

**TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP
EL-MAHROUSA HOTEL, ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT
6-8 AUGUST 2005-09-11**

AVIATION, COMMUNICATION & WEATHER FORECASTING WORKING GROUP.

Delegates of the aviation, Communication and Weather Forecasting Working Group began their deliberations by electing their bureau as follows:

Chairperson: Sudan
Vice Chairperson: Egypt
Rapporteur: Kenya

The working group mandate was deliberate on the workshop's agenda, focusing on aviation, communication and weather forecasting, with a view to meeting the workshop's objective of developing clear and easy recommendations for the Transport Minister's meeting to be held in September 2005.

Delegates of the working group began the business of the day by reviewing issues impacting on the growth and development of aviation, communication and weather forecasting within the COMESA economies, viz:

- i. Provision of sufficient funds for the already established Air Transport Regulatory Board to enable it spreadhead unhindered growth of civil aviation in the COMESA region.
- ii. Establishment of specific competition rules to ensure orderly provision of air services and guarantee safety in a liberalized market.
- iii. Review of projects prioritization criteria as provided in the workshop agenda. In this regard, delegates amended the list of suggested criteria as it relates to aviation and communication to include:
 - a. Private sector willingness to participate in project funding.
 - b. Alignment of projects to the NEPAD provisions.
- iv. Alignment of projects chosen to resolutions of the last Transport Minister's meeting in Addis Ababa, relating to the achievement of the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals).

With the above mind, delegates of the Aviation, Communications and Weather Forecasting group were of the opinion that it is more appropriate for the COMESA countries to concentrate on those projects that they have been successful in undertaking. The group recommends the following:

1. Under civil aviation, COMESA member countries should concentrate on the enhancement of air navigation facilities, including full implementation of CNS-ATM (communication, navigation, surveillance air traffic management) system.

2. Under weather forecasting, COMESA member countries should pursue enhancement of weather forecasting capabilities through improvement of facilities and technology.

Other recommendations of the group relating to aviation, communication and weather forecasting are:

- COMESA countries should adhere to the full implementation of the Yamoussoukro accord but the appropriate safeguards need to be put in place to ensure fair competition and safety in operations.
- COMESA countries should encourage public-private sector collaboration in project funding and management (encourage capacity building and efficiency improvement).

In view of the foregoing proposals, delegates of the working group recommend that Transport Ministers give emphasis on those projects that can be fast tracked and also contribute to the attainment of the MDGs and are in line with the NEPAD provisions.

In reference to the upcoming GATS meetings, a unified COMESA viewpoint require Transport Ministers emphasize that COMESA countries should not be stretched beyond their level of economic development and should be given sample time to prepare their economies for liberalization. The Ministers must insist on the principal of reciprocity, especially on trade in services and particularly as it relates to movements of natural persons.