims to promote socio-economic development and poverty reduction in Africa through improved access to integrated regional and continental infrastructure networks and services.

Ladies and Gentlemen

There are over 50 projects under PIDA. Of these projects the civil aviation component has only three projects related to liberalization of air transport, capacity building and the development of airports and air navigation facilities on the continent. I feel we should do more to address this situation if we are to promote aviation transport on the continent.

Ladies and Gentlemen

You may wish to note that the “African Civil Aviation Policy (AFCAP)” adopted by the Second Conference of the African Union (AU) Ministers of Transport in Luanda, Angola, on 25th November, 2011 cannot be fully implemented due to inadequate sustainable funding for aviation infrastructure, training and capacity building, as well as regulatory oversight capabilities by respective State Parties, as such a comprehensive continental initiative needs to be put in place to address and reverse this unfortunate situation and thereby promote the growth of aviation transport on the continent.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In order to improve air transport connectivity for LLDCs in Africa, the following measures should be considered:

- (a) Ensuring the full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration in line with the African Union Agenda 2063 as a prerequisite to the African integration of travel and trade facilitation;
- (b) Increase of soft infrastructure investment for capacity building because skills shortages are posing a considerable short-term obstacle to growth, with a lack of adequately trained pilots, air traffic controllers, engineers and other technical staff;
- (c) Use of the existing regional frameworks (such as COMESA and SADC); and

- (d) Use of various official platforms and funding windows available for infrastructure development, such as Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and India–Africa Forum Summit (IAFS), for aviation sector

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me provide a country perspective by sharing with you the obtaining situation for aviation transport in my own country. The Republic of Zambia is a land linked country in southern Africa, neighboring Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Zambia has a land mass of 753,000km² (291,000 m²) with a population of 16 Million people. Zambia's central geographic position in the region seats it at a cross section (hub) for more than seven trade routes or trade corridors.

Going into the future, the country's policy thrust is to position the country as an intermodal transport HUB for all modes, thus taking advantage of our central geographical position.

In order to spur growth of the transport sector and aviation transport in particular, in a methodical fashion, Zambia has recently completed the revision of its National Transport Policy and is currently finalizing the National Transport Master Plan therefrom. The two documents when finally concluded shall provide the blue print and spearhead the transformation of the country's transport sector into a regional modal HUB.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Republic of Zambia has enacted the Aviation Act No. 5 of 2016, which has provided a solid and up-to-date legal basis for the aviation

sector to grow. However, work still remains to review the existing operating and technical regulations and develop new ones where necessary in compliance with the provisions of ICAO standards and recommended practices. The institutional framework has largely been met in compliance with international standards. The Civil Aviation Act which provides for the establishment of; the National Civil Aviation Security Committee (NCASC), the, Aircraft Accident Investigation Board (AAIB), and the Transport Health Board is taking effect. These institutions are in the process of being established and there is need to accelerate their establishment.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Zambia has also made significant progress in implementing international standards and recommended practices, with about 62% effective level of implementation achieved at present. However, further improvement of safety and security standards is required and has been prioritized.

Further, Zambia has made substantial efforts to upgrade its civil aviation personnel at all levels. However, much effort is still required to satisfy the sector demand. CAA, the Department of Transport and other private and public institutions are not to full functional capacity. Specific priority for the CAA is to become financially self-sufficient and my Government has since passed into law an Act to enable the CAA to collect Charges and become financially sustainable. Due to lack of investment, ZASTI is currently unable to secure international accreditation as a training center. However, this situation will change soon as Government has decided invest considerable resources into ZASTI and thus reposition the institution to become the first choice aviation training facility in the region and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Aviation Infrastructure

Zambia has four (4) international airports, which are highly under-utilized resulting in low revenue to operation cost ratio. However, at present, there is every indication that the aviation activity in Zambia is growing steadily. There are further seven (7) domestic airports and 43 district aerodromes most of which are in a poor state of maintenance.

Realizing the latent growth potential for the sector, Government has in the last five years invested over USD\$ 1,700,000 in infrastructure development and rehabilitation. Works are currently on-going to modernize these facilities and bring them to world-class standard and thus reposition the country into an aviation HUB for the region and beyond.

Air Transport Services

Zambia is a signatory to the Yamoussoukro Decision (YD) signed by 44 member states of the African Union in 1988. YD aspires to create a liberalized, air transport market across Africa, superseding bilateral agreements. However, the YD dictates have only been minimally and partially implemented by respective countries. Zambia is committed to full implementation of the YD in order to facilitate and ease seamless domestic travel and trade. Arising from this Zambia has granted 5th freedom rights to a number of airlines who are currently servicing the Zambian aviation market. Although much effort is being made particularly in upgrading the international airports in Zambia (supply driven), a comprehensive and coordinated plan for attracting new traffic, passengers and carriers (demand driven) seems to be absent. Such a coordinated plan requires new partnerships and engaging possible new

business and concepts, identifying demand and possibilities to obtain customer preference.

Needless to say, both domestic and international air fares in Zambia are comparatively high, because competition is lacking and utilization rates are low. As fares have a high relation to aviation activity, this seriously reduces frequencies, destinations and -in general- connectivity by air. In Zambia Government wishes to address this situation by establishing a National Airline and we are considering all options (including partnering with the private sector) available to ensure the realization of the airline project.

In concluding, let me state that we need to do more as national states to provide for aviation sector in our national development budget in order to spur growth of our transport systems even as we leverage on outside assistance.

I thank you.