

**STATEMENT**  
BY  
**HON. JOSEPH KOFI ADDA, MP (Navrongo),**  
**MINISTER FOR AVIATION**  
ON THE COMMEMORATION OF  
**INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION DAY, 2018.**

Mr. Speaker,

7<sup>th</sup> December is a globally observed historical day occasioned by the United Nations (UN) to mark the International Civil Aviation (ICA) Day dubbed “Flyday”.

In 1994, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) established the Day to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization. The UN General Assembly proclaimed it as the ***International Civil Aviation Day*** in 1996.

The annual event aims to generate and reinforce global awareness of the importance of international civil aviation in social and economic development. The day also commemorates ICAO’s role in promoting the safety, efficiency and regularity of international air transport.

Aviation contributes immensely, worldwide, to increasing consumer benefits and choices, creating jobs, and stimulating tourism and trade. The increased connectivity that it delivers leads to further re-investment in aviation, creating a healthy cycle of aviation development and economic prosperity in those countries and regions which set out suitable planning and investment commitments.

Ghana, as a Member State, recognizes the significant impact of aviation activities on economic and social development and therefore the importance of the day.

We share a common interest in maximizing aviation benefits, and reaffirm our commitment towards creating an enabling economic environment, and raising political willingness to mainstream and reflect the priorities of the aviation sector in the global, regional and national agenda.

**Theme for the Celebration**

Mr Speaker, the theme for this year’s celebration is ***“Working Together to Ensure No Country is Left Behind”***.

The “No Country Left Behind” policy is an initiative of ICAO to assist member States in implementing its Standards And Recommended Practices (SARP) to help ensure that its implementation is better harmonized globally so that all States have access to the significant socio-economic benefits of safe and reliable air transport. It is also to reinforce the unique role of ICAO in helping member States to cooperate and realize a truly global rapid transit network at the service of all mankind.

There are still some large discrepancies with respect to how some member States implement the SARP and this policy is expected to help bridge the gap.

Ghana, as a country, has been committed to maintaining high safety standards by ensuring an accident free aviation sector, offering the strong political will to help pull resources together to continuously develop the aviation industry, and to build capacity to match the vision we seek to achieve. We also ensure high standards of security that assure the right environment for all players in the aviation sector.

### **Ghana's Recent Achievements**

Mr Speaker as we mark this day, and in line with the thematic statement for the celebration, we have an opportunity to recognize the achievements of Ghana so far in the aviation development and growth space, especially of safety and security in particular and the aviation economy in general. We must take the opportunity to highlight the opportunities policy choices of the Government of Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo have created for the Ghanaian and prod ourselves to take advantage of them.

Aviation connects people, cultures and businesses across the globe. It also strengthens socio-economic development worldwide. Air transport has played a role in the development of our country through our former national carriers Ghana Airways and later Ghana International Airlines. We have had a great history with these airlines in particular and the aviation industry in general, in spite of the issues that led to their dissolution.

Government policy is today taking us into the realm of new aviation economy heights.

***Mr. Speaker, it is the vision of Government to make Ghana an aviation hub within the West Africa Sub-Region.***

As we observe Aviation Day, it is noteworthy that Ghana's increasing prominence in the global arena is outlined through various key initiatives. There has been rapid growth in commercial activities as a result of efforts to open up and connect the country through the establishment of aerodromes, helipads and airstrips across the country. We have seen massive improvement in connectivity by revamping operations at the various airports: Kumasi, Takoradi, Ho and Wa. These are the existing ones. There are also a few more currently on the drawing board being created.

We have also seen a resurgence in domestic airline operations with the introduction of domestic operators like Unity Air and Passion Air in addition to the already running African World Airlines (AWA). Others are at various stages of certification. A number of otherwise defunct domestic operators will soon recommence operations to help open up the country, based on the new governance approach to the industry.

By encouraging inter and intra-regional trade, measures are being put in place to develop cargo facilities to promote the ease of doing business.

We seek to connect Ghana more easily to other parts of the world. We want to make Ghana attractive to investors and to create business opportunities. We know that aviation development in our country has the potential to lead to an increase in productivity by moving people faster and safer and also creating jobs with multiplying positive economic effects.

Aviation undoubtedly, will be a driver of government's flagship programmes such as the One-District One-Factory and Planting for Food and Jobs. Health, education, sports, the

arts and other sectors will be positively affected with the opening up of the space and making it people-friendly and therefore easily accessible. Aviation as a socio-economic driver has already been proven valuable by the recent innovative use of drone technology for health.

We will continue to build capacity to produce the needed aviation professionals by enhancing aviation training and making aviation an integral part of school curriculum from early on.

Infrastructure development in Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale will further boost activities and create the needed jobs for the teeming youth.

Intra-tourism is more easily facilitated with a safer more secure aviation environment. People are now able to easily visit tourist attractions, friends and family across the country. The frequency of flights between Accra and the other regional capitals with airports has and continues to accelerate investment in those areas, creating many direct and indirect jobs.

### **Intra-Africa Travel**

Mr Speaker, we recognize as a country that if we are going to attain the vision of being the aviation hub of excellence for the sub-region we must meet all the international standards. We have therefore complied with all requirements with all the relevant international authorities in order to properly access all African countries.

We have also taken up the role as ICAO champions of safety and security by supporting other African countries to match up to the required standards and capacity. For this our own Ghana Civil Aviation Training Academy (GATA) is continuously being made the center of excellence for Africa to build expertise through ICAO statutory courses. We are therefore also poised to export technical know-how for safety issues around aerodromes. The fruits of all this labour is already bearing fruit in Ghana and beyond. We intend to provide access to as many African countries as possible.

It must be noted that with this opportunity for opening up for pan-African trade, we will be in pole position to take advantage of the potential One trillion dollar estimated value of the African market alone, currently estimated at \$150 billion.

As a country, Ghana will continue to play an active role in the International Civil Aviation Organisation and champion the course of civilian air transport, work to improve connectivity in-country, on the continent and beyond.

All these policies and actions by government is based on our initial investments and achievements in the safety and security of aviation in Ghana.

We have recently made investments in top notch state of the art technology in VHF, Vsat and Air Traffic Management Systems that will make Ghana one of the most secure airspaces in Africa. We won the Airport Council International Safety Awards in 2017 and we intend to continue on that trend.

We acknowledge our primary responsibility for aviation development and reiterate our commitment to aligning and integrating our aviation infrastructure development programmes and plans with an appropriately balanced development of transport modes,

including multi-modal and urban planning initiatives; and linking them with national and regional development plans and strategies.

As we mark ICAO Day, 2018, we wish to assure Ghana and the entire world that under the transformative leadership of the President, Nana Akufo-Addo, we will work to make aviation accessible and relatively cheaper for everyone while ensuring the highest level of safety and security. We will strictly adhere to ICAO's standards to ensure that the Ghanaian aviation industry meets all the expectations.

We reiterate that air travel is not a luxury but rather a necessity and a catalyst for productivity; productivity in business, agriculture, health, education, arts, culture and tourism, to name a few.

Ghana is ready!

Mr Speaker, it is an honour and privilege to also announce on this significant day that, per the directive of the President the Ministry has concluded initial negotiations for the launch of our home-based carrier.

We at the Ministry of Aviation, on behalf of the President of Ghana and the government, look forward to making sure Ghana and Ghanaians are "not left behind" in these opportunities in aviation

Thank You.

Read 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2018