

EAC Examines Aviation Safety and Security at CASSOA Symposium

Details



Entebbe, Uganda; 31 May 2013: Stakeholders in the region's aviation sector today converged in Entebbe, Uganda for the 2nd East African Community Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (EAC-CASSOA) Symposium to discuss their roles in enhancing aviation safety and security.

The one-day conference on the theme: Linking Aviation Safety and Security: The Role of the Stakeholder was convened to examine new and emerging threats as far as aviation security in the region is concerned; challenges and impact of aviation security and; the role of stakeholders in enhancing aviation safety.

Uganda's State Minister for Foreign Affairs (Regional Affairs) Hon. Asuman Kiyingi who opened the Symposium made a strong case for generating and storing reliable data for aviation safety and security.

"Availability of complete, accurate and reliable data is critical to establishing and maintaining safety and security programs and systems, while ensuring harmony," Hon. Kiyingi said.

The Minister also called for better funding to the sector as a key measure for ensuring the right facilities are put in place to pre-empt threats to security and safety.

"Without committing the much needed resources programs for safety and security cannot be implemented nor sustained," the Minister observed, adding that committing resources relies on building strong mutual partnerships within the aviation industry.

At the same forum, the CASSOA Board chairman Mr. Rama Makuza lamented the inadequate funding mechanism for the regional aviation oversight body—based on Partner State contributions, as well as the difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified technical personnel owing to rigid remuneration structures.

More than 150 stakeholders drawn from within and outside the region heard that East African airports were becoming major conduits for trafficking drugs, human beings and human parts and as such the region could not afford to operate in isolation as far as aviation security is concerned.

These, according to Mr. Jessin Kalya, the aviation security manager at the Civil Aviation Authority in Uganda who spoke on the subject of aviation security in the context of regional conflict, are compounded by long-standing threats, such as terrorism and proliferation of small arms.

In this regard, key proposals floated to enhance aviation security included establishment of an anti-terrorism task force at the EAC Secretariat, joint training of aviation security personnel, developing an intervention force in the region, as well as correcting non-conformities identified during Security Audit Programmes (SAPs).

The 2nd Aviation Symposium brought together aviation sector regulators, air operators, Members of the East African Legislative Assembly, trainee inspectors and security and air transport policy makers among others. The Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency organized the conference, the second of its kind since the inaugural edition held in Arusha, Tanzania in 2009.