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ASSEMBLY — 36TH SESSION

ECONOMIC COMMISSION

Agenda Item 40: Regulation of international air transport services

**AIR TRANSPORT POLICY IN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES
(ECOWAS)**

(Presented by the Economic Community of West African States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ECOWAS 15 member States are determined to implement the Yamoussoukro Decision (YD) relating to the liberalization of access to air transport markets in Africa and to enhance Aviation Safety and Security in compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARP's).

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper is to inform the Assembly on the efforts undertaken by ECOWAS member States in the implementation of Yamoussoukro Decision and COSCAP Programme
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>References:</i>	ECOWAS Treaty MOU signed on 14 November 1999 for the implementation of the YD Assembly resolutions: A29-13, A35-7

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is grouping 15 member States: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Togo, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

1.2 ECOWAS member States have given mandate to the Commission to implement their Air Transport Policy which has been defined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in Yamoussoukro on 14th November 1999 in order to foster in West & Central Africa the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision relating to the liberalization of access to air transport markets in Africa (14 November 1999).

1.3
tasks:

At this end, ECOWAS Commission endeavored to implement the following missions &

- a) Functioning of the institutional framework of the MOU. 3 meetings of Coordination Committee & Council of Ministers responsible for civil aviation were organized: 2001 in Bamako, 2003 in Lome and 2004 in Libreville. 2 meetings of the Harmonization Committee: 2003 in Bamako and 2004 in Libreville;
- b) Setting up of Air Transport Unit: recruitment of Project Director in 2001 & a new one in 2007, planning of the recruitment of 2 Air Transport Officers in 2007;
- c) Fund mobilization: 2001-2004 World Bank grant (\$800,000), 2005 ADF grant with ADB (1,72 million UA for BAG-COSCAP, YD implementation & studies: regional Air Safety Agency, feasibility study of Regional Maintenance Centre and feasibility study Data Bank), 2007 9th EDF grant (800,000 Euros to support COSCAP Programme & YD implementation);
- d) ECOWAS counterpart: provide total of 160,000 UA for its portion of the ADF funds over the 4 years period of the grant which expires 31st December 2009. This requires 40,000 UA to be budgeted for annually. ECOWAS ought also to provide funds to satisfy other conditions as follows: setting up an Air Transport Unit with a minimum of three (3) staff, opening an account at the Central Bank in order to receive the grant funds, adopting of a joint technical regulations on civil aviation safety, autonomization of the Direction of Civil Aviation and creation of a Regional Air Safety Agency;
- e) Adoption of Lome Action Plan: Economic Regulation (3 common regulations relating to Deny Boarding, Airport Slots and Ground Handling were adopted in 2004), Air Safety & Security project (COSCAP Programme: BAG, UEMOA + Mauritania & CEMAC + Sao Tome); recommendation of Autonomy for Directions of Civil Aviation (done by 9 States: Benin, Capo Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal & Togo; the 6 other countries are on process);
- f) Monitoring the implementation of YD: country assessment & field missions since 2002;
- g) Studies available (2004) on Competition rules, Market access, Air Carrier License & Air Carrier Liability.

2. GLOBAL OBJECTIVE

2.1 The global objective is in to implement in ECOWAS space the Yamoussoukro Decision and to improve air safety and security level in accordance with Standards and Recommended Practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

3. **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The specific objectives are:

- Build in-house capacity (Air Transport Unit) in the line of Council decision;
- Establish a liberalized environment to facilitate access to air transport markets for Air Carrier Operators and private investors;
- Strengthen capacity of States and regional institutions for the implementation of the ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARP's) namely to improve security & safety and application of common air transport economic regulations;
- Achieve air transport regional action plans on Safety / Security, Economic regulations and common external policy in West and Central Africa;
- Mobilize funds and promote technical cooperation with air transport organizations.

4. **JUSTIFICATION**

4.1 The justification of the Air Transport project is based on the following reasons:

- 1) The requirements of ECOWAS member States which are increasingly marginalized in the Africa air transport market and incapable to ensure a safe, orderly and efficient development of their air transport: airlines collapse, lack of reliable and affordable air links between member States, high prices tariffs, etc;
- 2) The commitments taken in the above air transport policy by the member States;
- 3) The mandate of the ECOWAS Commission in its Strategic action plan inter alia aims for: "Provide a safe, reliable and coordinate air transport system; ensure equitable access of eligible airlines to the West African air transport markets; encourage the creation of a private regional airline".

5. **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2007**

- Recruited Project Director Air Transport;
- Recruitment of 2 Air Transport Officers (ATO): on process;
- Mobilized funding for YD implementation and sub regional safety projects (COSCAP –Cooperative Development of Operational Safety & Continued Airworthiness Programme): 630 500 USD (ADF Grant from ADB) and 800 000 Euros (9 PIR from European Union);

- Established a country assessment of implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision in 7 member States: Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Benin & Nigeria on July-August 2007;
- Facilitated activities for creation of regional airline with private sector (on process);
- Improved technical cooperation with air transport organizations ICAO (Abuja 3 August 2007, Montreal, Canada 18-28 September 2007) AFCAC (Nairobi, Kenya, 16-20 July 2007) & AFRAA meetings.

6. **ACTIVITIES FOR 2008**

- Meetings of institutional framework: Harmonization Committee, Coordination Committee & Ministers responsible for civil aviation;
- Air Transport Unit capacity building & training;
- Y D States Assessment Field Missions;
- Economic regulations application Seminars;
- Common External Policy with third parties (European Union and USA);
- COSCAP Coordination Steering Committee Meetings (BAG, UEMOA, CEMAC);
- Regional air carriers facilitation meetings & seminar;
- Technical cooperation: GNSS Implementation resource mobilization and coordination, ICAO, African Union, AFCAC, AFRAA Air Transport Meetings;
- Feasibility studies: establishment of Aviation Regional Safety Oversight Agency, Regional air transport data base, Regional Aircraft Maintenance Facility, Harmonization of air transport economic regulation, Harmonization of civil aviation technical regulation;
- Publication of common regulations adopted: economic & technical regulations.

7. **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- Strengthening ECOWAS Commission's capacity for efficient supervision & coordination of the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision & Actions Plans issued from the MOU signed on 14th November 1999;
- Open up of ECOWAS airspace and development of intra member States air links;

- Cooperation among member States with regular functioning of the institutional framework: Council of Ministers, Coordination Committee and Harmonization Committee;
- Coordination and fund mobilization for sub-regional safety projects (COSCAP – Cooperative Development of Operational Safety & Continued Airworthiness Programme, GNSS) for Banjul Accord Group (BAG) and UEMOA;
- Monitoring and adoption of common air transport economic regulations for Market Access, Fair Competition, Air Carrier Licence, Air Carrier Liability and Settlement of Disputes, Common External Policy in addition to Passenger Compensation, Airport Slot Allocation and Ground Handling Services;
- Periodic assessment of level of implementation of Decision and assistance to States in removing bottlenecks to market access;
- Facilitation of activities for creation of regional airline with private sector;
- Technical cooperation (signature of a MOU between ECOWAS and ICAO) and fund mobilization;
- Contribution to socio-economic development and integration of ECOWAS.

— END —