



transport

Department:  
Transport  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## **ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MS BARBARA CREECY, AT THE 2024 AVIATION AFRICA SUMMIT, SANDTON, JOHANNESBURG**

Programme Director;

Esteemed fellow Ministers and Permanent Secretaries of Transport and Aviation across Africa;

Mr Ernest Khosa, SACAA Board Chairperson and other Board Members present here today

The Director of Civil Aviation, Ms. Poppy Khoza;

CEOs of aviation entities, associations, and operators;

Representatives from the Department of Transport;

Captains of Industry;

Members of the civil aviation industry form across world;

Members of the media;

Thank you for inviting me to open your important Conference today. Let me also say how pleased I am to have the opportunity to host our counterparts from across the continent under the theme “Bridging skies and leveraging growth”

Ladies and gentlemen, as we gather this morning global air transportation is projected to report a full recovery during this 2024/25 financial year following the covid-19 pandemic.

In this context, the importance of the aviation sector cannot be overstated.

The concept of the aerotropolis is an important urban planning concept where airports serve as the core of commercial and economic development driving growth and innovation.

Here in South Africa as elsewhere on the continent, Aerotropolis developments can unlock numerous opportunities including job creation, infrastructure development, increased domestic and international connectivity, logistics, e-commerce, and other forms of innovation linked to urban regeneration and environmental sustainability.

Potential locations for Aerotropolis developments in South Africa OR Tambo in Johannesburg, Cape Town International Airport, King Shaka Airport, as well as smaller airports in Manaung and Nelson Mandela Metro.

In the continent opportunities for aerotropolis developments include Nairobi and Addis Ababa.

Prior to the Covid Pandemic in 2018, the Aviation sector in Africa supported 440 thousand direct and six and a half million indirect jobs. It created \$63 billion worth of economic activity. This amounted to nearly three percent of Africa's GDP and 2.2 percent of employment.

In this year, 2018, there were 1.2 million flights on the African continent, carrying 115 million passengers to 352 airports on 198 airlines.

By further interrogating the aerotropolis concept, strengthening co-operation among African nations, we can enhance our collective air transport network, improve connectivity, and support greater regional trade and tourism.

A recent IATA article estimates that over the next twenty years, air transport in South Africa is estimated to grow by 105%. This would result in an additional 21 million

passenger journeys in SA by 2037. If this target were met, the air transport would support nearly 800 000 jobs and generate \$19 billion a year in GDP.

We must work together to harmonize regulations, standardize procedures, and foster greater collaboration between our aviation authorities. This will not only streamline operations but also create a more cohesive and efficient aviation ecosystem across the continent.

In the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic tourism is an important economic sector offering significant employment creation across the value chain.

With its diverse landscapes and fauna and flora, rich cultures, and vibrant cities, Africa has immense potential to attract international tourists, which in turn will generate revenue, create jobs, and support local businesses.

To reach Africa's diverse destinations, tourists and business travelers, rely on an efficient, safe, affordable, efficient, reliable and interoperable aviation services.

South Africa is a signatory to the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). This agreement aims to enhance co-operation between airlines on the continent, through unrestricted frequency, and fair competition. The intention is to benefit both leisure and business travelers and accelerate economic growth and development of African economies.

Our country looks forward to participating in the pilot implementation project so we can better understand both benefits and risk mitigation related to this agreement.

Civil aviation safety and security is central to the confidence levels of passengers in air travel. Accordingly, whatever the difficulties, we must always ensure that our safety and security oversight is never compromised.

An International Air Transport Association (IATA) report, published in March 2024, found that Africa has not suffered a commercial airline accident for the past four years.

I am proud that our own country achieved ninety one percent on the Effective Implementation (EI) of safety oversight systems following the last audit conducted by the United Nation's specialised agency, ICAO, in 2023.

Ghana and Ethiopia follow closely with an over eighty eight percent achievement. Altogether, eleven African states have a safety rating of 75% and above.

Through South Africa is committed to ICAO's 'No Country Left Behind' initiative. Through this initiative and Memorandums of Understanding with our neighboring countries, we are committed to helping other African countries ensure civil aviation safety and security standards

are on par with some of the leading regions in other parts of the world.

Our aviation sector faces increasing pressure to reduce its environmental impact, and it is our responsibility to address these challenges proactively.

We must invest in and develop green technologies that minimise our carbon footprint and explore alternative fuels that support the growth of aviation without compromising our planet's health.

The 41st ICAO General Assembly resolutions from 2022 highlighted the global commitment to the net-zero carbon offsetting emission targets by Year 2050 within the aviation sector.

South Africa, through the SACAA, has been a participant of this pilot project since 2018 where our State continues to assist many of our neighboring states through the 'buddy system' of this program. As we approach the 42<sup>nd</sup> Assembly next year, it is crucial that Africa, not just South Africa, reaffirms its dedication and direction towards these goals.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I conclude, I hope that during this summit, we will also discuss strategies that will prepare us better for unexpected natural disasters and other emerging global risks. Our business continuity models must ensure that our industry can respond better to these unforeseen events

Let us, as African nations, use these two days to make significant strides in the development and growth of the aviation sector and the aerotropolis that surrounds it.

Let us commit to working together to build a resilient aviation industry that serves the needs of not only our individual nations and our continent but the global community.

I am pleased to declare the Aviation Africa – South Africa leg officially open!

At this time I invite the Minister of Rwanda or his representative to join me on stage to receive the flag as the next host of Aviation Africa Summit and Exhibition.