

**Joint Statement**  
**of the European Commission and the African Union Commission**  
**on**  
*EU-Africa Co-operation in Civil Aviation*  
*Following the Air Transport Conference*  
*held at Windhoek on 2-3 April 2009*

1. Following the political commitment taken by Mr Antonio Tajani, Vice President of the European Commission in charge of transport and Dr Elham Ibrahim, the African Union Commissioner in charge of infrastructure, to deepen EU-Africa cooperation on civil aviation in the framework of EU-Africa Strategic Partnership, a first EU-Africa Aviation Conference was held on 2-3 April 2009 in Windhoek. It was jointly organised by the African Union Commission and the European Commission. It brought together almost 200 leading representatives of the European Union and African aviation sectors representing public authorities, airlines, aerospace industries and service providers.
2. The EU-Africa Aviation Conference was highly successful in bringing together all key stakeholders and in serving as a platform for identifying priority areas and the way forward in closer EU-Africa aviation co-operation for the future.
3. The EU-Africa Aviation Conference addressed a wide range of areas of mutual interest including notably:
  - Market trends as well as political and regulatory developments in Africa and the EU including the increasing emphasis on market liberalisation and consumer benefits arising from fair competition.
  - The vital role played by Air Transport in socio-economic development and the integration of Africa.
  - Aviation safety and security policies and means to improve the current situation.
  - Air traffic management and, to this respect, the development of capacities on the basis of the experience of the Single European Sky, in particular to explore the potential for cooperation and to enable over flight capabilities across African regions.
  - Enabling doing business and making sustainable investment in both markets.
  - Future EU-Africa co-operation in civil aviation including training, capacity building, technical assistance and industrial co-operation.
4. In this context of growing interdependence, the two sides reiterated their desire to deepen and strengthen co-operation between the EU and Africa on a broad range of issues in order to support the safe and sustainable development of the growing air traffic services between Africa and the EU and within Africa.
5. Both parties agreed on the importance of the extension of the EGNOS satellite navigation system so that it provides the same services to civil aviation over Africa as it does over Europe bearing in mind the need for interoperability with other air satellite navigation systems in Africa.

6. Both EU and African aviation sectors are undergoing significant economic as well as regulatory change. The EU has already implemented a single aviation market, while Africa is in the process of achieving the same goal through the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision. The two sides confirmed their interest in gradually opening up their aviation markets by increasing capacity entitlements in relation to market access and through regulatory co-operation facilitating airline operations, in particular in safety issues. This will create significant benefits to passengers and users and significant opportunities for operators both in Africa and in the European Union.
7. The participants recognise the necessity to ensure legal certainty and the need to negotiate at the appropriate level and as a matter of priority the required amendments to the existing bilateral air services agreements with a view to resolving outstanding legal issues between EU Member States and African States. They recognise the initiative of some countries and regional organisations that have paved the way for an African designation while recognising the EU Community designation.
8. The two parties confirmed their intention to set-up a permanent strategic dialogue in aviation matters, notably through:
  - i. Engaging, as a matter of priority, in a process of co-operation on safety and security matters. The EC could provide increased technical assistance needed which could contribute to the constant improvement of air safety in Africa.
  - ii. Supporting the Yamoussoukro Decision process of liberalisation of African Air Transport to develop a strong sector in both passenger and cargo transport.
  - iii. Developing further co-operation in air traffic management and the related SESAR programme.
  - iv. Engaging in a broad dialogue on application of environmental protection.
9. To this end, the EC and the African Union Commission commit themselves to create a Cooperation Committee which will deal with all matters of general interest. This Committee will meet regularly and at least once a year. Cooperation will also be organised at regional level.
10. Both parties agree on the attached Common Strategic Framework and Action Plan which detail the possible areas of cooperation and the means for making the Air Transport permanent strategic dialogue a reality.