

Entebbe Airport in expansion drive

By David Lumu

Entebbe International Airport has lately seen an expansion and modifications to accommodate the fast-growing tourism and investment passenger traffic, yet the journey for the airport to reclaim its number one position on the continent has just begun.

"In order to secure continued economic growth and competitiveness, the Government has come up with a 20-year master plan to expand, modernise and reconstruct the airport," according to Vianney Luggya, the spokesperson of the Civil Aviation Authority.

Luggya said the airport is currently undergoing a major upgrade and expansion for the first time in several years. The China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), a firm contracted to upgrade and expand the airport, is currently carrying preliminary engineering activities, including earthworks and grading, in preparation for commencement of actual construction works.

The first phase of the upgrade and expansion programme is being funded



Entebbe International Airport is Uganda's only airport

using a \$200m (sh700b) loan from Exim Bank of China. Under the phase one of the upgrade and expansion of the airport, the old runway (12/30) and the main one (17/35) will be strengthened with a new asphalt overlay. A runway is a surface designed for the aircrafts to use for takeoffs and landings.

The old Apron 2 (parking area) for planes of VIPs including one for the president will also be strengthened with a new asphalt overlay.

The Apron 4 for UN planes will have a new concrete pavement added. Apron 1, which is located near the existing terminal building will also be strengthened and expanded to accommodate six aircrafts. Another apron will be established at the new cargo centre that will be constructed to accommodate three large and (three) small (cargo) planes.

According to the design, the taxiways, the path between aprons and runways, will be

GOVERNOR SIR ANDREW COHEN STARTED ALL THE RURAL AIRFIELDS IN UGANDA

expanded and strengthened with an asphalt overlay. It is anticipated that the upgraded and expanded Entebbe International Airport will be able to handle 3.5 million passengers each year, more than half of the current estimated 1.5 million travelers. For this to happen, the existing terminal building will be expanded.

The expansion of the existing terminal building will involve bringing down parts (of the existing terminal building) and creating more space for more passengers to leave and exit through the complex with ease. The new terminal building will also have more boarding gates and bridges than the existing facility. It will sit on 20,000 square meters.

The old cargo centre, which is located near the existing terminal building, will be demolished to facilitate the expansion of (the terminal building).

Pre-independence period
Uganda's natural endowment endeared it to the British colonialists. As a landlocked country, the quickest transport mode to help establish their position was air transport. The colonial government moved quickly to develop aeronautical infrastructure in Uganda. An airstrip 1,000 by 60 yards was established at Kololo Hill in 1936, to serve the commercial centre of Kampala, with a bigger airport planned for location in Entebbe, 40km away from the city. The £18,500 project for Kololo airstrip was approved by Governor Philip

Entebbe International Airport

Uganda's aviation hub, Entebbe International Airport, was constructed in 1947, to serve the colonial administrative regime established under Sir Gerald Portal in 1893. Entebbe has since been developed as Uganda's international gateway with its traffic growing from a paltry 27,000 passengers in 1962 to 1.5 million in 2016.

Entebbe was commissioned in 1952 by Princess Elizabeth II (Queen Elizabeth II), where she also departed to return to England on learning of her father's death and her ascendancy to the throne.

Mitchell and executed by Galley and Roberts Ltd. The small air traffic control centre built at Kololo still holds ground amidst more modern residential and national park developments. The Kololo airstrip is historic for hosting the independence ceremony in October 1962.

Run-up to independence

By October 1962, Entebbe airport had handled several modern aircrafts including the Comets operated jointly by British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) and South African Airways in 1952. Entebbe Airport was preferred to Nairobi due to its elevation at 3780 feet as compared to Nairobi's 5,500 feet which made it too hot and too high for the Comet 1 aircraft.

The Comet 1 service to South Africa from Europe was thus transiting through Entebbe, setting the stage for the airport's potential growth in East Africa. The growing colonial influence coupled with abundant wildlife, led to the establishment of more aerodromes around the country to support the tourism industry.

Among these were Kasese, Kidepo, Pakuba and later, Kisoro. Arua, Gulu, Mbarara and Moroto were developed to enhance service delivery while Jinja and Tororo supported industrial developments in the respective areas. Governor Andrew Cohen was instrumental in laying ground for the rural airfields projects.

Post-independence period

By the early 1950s, the colonial state was administering East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) under a common services arrangement. The East African Directorate of Civil Aviation (EADCA) was established to regulate the growing air transport industry. East African Airways (EAA) was formed in 1945 as a joint venture between the three partner states and Zanzibar. By Uganda's independence in 1962, the regional airline was recording annual profits of well above £460,000.

Two years after Uganda's independence, the first four East Africans joined the air

work school at Perth for pilot training.

In 1965, Uganda had its first registered aircraft following East African Airways decision on its fleet ownership after the partner states became independent. Two years later Uganda contracted as a member state of ICAO, the UN agency charged with supervising the orderly development of civil aviation in the world.

1966 witnessed political skirmishes in Uganda heralding the onset of political turmoil in the country. The wars of liberalisation and the attendant political instability that characterised the 1970s and 1980s had a toll on the country's aeronautical infrastructure.

In 1971 Idi Amin took over government. The same year, the East African Community opened the region's first aviation training academy at Soroti. The academy trained the finest breed of pilots and aircraft maintenance engineers on the continent. While it survived the community wind-up in 1977, its standards and rating continued to fall due to poor financing and departure of its senior instructors, who were the backbone of its first six years of excellence.

The Entebbe airport hit the global annals of history for being the scene of a daring rescue mission by elite Israeli troops who rescued over 100 hostages hijacked by a group of Palestinian and German militia in 1976.

With the East African Community busting in 1977, the aviation industry in Uganda took the brunt of its demise. The Directorate of Civil Aviation (DCA) and Uganda Airlines were formed to fill the service gaps left by the community's sudden collapse. The national airlines growth path was crossed by a series of incidents including the tragic accident of a B707-388 at Fiumicino Airport in Italy in 1988. In April 1979 another B707 had been destroyed by the Tanzanian army during the liberation war, bringing the airline's fleet to its knees. The Twin Otters, Cessnas and Cherokees that the airline boasted of folded their wings in worrisome succession, leading to the airlines liquidation in 2001.

East African Community
Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency



THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY AND SECURITY
OVERSIGHT AGENCY CONGRATULATES THE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY
UGANDA AS IT COMMEMORATES

THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION DAY 2017!

The East African Community Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (EAC-CASSOA) was established by the EAC Council of Ministers following the signing of a Protocol by three founder Partner States on 18th April 2007. It started operations on 1st June 2007, as an autonomous self-accounting institution of the EAC. It was thereafter formally launched on 18th June 2007 during the 5th Extraordinary Summit of EAC Heads of State held in Kampala, Uganda.

The mandate of CASSOA is based on Article 92 of the EAC Treaty, under which the Partner States undertake to make air transport services safe, efficient and profitable; adopt common policies for the development of civil air transport in the Region; harmonise Civil Aviation Laws and Regulations and coordinate measures and co-operate in the maintenance of high security.

VISION

Attain a Safe and Secure Regional Civil Aviation Industry through enhanced oversight systems.

MISSION

Developing, promoting and coordinating the Implementation of Sustainable Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Systems in the Partner States.

Alongside the **CORE VALUES** of the EAC, CASSOA shall promote **Integrity, Professionalism, Respect and Teamwork** in the work place.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES on the basis of these thematic areas:

- To enhance CASSOA's corporate image and strengthen its governance and finance structure.
- To promote an effective and sustainable civil aviation safety oversight system in the region.
- To promote an effective and sustainable civil aviation security oversight system in the region.

DECEMBER 2017

EAC CASSOA
Plot 41/43 Circular Road,
P.O. Box 873, Entebbe
Uganda.

Telephone: +256 414 322047
+256 312 260030
Fax: +256 414 322049
Email: cassoa@cassoa.org
www.cassoa.org