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REPORT OF THE 5TH MEETING OF THE AFRICAN AIR NAVIGATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

(Lomé, Togo, 28 March - 1st April 2022)

PREPARED BY THE SECRETARIAT

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Place and Duration

The fifth Meeting of the African Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) was held in-person in Hotel 2 Février, Lomé (Togo), from the 28 march to 1st April 2022.

1.2 Attendance

The meeting was attended by more than hundred and fifty (150) participants from African ANSPs, Regional and International Organizations, and Industry Partners. The meeting registered the participation of the Civil Aviation Authorities of Togo and Gabon. The list of participants is provided in **Appendix A** to this Report.

1.3 Officers and Secretariat

Mr. MOHAMED Moussa, Director General of ASECNA, designated by his peers as Chairperson of the African ANSPs chaired the meeting.

The moderation was done in turn by the DG of ASECNA, the DG ATNS, DG of ANAC Togo and DG of the KCAA.

Mr. Prosper Zo'o-Minto'o, ICAO WACAF Regional Director assured the Secretariat, supported by Mr. François-Xavier Salambanga and Mr. Fanfe Bamba, respectively Regional Officers CNS and AIM from the ICAO WACAF Office and Mrs. Ogutu Keziah, Regional Officer ATM/SAR of the ICAO ESAF Office.

They were assisted by Mr. Apollin Komguem Magni, Technical advisor in charge of ATS and single sky (ASECNA), Mr. Charles Kouadio Kanga, Delegate of ASECNA to ICAO, Mr. Thabani Myeza, Director Africa Affairs CANSO Africa and Mr Dieudonne Kassa Kassa, Flight Procedure Designer, AFPP.

1.4 Working language

The meeting was held in English and French with interpretation.

1.5 Opening of the meeting

The opening ceremony was chaired by Mr. Affoh Atcha-Dedji, Minister of Road, Air and Rail Transport of the Republic of Togo.

In his remarks Colonel Dokisime Gnama Latta, Director General of ANAC Togo welcomed the participants and expressed his appreciation to ASECNA and the African ANSPs for convening this in-person meeting after the COVID-19 outbreak. He expressed the support of ANAC Togo to such initiative aiming at reinforcing the cooperation amongst ANSPs for a safe and cost-effective provision of air navigation services in Africa.

In his address, Mr Prosper Zo'o-Minto'o expressed on behalf of the President of the Council and the Secretary General of ICAO, his gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Togo, to ANAC Togo and ASECNA for accepting to host this in-person meeting after two years of restrictions and lockdowns imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

He reminded the various initiatives undertaken by ICAO to assist States in addressing challenges in the provision of air navigation services in the AFI Region. He expressed his concerns regarding the low level of EI in the USOAP-CMA ANS area in several African States. The Regional Director finally recalled the objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Affoh Atcha-Dédji, Minister of Road, Air and Rail Transport of the Republic of Togo, welcomed the participants and renewed the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Togo as Champion State for the implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), to facilitate initiatives and actions toward the integration of the aviation industry in Africa.

He highlighted progress made and ongoing developments in the Air Transport industry in Togo, and its impact in the region. He encouraged ANSPs to reinforce the Peer Review mechanism and technical cooperation to sustain the implementation of a seamless airspace; a key component enabling safe, secured, and efficient cost-effective operations in the framework of the SAATM.

II. REPORT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda Item 2: Review of the status of implementation of the recommendations of the last meeting of the African ANSPs

Under this agenda item the meeting discussed the status of implementation of the recommendations of the last meeting of the African ANSPs held in 2019. The meeting was provided with the report on the pilot peer review conducted between ASECNA and GCAA, as well as on the review between ATNS and Eswatini. The meeting acknowledged the contribution of the ANSPs to the pilot phase activities despite the difficult period imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some ANSPs testified on the improvements they could achieve from the lessons learned from the Peer Review pilot phase and the meeting concurred that the process should be improved and strengthened based on the lesson learned.

Further to its consideration, the meeting noted the following specific challenges faced by ANSPs when conducting the Pilot Phase activities and agreed on the way forward to address those challenges.

Challenges:

- Severe impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic;
- Lack of clarity in the definition of the scope of the peer review;
- Language barriers when Peer Reviewers and Reviewees did not use the same working languages;
- Low reporting/sharing on the implementation of Pilot Peer Reviews Corrective Action Plans (CAPs);
- Lack of training of Peer Reviewers;
- Peer Review Questionnaire limited to the ATS area; and
- Lack of consensus on the use of the African ANSPs Peer Review Manual as reference for the conduct of reviews.

Way forward:

- Adapt the definition of the scope of each review to the extent of activities to cover;
- ANSPs to make available to the reviewers the documentation in one of the alternate French/English language;
- ANSPs to reinforce capacity of their reviewers in alternate language;

- Peer Reviewers Training Programmes and Plans to be revised, consolidated and effectively implemented;
- Peer Review Questionnaire to be revised to include all ANS areas and beyond all related areas;
- The African ANSPs Peer Review Manual to be revised and approved as unique reference for the Peer reviews; and
- Revitalize the activities of the African ANSPs Peer Review Management Team.

Agenda Item 3: AFI Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) Peer Review mechanism

Under this Agenda Item, the meeting was briefed on the mechanism governing the African Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSPs) Peer Review Programme.

The meeting reviewed the actions conducted since the launching of the programme in 2015 and recalled the challenges identified under agenda item 2. The reports from the ANSPs and the results of the Peer reviews highlighted some ANS deficiencies for which the meeting identified some way forward to address them.

Recognizing the importance of the peer review in the improvement of the quality of service, the meeting called for the consolidation and effective implementation of the peer review programme, and invited the ANSPs as well as the African ANSPs Peer Review Steering Committee to consider the proposed way forward to address the challenges identified.

Challenges:

- Pending deficiencies in communication infrastructure and facilities;
- Threats to the aeronautical frequency band by non-aeronautical applications users (*interferences from 5G IMT stations on VSAT and aircraft radio altimeters, FM Radio Station on VHF*);
- Low level of interconnectivity and interoperability of the current ATM/CNS infrastructure;
- The obsolete components of the current network do not support the emerging IP based applications;
- Lack of reporting for a data-driven Performance Management of Air Navigation Services; and
- Difficulty for ANSPs providing domestic air navigation services to conduct peer reviews.

Way forward:

- Expedite the resolution of pending deficiencies in communication infrastructure and facilities by leveraging cooperation through exchange of spare parts, technical personnel, and expertise;
- Expedite the implementation of interconnectivity of AFI VSAT Networks with full cyber-secured IP capabilities to accommodate new and future services;
- Contribute to States support to ICAO position for WRC23;
- Establish a mechanism at regional level for sharing performance data as a basis for the review of regional priorities under the ASBU framework; and
- The Peer review Management Team to include ANSPs providing domestic air navigation services into the peer review mechanism.

Agenda Item 4: Air navigation services and the COVID-19 pandemic

The meeting analysed the multidimensional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ANSPs and shared the sustainable experience for a normal Air Navigation Services provision; and identified common challenges in this context. The meeting was provided with ANSPs and Partners perspectives and initiatives in addressing challenges, and developing recovery strategies through projects and innovation towards industry resilience.

Challenges:

- Reduction in staff numbers resulting in low turnover;
- Increase of human factors issues in Air traffic services;
- Loss of revenue for ANSPs due to the drop of traffic in an increasing travel cost environment;
- Reduction in the investment in CNS/ATM systems;
- Difficulty to deliver continuous theoretical as well as practical trainings for operational staff; and
- Probable insufficient preparedness and readiness to cope with the post Covid-19 air traffic growth.

Way forward:

- Implement innovative and efficient working solutions (AIDC, ATFM, ...) to address human factors issues;
- Identify and give priority to the implementation of projects that contribute to the resilience of the Air navigation system;
- Take advantage of the innovative solutions to implement remote learning programmes; and
- Develop and harmonize a regional ANSPs post Covid-19 cooperative restart and recovery mechanism.

Agenda Item 5: Support to the African Union Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) flagship programme

Under this Agenda Item, the meeting discussed issues related to the implementation of the ANS components of the AFCAC Joint Priority Action Plan for the operationalization of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) championed by the Republic of Togo, as a follow up to the AFCAC/AU Stakeholders meeting held in January 2022.

The meeting was also appraised of the existing initiatives within ASECNA Member States through the CUPA (single sky for Africa) project to build seamless ATM framework in Africa. The meeting also noted the existing opportunities and lessons arising from regional cooperative management of airspaces in Africa and recognized the role of the ANSPs as key enablers to the implementation of the SAATM. The meeting identified some existing challenges which could jeopardise the achievement of the SAATM and agreed on some way forward to address them.

Challenges:

- Increased cost of travel that continues inhibit demand recovery;
- Limitation of traffic growth and ANSPs revenue resulting from:
 - the non-granting of the fifth freedom among African States in the framework of SAATM;
 - Low cooperation and code-sharing among African airlines;
- Pending engagement of some States in the SAATM;
- Lack of an Air Navigation Systems Architecture and Roadmap for a Seamless Sky in Africa; and
- Low pace of development of the AFI ATM Master Plan (AAMP).

Way forward:

- Encourage AFCAC and States to work on a strategy aiming at reducing travel cost on the continent;
- Encourage States that have engaged in the SAATM to sign the MoU for its effective implementation including the fifth freedom as well as the removal of any other identified barriers to improved connectivity and the growth of air transport;
- Encourage the continent airlines to increase cooperation including code-sharing among themselves;
- Encourage the SAATM Champion and the interested States to finalize their engagement; and
- ANSPs to enhance collaboration for the establishment of the Air Navigation Systems Architecture and Roadmap towards a Seamless Sky in Africa in support to SAATM implementation.

Agenda Item 6: Implementation of the Global and Regional Air Navigation Plans (GANP & AFI ANP) and ANSPs Priority Areas of Cooperation

The meeting discussed priority areas of cooperation between the African ANSPs as well as the modalities for their implementation, with a particular emphasis on the spare parts and expertise sharing, the implementation of a seamless sky in support of the SAATM as well as the pooling of data and innovative technologies. The meeting identified some challenges faced by the ANSPs with regards to the proper planning and implementation of the ANS priorities and supporting programmes and came up with the way forward to address these challenges.

Challenges:

- Planning and implementation of Air Navigation Services;
- Non-start of PBN implementation in some States;
- No systematic update of PBN flight procedures in some States;
- Resources mobilization and staffing issues for the AFPP; and
- Lack of measurement of CO2 emission balance when introducing changes to the air navigation system.

Way forward:

- ANSPs who have not done so, to develop an ATM Master Plan as part of the National Air Navigation Plan, in line with the GANP/RANP, to guide their planning and implementation;
- ANSPs who have not done so, to expedite the effective implementation of PBN, with the support of the AFPP;
- ANSPs to update their PBN flight procedures on a systematic basis, in accordance with national regulations;
- ANSPs to support States for the resources mobilization for the sustainable functioning of the AFPP;
- ANSPs to support States in implementing the AFPP Steering Committee's decision on to consider secondees personnel as consultant; and
- ANSPs to develop a common baseline for the conduct of systematic carbon footprint assessment of air navigation system changes.

Agenda Item 7: Future work programme

Considering the identified challenges and the proposed way forward to address them, the meeting discussed and adopted the future work programme aiming to achieve the required actions as a way forward. In this work programme, some tasks are listed for each major item, with a responsible team and completion timelines. The meeting also agreed on the periodicity of the meetings to be 2 years, as well as the sessions of the Steering Committee to be held every year.

The future work programme is in **Appendix** to this report.

Agenda Item 8: Any Other Business

In this agenda item, the meeting was presented the emerging issue related to the lack of appropriate framework for the integration of the UAS in the airspace and their safe operation. The meeting recognized the challenges posed by the operation of UAS to the ANSPs in the current context of lack of regulatory framework and proposed the way forward to address these challenges

Challenges:

- Impact of unmanned aircraft systems (RPAS) or drones on ATC operations due to lack of regulatory framework and operational guidance.

Way forward:

- Encourage States, to develop and implement with the assistance of ICAO, the regulatory framework for the integration of RPAS into the air traffic management system; and
- ANSPs to share experiences in integrating RPAS into the air traffic management system.

III. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF OUTCOME

The meeting was presented with the main outcomes arising from the consideration of the agenda items. These outcomes were mainly presented under the challenges identified by the meeting and the way forward proposed to address them. The summary outcomes is attached as **Appendix B** to the report

The meeting agreed on the draft Future Work Programme as amended during the plenary and proposed the secretariat to circulate it to enable ANSPs to indicate the Action Teams they would volunteer to participate in and the ones they would like to lead. The Future Work Programme is attached as **Appendix C** to the Report.

IV. CLOSING CEREMONY

The closing ceremony was held on Friday 1st April 2022.

The meeting addressed a Motion to express their recognition and encouragement to Colonel Dokisime Gnana Latta, Director General of ANAC Togo, and Mr. Mohamed Moussa, Director General ASECNA for their support to the development of civil aviation in Africa. The meeting expressed also its Gratitude to Mr. Affoh Atcha-Dedji, Minister of Road, Air and Rail Transport and to the Government of the Republic of Togo for all the support and facilities provided.

The meeting addressed a special motion of thanks to His Excellency, Mr. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé, President of the Republic of Togo and African Union Heads of States Champion for the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), for his commitment, outstanding personal involvement and valuable support, for the promotion and operationalization of SAATM, in conjunction with the African Continental Free Trade Area.

The motions in their original French version are attached as **Appendices D & E** to the report

In his closing statement, Colonel Dokisime Gnana Latta, Director General of ANAC Togo expressed his satisfaction on the meeting outcomes and encouraged ANSPs to effectively implement the future work programme as agreed.

He wished a safe trip to participants and closed the 5th ANSPs meeting of the AFI Region.

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