



PRESS RELEASE

Kenya Airways unveils its first “Freighter” as it seeks to address the growing demand for air cargo and prepares for the distribution of the COVID-19 Vaccine.

Nairobi, February 8, 2021 — Transport Cabinet Secretary James Macharia has today unveiled and commissioned the first Re-purposed Dreamliner for National carrier, Kenya Airways (KQ). The repurposed passenger Boeing 787 to a cargo aircraft, is in response to the depressed demand on the passenger side and the growing demand for air cargo in Kenya and across the continent and also addressing. The repurposing included cabin modifications undertaken through December 2020 by the KQ Team in close collaboration with Avianor, a leader in the aerospace industry.

Speaking during the unveiling event held at KQ’s Cargo Facility, CS Macharia urged exporters and importers present to seize the opportunity presented to maximise trade for the growth of our economy.

“The repurposing of the B787 is a clear indication that there is demand for air cargo and this is an opportunity for local manufacturers to ramp up production and take advantage of increased capacity being offered by our national carrier. As a government we will continue to partner with air cargo operators like Kenya Airways to enable them to expand their footprint across Africa to reduce the cost of logistics across the continent” said CS Macharia.

Kenya Airways continues to diversify its services while responding to the ongoing demand for cargo and specialized storage especially for pharmaceuticals by investing in a state-of-the-art pharma facility located at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA). The facility was a long-term investment made to meet the demand of pharmaceutical products globally and support the need of maintaining the product integrity throughout the supply chain. With the upcoming vaccination distribution, Kenya Airways has now readily positioned itself to transport the vaccines destined for Africa.

Speaking during the launch, Mr Allan Kilavuka, KQ Group Managing Director & CEO, said that the repurposing is part of KQ’s strategy towards diversification to increase its cargo capacity and support economic growth of the country post COVID-19.

“Diversification remains key to our recovery and the repurposing of this aircraft not only enables us to be ready to support the COVID-19 vaccine distribution across the continent, but also contributes towards addressing the disease burden in Africa via our state-of-the-art pharma facility. We look forward to working closely with the health sector fraternity and the ecosystem around it,” said Mr. Kilavuka.

Speaking at the same event Ms. Betty Maina Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development urged traders to take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) especially with KQ increased cargo capacity as the government will continue to facilitate them seek more markets for local produce.

“With the start of trading under AfCFTA, we should also take advantage of the African market because it absorbs most of Kenya’s processed exports. The expanding population in Africa provides Kenya with an opportunity to help the continent meet its imports and Kenya Airways is better positioned to support this market. The government of Kenya will continue to support traders by seeking other markets such as Russia, Japan, South Korea and the Middle East for its horticultural products. It is an opportunity for us to expand exports from Kenya into these other” said CS Maina



Kenya Airways also received its certificate of air worthiness from the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCCA) and Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) after the aircraft completed trial flights successfully and made its maiden flight to London carrying a mix of horticulture, fresh produce amongst other produce.

Speaking at the same event, Mr. Ojapat Okisegere, the CEO Fresh Produce Consortium of Kenya (FPCK) lauded Kenya Airways commitment to provide the much-needed capacity.

“Kenya Airways and the fresh produce industry recently committed to collaborate together to improve the logistics and the country’s competitiveness and part of this commitment was for KQ to provide the much needed capacity. Kenya Airways will require a minimum of three long-haul aircrafts to service the demand in the country and open new markets and therefore this is important progression to addressing the needs of traders in Kenya and across the continent.” Said Mr Okisegere.

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About Kenya Airways (<https://www.kenya-airways.com/ca/en/>)

Kenya Airways, a member of the Sky Team Alliance, is a leading African airline flying to 54 destinations worldwide, 41 of which are in Africa and carries over four million passengers annually. In 2020 KQ was named Africa’s Leading Airline by the World Travel Awards. It continues to modernize its fleet with its 36 aircraft being some of the youngest in Africa. This includes its flagship B787 Dreamliner aircraft. The on-board service is renowned and the lie-flat business class seat on the wide-body aircraft is consistently voted among the world’s top 10. Kenya Airways takes pride in being at the forefront of connecting Africa to the World and the World to Africa through its hub at the new ultra-modern Terminal 1A at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi.

About Avianor (www.avianor.com)

Avianor has been a leader in MRO, integration and interior finishing of commercial and military aircraft for more than 25 years. Located at Montreal-Mirabel International Airport (YMX), comprised of 350 permanent and temporary employees, in addition to 250,000 square feet of hangars, manufacturing and repair shops, warehouses and offices. DRAKKAR Aerospace & Ground Transportation became a majority shareholder of the company in 2019, thus continuing its growth and position of choice within the local, national and international aerospace industry. , in addition to 250,000 square feet of hangars, manufacturing and repair shops, warehouses and offices. DRAKKAR Aerospace & Ground Transportation became a majority shareholder of the company in 2019, thus continuing its growth and position of choice within the local, national and international aerospace industry.

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