



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATIONS

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Press Release

20th Africa and Middle East Regional Meeting - Ouarzazate, Morocco

Air traffic control professionals from Africa and the Middle East assembled in Ouarzazate, in the Kingdom of Morocco for the IFTACA Seminar and 20th Africa and Middle East Regional Meeting from 03 – 05 November 2009. The meeting, which focused on **Performance**, was officially opened by His Excellency Abdessalam BEKRAT, the Governor of Ouarzazate and was chaired by IFATCA President and CEO, Mr. Marc BAUMGARTNER.

The meeting acknowledged the excellent effort of the Moroccan Air Traffic Controllers' Association to host the 120 delegates from 17 Member Associations, Corporate Members – SELEX and INDRA – and International Organizations such as IFALPA and ASECNA. The attendance of so many delegates from an area in which air travel is still proving difficult demonstrates the commitment of the region's air traffic controllers to their own personal and professional development and to ensuring safety in air traffic services.

Delegates were provided with technical and professional presentations on Performance in Air Traffic Management, Performance Based Navigation, Crisis communication, TCAS and ADS-B. Presentations such as these are a priority for IFATCA and form part of the federation's strategy to enhance the knowledge and professionalism of the world's air traffic controllers.

IFATCA acknowledged the effort made by L'Agence pour la Sécurité de la Navigation aérienne en Afrique et à Madagascar (ASECNA) to implement most of the conclusions of the meeting held between the Federation and ASECNA and its air traffic control staff and the International Transport Workers' Federation, and the French Air Traffic Controllers' Association, during the 48th Annual Conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia in April 2009; IFATCA stressed the need to maintain the efforts toward a continually improving relationship.

The meeting stressed the need for the region's Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSPs) to address the communication deficiencies that reduce the level of safety and efficiency of the air traffic services. The generally acknowledged worldwide shortage of air traffic controllers is even more critical in Africa and the Middle East. The staff shortage is exacerbated by the continuing lack of recognition for the air traffic control profession in many countries which has resulted in the movement of highly trained air traffic controllers to other aviation organizations and ANSPs in other countries. These

issues may severely affect the efforts of the region as it prepares for the expected increase in air traffic for the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa.

The following are some of the 21 recommendations the meeting adopted:

- Member Associations should commit to educate their members on Performance in ATM and the impact of the ICAO Global Concept.
- Air Navigation Service Providers should provide as a priority training to air traffic controllers on Performance Based Navigation.
- Air Navigation Service Providers should put in place effective strategies to address the critical shortage of ATCOs and implement attractive programs/incentives to retain them.
- Air Navigation Service Providers are strongly encouraged to improve the communication infrastructure within their individual airspaces to enhance safety in the region.

The support for this meeting and for the Moroccan Air Traffic Controllers' Association was evident in the opening remarks of the Director General of Morocco Civil Aviation Authority, and the Director General of Office National Des Aéroports (ONDA). The Kingdom of Morocco has clearly demonstrated its commitment to the development of aviation in Morocco and confirmed itself as a leading aviation State that should be an example for all in the region.

The IFATCA Africa and Middle East Region Award of Distinction was conferred on the late Mr. Henry P. Nkondokaya, Executive Vice-President Africa and Middle East who passed away in office on 6 September 2009.

The meeting confirmed Nairobi, Kenya, as the host venue for the 21st Africa and Middle East Regional Meeting and congratulated Jordan for being elected at the 2009 Annual Conference as the host of the 50th Annual Conference of IFATCA in 2011. Senegal and Nigeria were promised support in their intention to bid for the 51st Annual Conference in 2012.

Delegates agreed that with this successful meeting the cause for improved air traffic services in Africa and the Middle East was advanced significantly.

IFATCA is the worldwide organization representing more than fifty thousand air traffic controllers in 137 countries. Amongst its goals are the promotion of safety, efficiency and regularity in international air navigation and the protection and safeguarding of the interests of the air traffic control profession.

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