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Directorate of Information and Communication

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African Union, Member States and Aviation Industry Advocate for Joint Stance on Single African Air



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 27 January 2018: The Commissioner for Economic Affairs Professor Victor Harrison expressed optimism about improvement in air connectivity in Africa with the launch of a Single African Air Transport Market that took place on the margins of the 30th AU Summit at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Commissioner Harrison made the remarks while addressing the High-Level Ministerial Meeting on the Future of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) on 27 January 2018, prior to the launch of the SAATM.

“The Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) is amongst the first twelve AU Agenda flagship projects to be formally launched. He acknowledged, and appreciated the contribution of the stakeholders who have made the project successful as it is a historic course following a long and winding road since the adoption of the Yamoussoukro Decision in November 1999.

He concluded his speech by urging all stakeholder to start mobilizing all levers of implementation so that they can start producing results.

Mr. Ambachew Mekonnen, Minister of Transport of the Federal Democratic Republic of

Ethiopia in his opening remarks commended the African Union on the work they have put in to ensure Africa's integration with the opening of the African sky to allow easy, quick, cheap movement in the continent. He also expressed Ethiopia's commitment to enhance the Single African Air Transport Market.

The Ethiopian minister underlined that, “the launch of the Single Africa Air Transport Market will have a huge impact on tourism potentials of rapidly growing economies and foster intra-regional cooperation in the continent.”

The High Level Ministerial meeting comprised of a panel discussion featuring Member State representatives and top airline executives officers including the vice president of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Raphael Kuuchi, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) council president, Dr. Olumuyiwa Bernard Aliu, Chief Executive Officer of Ethiopian Airlines, Mr. Tewolde GebreMariam and top executive of Boeing, Airbus and Embraer.

The discussions focused on issues around the benefits of SAATM to the travelers, required regulatory institutional frameworks on safety and key strategic solutions for the sustainable opalization and financing of a successful single Africa air transport market.

Note to the Editors

The Single African Air Transport Market was launched on January 29, 2018. As the first of the 12 African Union's Agenda 2063 flagship projects to be launched, the implementation of SAATM will pave the way for other flagship projects as the African Passport and enabling the Free Movement of People, the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)”.

The Declaration on the establishment of a Single African Air Transport Market, as a flagship project of the AU Agenda 2063, was adopted by the African Union (AU) Assembly in January 2015. Immediately thereafter, eleven (11) AU Member States declared their Solemn Commitment to establish a Single African Air Transport Market through full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision of 1999 that provides for full liberalization of market access between African States, free exercise of traffic rights, elimination of restrictions on ownership and full liberalization of frequencies, fares and capacities.

AU Member States who have not yet adhered to the Solemn Commitment of the SAATM are urged to join the countries that have endorsed the Solemn Commitment for the establishment of a single African Air Transport Market.

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