



**Presentation at the Second Meeting on the Sustainable
Development of Air Transport in Africa 28 – 31 March 2017,
Accra, Ghana**

Your Excellences, Honourable Ministers, Honourable Minister of Transport for Ghana, President of the ICAO Council, distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, and all protocols observed, good morning.

I bring you greetings from Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, the CEO of the NEPAD Agency who could not be here with us. It is indeed an honour and certainly my pleasure to make these Opening remarks on behalf of the NEPAD Agency.

This Second ICAO Meeting on Sustainable Development of Air Transport in Africa is very important for the NEPAD Agency, because unfortunately, the NEPAD Agency was not represented at the First Meeting. Recognizing that the NEPAD Agency is the Implementation body and development agency of the African Union, it is imperative that we fully and effectively participate in



such meetings whose outcomes have major impacts on the development landscape of our continent particularly, in the Infrastructure sectors.

As you may be aware, the NEPAD Agency is the also the implementation Agency for the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) from 2012 to 2040. PIDA provides the framework for infrastructure development on the continent, and infrastructure is defined as the following sectors: the Transport (with its attendance modes; Air, Road, Rail, Sea and Pipeline), Energy (generation, transmission and distribution), ICT and Trans-Boundary Water. In the PIDA PAP for 2012 to 2020 with a price tag of US\$68 Billion, there are 24 Transport projects and only 4 of them are aviation projects.

You will agree with me that the Aviation sub-sector has been neglected for a very long time, and the 4 projects out of 24 Transport projects, is a reflection and testimony to this neglect. This is certainly not an accident but due to the complexities, regulatory and technical nature of this sub-sector. This is also compounded by the past failures of most national airlines and the



fact that we as aviation experts have not done a very good job in demystifying this sub-sector. Plainly stated, aviation is the least understood of all the infrastructure sectors I mentioned above and the natural tendency is to just ignore what you do not understand.

This Meeting has provided an excellent platform to demystify the aviation sub-sector and most importantly to identify the challenges, how to address some of them and to amplify the benefits of aviation in the overall sustainable development of our continent. I believe that in this regard, ICAO must be commended for taking this bold step in bringing all of us together.

This is long overdue because our continent is the only one that has not made full use of the aviation sub-sector and also the only continent that has not maximized its benefits. Let me thank ICAO and all the organisers for taking this bold and very important step particularly, at this stage of our continent's development.

Let me take this opportunity on behalf of the NEPAD Agency to sincerely thank ICAO, the Government of Ghana particularly, the Civil Aviation Authority, ECOWAS and all those who made this meeting possible. Let me also specifically thank the Government



of Ghana for the excellent hospitality that has been accorded us and for serving as a beacon of democracy on the continent.

Honesty requires us to acknowledge and recognize the infrastructure challenges we face as a continent. These challenges are real, and nowhere are they glaringly manifested on a daily basis as in the Transport sector particularly in the aviation sub-sector in the area of airline services and connectivity in this sub-region.

Let me also thank ECOWAS for its leadership in addressing some of the challenges in the aviation sub-sector in this sub-region. The Banjul Accord is one of the many examples of the success stories in addressing air transport liberalization and safety in this sub-region, again thanks to the leadership of ECOWAS in bringing all the CAAs together.

While this meeting will provide the platform for addressing our aviation challenges, It is important to note that, without the active participation of the private sector, it would be very difficult to effectively address some of these challenges. Equally important, is what happens after this meeting. How do we work collectively



with the private sector and all our stakeholders to operationalize and implement the decisions that we take so that we genuinely transform our continent using the aviation sub-sector?

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, please be assured that the NEPAD Agency, as the Implementation Agency of the African Union, will continue to work with you all in actualizing all the decisions that we will take during this meeting. During the PIDA Week last year in Abidjan, the AfDB acknowledged that although the cost of the PIDA PAP projects for 2012 to 2020 of about \$68Billion was high, the cost of not doing anything or inaction was even much higher and would negatively impact the sustainable development of the continent.

It is generally said that funding is not an issue but the issues are getting bankable regional or intercontinental infrastructure projects and the risks associated with them. It is against this background that the NEPAD Agency produced the De-Risking Report last year, and I believe that the UNECA with some contribution from the NEPAD Agency will soon be publishing a book on De-Risking Transboundary Infrastructure Projects.



The NEPAD Agency also created the Service Delivery Mechanism (SDM) which is an instrument to assist in the conceptualization and early preparation of infrastructure projects to enhance their bankability. We have also created the Continental Business Network (CBN) which brings together African governments, development partners and the private sector to fund specific regional infrastructure projects.

Recognizing the regional and continental infrastructure challenges, last year during the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Kigali, the NEPAD Agency also launched the MOVEAFRICA Initiative. This initiative focuses mainly on the logistics and soft infrastructure challenges affecting the efficient movements of people, goods and services on the continent. Again, we are working closely with the Private sector in rolling out this Initiative this year.

Finally, Your Excellences, distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen, I want to remind you all that Aviation is indeed part and parcel of infrastructure. Simply stated; Aviation is also infrastructure and it must viewed and treated that way.



I sincerely believe that the deliberations, and the outcomes of this meeting will provide us with the way forward to address our aviation challenges. Collectively working together and with the private sector our continent will never be the same with regards to infrastructure development particularly, the aviation sub-sector. Henry Ford once said: “that coming together is the beginning, staying together is progress and working together is success”. I believe that we are all in this together and have no choice but to succeed.

I thank you and God bless you all.