

MEDIA RELEASE

Air transport supports 6.2 million jobs and \$55.8 billion in African economic activity

Geneva, 2 October 2018 – Africa is benefitting from air transport connections as over 98 million passengers travel in the region, supporting 6.2 million jobs in aviation and related industries, and 2.6% of the continent’s economic activity. These findings are in a new report, *Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders*, released by the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG) today.

Launching the report at the ATAG Global Sustainable Aviation Summit in Geneva, ATAG’s Executive Director, Michael Gill, said: “Let’s take a step back and think about how advances in air transport have changed the way people and businesses connect with each other – the reach we have today is extraordinary. More people in more parts of the world than ever before are taking advantage of safe, fast and efficient travel.”

“The aviation sector facilitates a substantial level of tourism in Africa. Globally, 57% of international tourists travel by air. This stimulates still more economic activity, as tourists spend their money with restaurants, hotels, retailers, tour operators, and other providers of consumer goods and services. In 2016, spending by foreign visitors who flew to African countries supported an estimated 4.9 million jobs and nearly \$36 billion contribution to GDP.”

“By 2036, aviation in the region is expected to support 9.8 million jobs and \$159 billion in economic activity. Key to this growth will be sustainable development of air transport, including the adoption of policies that ensure reduction in charges and fees for aviation services, infrastructure development, training of aviation-related labour force, and most notably, improving connectivity across the continent such as through the implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market.”

Abdérahmâne Berthé, Secretary General of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) said: “An important factor for the sustainable development and transformation of African aviation is the successful implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market . The opening of Africa skies goes hand in hand with the removal of visa restrictions and the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) which will facilitate movement of people and goods across African borders. In addition to measures to implement the above, AFRAA urges States to ensure that they create an enabling operating environment for airlines so that they may take advantage of the benefits that aviation brings.”

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ATAG is a coalition of organisations and companies throughout the air transport industry that drive the sustainable development of the air transport sector. Funding members include ACI, Airbus, ATR, Boeing, Bombardier, CANSO, CFM, Embraer, Honeywell Aerospace, GE, IATA, Pratt & Whitney, Rolls-Royce and Safran.

Ali Tounsi, Secretary General of Airports Council International Africa, commented: “The role of airports in improving and developing air transport cannot be underestimated. Airports have transformed their historic role of "gateway to a destination" to be a determining factor in development through their increasingly important roles in national and regional economics. Airports are struggling more than ever in this sector, which is becoming highly competitive, ensuring improved connectivity, producing positive multiplier effects in countries' economic activities and playing a major role in the sustainability of the industry.”

Boni Dibate, Director Africa Affairs of the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation, said: “As one of the fastest growing regions for international air traffic, Africa needs efficient, safe and cost-effective air traffic management (ATM) to realise aviation’s economic benefits. CANSO Members are achieving this through initiatives such as safety peer reviews, cross-border air traffic flow management (ATFM) and collaborative decision-making (CDM) with airports and airlines”.

Globally, the air transport sector 65.5 million jobs and \$2.7 trillion in economic activity, including over 10 million women and men working directly for the industry itself. Aviation carries 35% of world trade by value, but less than 1% by volume and 57% of world tourists travel to their destinations by air.

The report, which can be downloaded at www.aviationbenefits.org, was prepared by ATAG along with other aviation industry associations and builds on extensive research by Oxford Economics.

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- The Air Transport Action Group represents the entire aviation sector: airlines, airports, air traffic management organisations and the makers of aircraft and engines. It coordinates common industry positions on the sustainable future of air transport. www.atag.org