AFRAA Secretary General meets Aviation Stakeholders in Tunisia ahead of AFRAA’s 6th Aviation Convention

The Minister of Transport of the Republic of Tunisia, Honourable Anis Ghedira, welcomed the Secretary General to Tunis where they discussed various aviation priorities for Tunisia, the progress on the establishment of the single African air transport market and other developments in the region. AFRAA Secretary General, Dr. Elijah Chingosho was in Tunis in March 2017 where he visited various stakeholders ahead of the 6th Aviation Stakeholders Convention scheduled to take place from 07-09 May 2017 at the Medina Mediterranea in Yasmine Hammamet - Tunisia.

The Convention is being organized with the view to fostering dialogue, building sustainable networks in supply chain management, creating a competitive environment for aviation business in the continent.

Honourable Ghedira pledged the full support of the Ministry of Transport of Tunisia in the staging of the Convention noting the importance of the event to Tunisair and to the country at large.

AFRAA and Sabre sign MoU to help improve African carriers’ competitiveness

AFRAA has partnered with Sabre Consulting, one of its partners, to conduct a study on customer satisfaction and loyalty among AFRAA member airline passengers. The Project will help member airlines understand passengers’ views on the importance and satisfaction level of different attributes frequently associated with airlines. The findings of this study will provide information on how AFRAA member airlines can provide better service and more tailored offerings for their passengers.

At least ten carriers will take part in Sabre’s consulting programme – including Rwandair, South African Airways and Royal Air Maroc. Airlines taking part in Sabre’s new NPS study will undergo a comprehensive survey that will seek to provide them with a greater understanding of their customers’ pain points and experiences, as well as the desires and motivation of the African air traveler. They will then receive top-line recommendations on how to use technology to streamline their operations, decrease costs and improve revenue through cutting-edge technology.

The results of the NPS study will be presented to participating carriers at AFRAA’s 6th Stakeholders Convention in Tunisia from 7-9 May 2017.
RwandAir to start flights to London Gatwick Airport in May 2017

RwandAir announced that it will commence three weekly flights to London Gatwick International Airport, in the United Kingdom effective May, 2017.

London, one of the world’s leading financial centers becomes RwandAir’s first European and second long haul route. The destination will be served by the newly acquired Airbus A330 fleet.

Mr. John Mirenge, the Chief Executive Officer of RwandAir said: “We are delighted to enable new and seamless connections between London and the whole of our network offering our esteemed customers a differentiated product in terms of comfort, good customer services and affordability.”

RwandAir has already announced that flights to Mumbai, India and Harare, Zimbabwe will commence in the first week of April 2017. London, will be RwandAir’s twenty second (22) destinations. Source: RwandAir

KENYA AIRWAYS

Kenya Airways budget airline seeks licenses to 11 African countries

Kenya Airways’s low-cost airline - Jambojet - applied for licenses to fly to destinations in 11 African countries in renewed efforts to expand operations beyond the country.

Jambojet CEO Mr. Willem Hondius in an interview said: “For us this is the next step because we have established ourselves in Kenya already”.

Jambojet wants to fly to Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and serve two destinations in Malawi—Blantyre and Lilongwe. The airline is also seeking approvals to fly to Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Jambojet’s parent company Kenya Airways already serves most of these destinations. Mr Hondius said in the interview that it had not yet been decided whether the two airlines would reach a code-sharing agreement to serve these routes.

Jambojet is also seeking to expand its domestic routes. The airline currently serves six destinations from its Nairobi hub — Eldoret, Kisumu, Lamu, Malindi, Mombasa and Ukunda. The airline wants to add Vipingo, Wajir and Garissa to its network. Jambojet is hoping to fly to some of these new routes in the second half of the year. The new routes, Mr Hondius said, will require an expansion of its fleet of aircraft.

Jambojet has also ordered new aircraft to replace an older plane on its fleet. The company has also said that it will buy one more plane by August 2017. The airline operates two Q400s and two Boeing 737s.

Jambojet was launched in April 2014. In its second year of operation, the company reported a profit of Ksh126 million ($1.26 million) after recording a loss of Ksh287 million ($2.9 million) in 2015. The carrier recently indicated that it plans to diversify revenue streams beyond passenger ticket sales. Source: theeastafrican.co.ke

EGYPTAIR AND ETIHAD AIRWAYS SIGN CODESHARE PARTNERSHIP

EgyptAir and Etihad Airways, announced a new codeshare partnership to be introduced in phases from March 2017.

Under the initial phase of the agreement, Etihad Airways will place its ‘EY’ code on EgyptAir operated flights between Abu Dhabi and Cairo, while EgyptAir will place its ‘MS’ code on Etihad Airways flights between the two capital cities.

During the second phase, Etihad Airways will gain access to major cities across Africa on flights operated by EgyptAir via its Cairo hub. In turn, EgyptAir will be able to access key routes to Australia and the Far East served by Etihad Airways from its Abu Dhabi operational hub. The third phase will see the EY code placed on domestic flights across Egypt.

Captain Sherif Ezziat, Chairman and Managing Director of EgyptAir Airlines said: “EgyptAir is always keen on enhancing its network through partnering with strong airlines. Thus, we are delighted to be partnering with Etihad Airways. The agreement will open new skies to our customers and we look forward to working with Etihad Airways to offer all guests a superior service provided by our highly skilled and professional crews. In a future phase, Etihad Airways customers will be able to enjoy the true Egyptian hospitality on board our flights to a number of African destinations with convenient timings in addition to accessing domestic destinations in Egypt.”

Source: Etihad Airways

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Precision Air to relaunch flights to Entebbe

Precision Air services announced its intention to relaunch flights to Uganda through the Entebbe International Airport. The scheduled flights are expected to start from July 2017. Precision Air will operate four flights per week with two direct flights from Dar es Salaam and two via Kilimanjaro.

Commenting on the relaunch, Precision Air’s Commercial Director Mr. Robert Owusu said: “the decision to relaunch flights to Entebbe came after a market study which revealed that there was demand for flights between Tanzania and Uganda. Apart from the business relationships Tanzania and Uganda have a very rich history and we are going to honor that history by connecting the two countries through our services. We will start with the flights per week every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Passengers between Tanzania and Uganda should expect affordable and reliable flights.” Source: Precision Air

Photo: Precision Air

ASKY starts new nonstop service between Lomé and Johannesburg

ASKY, announced new non-stop service between Lomé and Johannesburg effective 8 April 2017. With this flight, Johannesburg will join the growing ASKY hub in Lomé. Passengers will be able to connect between Johannesburg and ASKY’s entire network in West and Central Africa, including Abidjan, Bamako, Conakry, Dakar, Douala, Lagos, Libreville, Niamey, Ouagadougou and Yaoundé. Passengers in many of these markets will have hours with this new connection over the current schedules offered in the markets. The flight will be operated with 737-800 aircraft, configured with 16 business class seats and 138 economy seats. Tickets can be booked at all ASKY Agencies or your usual travel agents. Source: ASKY

Photo: ASKY

Ethiopian Airlines concludes a codeshare agreement with Air Namibia

The codeshare agreement covers Ethiopian thrice weekly services to Windhoek and the services of both airlines beyond their respective hubs. The agreement will allow both airlines to expand their global network through the services of each airline and also facilitate the provision of competitive and convenient travel choices to their respective customers.

Mr. Girma Shiferaw, Acting Vice President, Strategic Planning and Alliances said, “We are glad to partner with Air Namibia. It is my sincere belief that such strategic collaboration among African airlines is one of the necessities to see African aviation thrive and grow faster in line with the economic development of the continent. Now, customers of Air Namibia will enjoy seamless connection on Ethiopian ever expanding global network across five continents with a minimum layover in Addis Ababa; conversely, our passengers will be able to access destinations beyond Windhoek on Air Namibia flights.”

Air Namibia, Acting Managing Director, Advocate Ellaine Priscilla Samson said, “We are very pleased with the signing of the codeshare agreement with Ethiopian Airlines, an airline which achieved amazing accomplishments in the global arena. This will be an opportunity for the liberalization of intra Africa air transport in furtherance of the Yamoussoukro Decision as two African carriers. In addition, this will assist Air Namibia to expand its network via the global reach and stature of Ethiopian Airlines. Hence the teaming of our two airlines is the consummate endeavor of our continent moving towards a fuller liberalization in the aviation sector”.

Air Mauritius promotes the Air Corridor in Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Air Mauritius is intensifying its efforts to promote the Air Corridor. After several workshops and roadshows organized in various Asian and African markets since last year, Air Mauritius is now extending its reach in both continents. Following workshops held in Japan & Korea, in December 2016, Air Mauritius, in collaboration with the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA) and Changi Airport Group, recently organized two Road Shows which were held on 22 February 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand and on 23 Feb 17 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Teams from Air Mauritius and the MTPA made presentations to explain the travel options offered by the Air Corridor in connecting Asia to Africa via Mauritius and Singapore. Both venues saw a full turnout of more than 70 participants from the travel trade and the media. Press briefings were also conducted to enable a broader reach of the Air Corridor promotion. Subsequently, several media channels followed-up with coverages of the Air Corridor.

Media and travel trade partners were eager participants in a raffle draw where winners were awarded free air tickets and accommodation in Mauritius.

The Asia-Africa Air Corridor was inaugurated in March 2016 to provide better travel options between the two continents through the hubs in Mauritius and Singapore.

At this event, the TunisAir CEO welcomed this agreement and stressed the commitment of the national company to continue to work towards the rapprochement of Tunisia with Sub-Saharan Africa. For this purpose, Tunisair, whose current network includes 10 African cities, intends to launch several new services in order to develop its connection traffic via its Tunis hub.

According to Tunisair CEO Mr. Elyes Mnakbi, the company will launch its first Tunis-Conakry flight with a frequency of two weekly flights to the Guinean capital. In addition, the line to Cotonou (Benin) will be launched before the end of the current year. This link will operate 2 flights per week via Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire). Tunisair will also link Tunis to Douala and NDjamena via a combined flight at the rate of 2 frequencies per week, starting in the summer of 2018.

Similarly, and from the summer of 2019, Libreville will be served at the rate of 2 Flights per week. The Tunis-Abidjan link will be consolidated with a daily flight in the summer of 2017. As for the Senegalese capital, it will be linked to Tunis by 6 flights per week, compared with 4 flights currently.

At the end of this year, the company will be serving 13 African destinations at the rate of 62 weekly connections. These routes open more than 224 connections to its network from Tunis, in favor of its customers. Source: 4-traders.com

Photo: Ethiopian Airlines

Photo: Air Mauritius

Photo: Tunisair

Issued by the African Airlines Association
### AFRICAN AIRLINES

**Astral Aerial Solutions wins 2017 IATA Air Cargo Innovation Award**

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced that Kenya based Astral Aerial Solutions is the recipient of the IATA Air Cargo Innovation Award for 2017, for the company’s Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Traffic Management (UTM) Concept for Africa. The award was presented at the 11th World Cargo Symposium (WCS) in Abu Dhabi.

Astral Aerial’s project seeks to lay the foundation for safe, secure and effective UAS operations and integration into existing airspace to ultimately allow the expansion of air cargo in Africa.

Mr. Glynn Hughes, IATA’s Global Head of Cargo said: “The IATA Air Cargo Innovation Awards showcase the innovation going on across the air cargo industry. Among many worthy candidates I congratulate Astral Aerial Solutions for an outstanding achievement and hope the $20,000 first prize will help in its development. It is great to see a developing nation company helping to drive the innovation that is needed throughout the global air cargo industry.”

Mr. Sanjeev Gadhia, CEO Astral Aviation said: “We are delighted to be recognized for our innovative UTM Concept for Africa project. Drone technology has strong potential to boost the continent’s air connectivity and deliver goods and services to remote regions and more critical lifesaving products to those in need.”

The IATA Innovation Awards were launched in 2014 to encourage and promote innovation in the air cargo industry. Source: IATA

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**LAM Mozambique opens store in Xai-Xai**

LAM recently opened a retail store in Xai-Xai, a city in the South of Mozambique. The store opening is made in partnership with the Postal Service of Mozambique, a country from the country’s Transport and Communications sector.

With the opening of the store sales in Xai-Xai, the life of passengers living in Gaza becomes easier, given that in the past they had to travel to Maputo to purchase tickets.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Governor of Gaza Province, Stella Zeca, the President of the Municipal Council of Xai-Xai, the Administrator of the District of Xai-Xai, local economic agents, and LAM’s and Postal Service of Mozambique’s managers and employees.

The event was also marked by the formalization of the agreement, having as its signatories the administrators of the commercial areas of both companies, namely, Faizal Sacugy, from LAM, and Vasco Jovo, from Postal Service of Mozambique. Source: LAM

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**Air Botswana to resume Gaborone-Cape Town service**

Air Botswana announced that it will resume its service between Gaborone and Cape Town from February 2017 and also introduce additional flights between Gaborone and Kasane.

Daphne Osenkeng, PR Officer said: “We will fly to Cape Town four times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays”; adding that the flights would be faster, thanks to the use of jet aircraft. The airline is leasing a Bombardier CRJ 100 for the route.

The new direct flights between Gaborone and Kasane will operate on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Source: tourismupdate.co.za

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**Embraer rolls out the E195-E2 Commercial Jet**

A ceremony held at the Company’s facilities in São José dos Campos, Embraer presented the largest aircraft of the second generation of the E2-Jets family. With the first flight scheduled for the coming months, the jet is expected to enter into service in the first half of 2019.

John Slater, President & CEO, Embraer Commercial Aviation said: “The E195-E2 has the potential to significantly change the fleet profile of airlines around the world. With a 20% lower cost per trip and a cost per seat similar to larger aircraft, the E195-E2 becomes the ideal aircraft for regional business growth as well as low-cost business plans and complementing existing mainline fleets”.

“We introduced in the proven E-Jets platform all new technologies that would add value to customers. One example is the fourth generation of fly-by-wire, which allowed a 20% reduction of the empennage area, minimizing drag and weight. The airplane will save up to 24% in fuel and 20% in maintenance costs per seat, when compared to the current E195. A portion of these savings will be achieved with the new engine technology, but the greatest competitive advantage of the E195-E2 lies in the optimization of its structure and of its various systems,” said Luis Carlos Affonso, COO, Embraer Commercial Aviation. Source: Embraer
AFRICAN AIRLINES

Boeing grows presence in Africa with opening of offices in South Africa and Kenya

The Boeing Company announced the opening of two new offices in Johannesburg, South Africa and Nairobi, Kenya, marking a significant milestone for the company as it continues to expand its international presence. The offices will be managed by Boeing International headed by J. Miguel Santos, Managing Director Sub-Saharan Africa, and Director International Sales, Africa, for Boeing Commercial Airplanes, with Chamsou Andjorin, Director Government Affairs and Market Development, located in the Nairobi office.

Boeing International was established in 2001 and is responsible for the company’s international strategy and corporate operations outside the United States. The organization develops the company’s growth and productivity initiatives outside the U.S., forming new business and industrial partnerships, overseeing international affairs, enhancing Boeing’s local presence and providing global functional support.

Taking the necessary steps to establish a firm presence on the continent was an obvious choice according to Mr. Miguel Santos: “Africa is not new territory for Boeing. Since the introduction of the jet airplane, Boeing aircraft have formed the backbone of the continent’s commercial fleet and Boeing continues to be one of the largest U.S.-based companies doing business on the continent. The aerospace industry needs to start paying closer attention to Africa, because this continent is clearly on the move economically and all the trends are pointing in the right direction for the expansion of the sector. Our job is to be ahead in understanding these emerging trends and opportunities”. Boeing also provides resources to

Bombardier delivers the Sixth CS100 aircraft to SWISS

Bombardier delivered the sixth CS100 aircraft, the smaller variant game-changing C Series aircraft, to Swiss. Bombardier has now delivered a total of eight C Series aircraft; six CS100 to SWISS and two CS300 to airBaltic.

Fred Cromer, President of Bombardier Commercial Aircraft said: “We are very proud to have delivered another C Series to Swiss today and to continue building on the strong momentum generated by the successful entry into service of the C Series aircraft in 2016. We continue to ramp up production on the C Series in 2017, and as per our plan, the cadence of deliveries will increase in the second half of the year.”

The C Series continues to demonstrate strong operational performance with both SWISS and airBaltic and have now accumulated over 5,500 flights.

“The C Series airliners have had very strong in-service performance to date. The PW1500 powering the C Series is demonstrating strong operational performance and I am confident that the aircraft will continue exceeding customer and passenger expectations.” said Rob Dewar Vice President, C Series Program, Bombardier Commercial Aircraft.

A new ATR 72-600 of the Swedish carrier BRA (former Braathens Regional) took off from Stockholm-Bromma to Umeå fueled at 45% with fossil-free used cooking oil, marking the first biofuel-powered flight of an ATR aircraft.

Several research and development initiatives are currently underway in Sweden to produce biofuels from different types of wood. In Sweden, forests cover more than 50% of the country, and grow at a rate of 120 million cubic meters annually. Making domestic air traffic in Sweden completely fossil-free would require less than 2% of the total annual forest growth.

ATR continues to invest in virtuous technologies and contributes to European research and development efforts to take advances in environmental performance even further. ATR encourages the use of alternative fuels and offers support to customers and local governments in developing a comprehensive business plan, from fuel selection to routing, certification and availability for seamless airline operations.

Christian Scherer, Chief Executive Officer of ATR, said: “Today’s challenge is to get a large-scale production of biofuels at affordable costs while avoiding a negative impact on the environment. Swedish airlines like BRA can take advantage of the massive expansion of its forests, along with the operation of fuel-efficient turboprops, to reach the ambitious goal of halving their CO2 emissions by 2025.” Source: ATR

Amadeus B2B Wallet wins first ATR biofuel flight

Amadeus was awarded a gold medal in the ‘Best B2B innovation’ category for its B2B Wallet product at PYMNTS.com’s prestigious Innovator Awards ceremony.

Amadeus B2B Wallet was launched last year and brought to market with two pioneers in FinTech innovation, iXiris and Mastercard. The solution provides travel agencies with a simple and secure way to pay their suppliers using a fresh approach: virtual cards. With the product, travel agencies can choose the best payment method, reduce costs, earn revenue and make supplier payments more efficient.

The awards honour both new and seasoned payments players, running as part of the Innovation Project 2017, an event that brings together leaders in payments, commerce and retail each year for two days of discussions.

The latest commendation follows another recent award that Amadeus B2B Wallet won with iXiris at the Cards & Payments awards for ‘Best Business Card Programme’. Source: Amadeus
Rolls-Royce introduces the CareStore for Civil Aerospace customers

Rolls-Royce is introducing the CareStore, a gateway which will enable Rolls-Royce to work together with Civil Aerospace customers to help them make informed decisions about which of Rolls-Royce’s wide range of digitally enabled services best fit their needs. Source: Rolls-Royce

AFRICA AIRLINES

Travelport and Abu Dhabi’s Bin Ham Travel Group announce new long term partnership

Travelport announced a new, multi-year agreement with Bin Ham Travel Group. Established in 1979, Bin Ham Travel Group comprises three leading travel management companies: Al Amaan Travel and Holidays, Al Ain Express Travel and Bin Ham Travel.

The Bin Ham Travel Group will leverage Travelport’s innovative technology through the Travel Commerce Platform to gain access to the fares and ancillaries of approximately 400 of the world’s leading airlines. Also, through Travelport Smartpoint, travel agents have the capability to upsell more hotel rooms and car rentals with access to over 650,000 unique hotel properties and 36,000 car rental locations all through their preferred workflow.

Matthew Powell, Managing Director, Middle East & South Asia at Travelport, commented: “This new partnership with Bin Ham Travel Group, a celebrated travel industry leader in the UAE, is a great testimony to how our industry-leading Travel Commerce Platform, which offers unrivalled technology and travel content, is supporting the needs of our customers across the region as they target growth in their businesses. We look forward to partnering with the Bin Ham Travel Group and helping them do exactly this.” Source: Travelport

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About AFRAA

AFRAA, is a trade organization of Airlines from the member states of the African Union (AU) whose aim is to foster commercial and technical cooperation for airlines and represent their common interest. Founded in Accra, Ghana in April, 1968, and currently headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, the Association members represent 83% of total intercontinental traffic carried by African Airlines. For more information, visit: www.afraa.org

The AFRAA Bulletin is monthly publication by the African Airlines Association (AFRAA). Send articles or enquiries to: mkahonge@afraa.org

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