

ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN AIR FORCES

CHARTER

FOREWORD

Africa is a diverse and dynamic region that is undergoing significant gains in economic growth and development, but transnational and domestic security threats often hinder progress. Challenges range from resource distribution concerns and long-standing identity conflicts to growing issues with violent extremism and drug trafficking. African nations are increasingly stepping up to confront these security issues.

Airpower is a critical component and key to successfully combating these security challenges. Air assets can be utilized to overcome some of the difficulties presented by Africa's size, austere environment and limited transportation infrastructure. Air mobility operations bridge distances, support rapid resupply of ground troops, and expand governmental reach. Airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) provides vital situational awareness. Air interdiction allows for kinetic operations covering a broad area while close air support provides firepower to troops in contact.

While airpower itself can be a force multiplier, regional cooperation in the air domain is just as important. During the 2014 African Air Chiefs Symposium, the participants cited the transnational nature of the current security challenges and argued they require continental, regional, multilateral, and bilateral cooperation for effective responses. To this end, the Air Chiefs expressed a desire to formalize the existing Air Chiefs' forum and develop an organization to facilitate cooperation.

This charter is the first iteration and attempt at formalizing the Association of African Air Forces.

SECTION I: ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN AIR FORCES

I. Title and Objective

The Association of African Air Forces (AAAF) is a voluntary and non-political organization; membership is open to Air Forces or their equivalent within the continent of Africa and the United States of America.

II. Purpose

The purpose of AAAF is to foster and strengthen the bonds of friendship, cooperation and mutual support among its members.

III. Approach

The AAAF is focused on the exchange of experiences and examining opportunities to cooperate and collaborate in order to improve and support air operations across Africa.

IV. Guiding Principles

The principles guiding AAAF:

- A. The need for airpower capabilities throughout Africa has never been more relevant. Airpower is a comprehensive solution to address many African challenges, to include the vast African geography, the current transnational threat situation, and the lack of infrastructure.*
- B. Because of their professional knowledge, the members of the AAAF are able to advise their respective governments and international organizations (e.g. African Union, Regional Economic Communities) on the effective and efficient use of air resources.*
- C. It is essential to maintain and strengthen a climate of professional cooperation and trust in which future agreements may be developed.*
- D. AAAF agreements and activities, as defined by this charter, are apolitical and will not affect the sovereignty of the nation states.*

V. Topics of Interest

Fundamental topics of mutual interest to address:

- A. Air operations, specifically mobility, ISR, close air attack*
- B. Humanitarian assistance/disaster relief*
- C. Transnational threats*
- D. Human resources, education and training*
- E. Supply, logistics, rapid response*
- F. Air accident prevention, air domain safety*

VI. Official Language

Documents of the Association of African Air Forces will be provided in both English and French. When possible and requested, documents will be provided in Portuguese and Arabic as well.

SECTION II: MEMBERSHIP

VII. Members of the AAAF

- A. Members are defined as the Air Forces or the equivalent of every country that signs this charter.*
- B. All members have an equal voice within the association.*
- C. Members should provide a liaison officer to be a part of the liaison officer working group.*
- D. Members implement activities and action items agreed upon during an annual symposium.*

SECTION III: AAAF ORGANIZATION

The AAAF is managed on an annual cycle. This cycle is the course of time from the start of an African Air Chiefs Symposium to the start of the following one, normally equating to a one-year period.

VIII. African Air Chiefs Symposium (AACS)

- A. The intent is for AACS to be held annually, subject to the availability of sufficient funds; the location will be determined by the co-hosting Air Force.*
- B. Executive and plenary sessions may be held during AACS. Bilateral or multilateral meetings may be held on a voluntary basis upon the request of one or more countries.*
- C. Location of the next AACS should be announced during current AACS.*
- D. Air Chiefs will determine action items to be addressed by the liaison officer working group during the following year.*

IX. Chairman of the AAAF

- A. The Air Force Commander of the co-hosting nation is considered the AAAF Chairman.*
- B. The USAFE-AFACRICA Commander or designee is the Vice Chairman.*
- C. The Chairman of the AACS leads the association during the AAAF cycle.*

X. Liaison Officer Working Group

- A. The liaison officer working group is made up of officers designated by their respective air forces.*
- B. The working group is tasked with maintaining communication between the AAAF members throughout the year.*
- C. The working group will collaborate to answer the action items developed by the Air Chiefs at the AACS. They will provide an update on the action plan during the subsequent symposium.*

XI. Office of the Permanent Secretariat

- A. The purpose of the Permanent Secretariat is to centralize and ensure the continuity and permanency of AACS and all other AAAF activities.*
- B. The Permanent Secretariat provides administrative and functional support to the AAAF, such as ensuring action items decided on during the annual symposium by the Air Chiefs are accomplished. It develops, reports, records, and disseminates information.*
- C. Responsibility for Permanent Secretariat operations should be assumed by an Air Force for a minimum period of five years.*

XII. Effective Date

- A. This association takes effect upon the date of the charter's signature.*