



## Press Release

### **New AfBAA executive doubles membership and fulfills key goals in first 12 months of leadership.**

- New leadership sets pillars and makes progress towards targets in every area.
- Membership more than doubled during the last twelve months.
- New committees formed to attract wider industry sectors to Association.
- Signed MoUs with influential African and global organizations.
- Established connections with influential industry bodies worldwide.

**12 May 2026/Kigali, Rwanda** - One year after electing a new Chairperson and Vice Chair, the African Business Aviation Association (AfBAA) has made huge strides in its mission to support and promote the business aviation community across the continent. Highlights include more than doubling the membership, with the current listing rising to 55 members with many former members returning. A new UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems or Uncrewed Aircraft Systems) committee has been formed in recognition of the growing numbers and vast potential for the unmanned aerial vehicle sector across Africa. The Association has also established an Operators Committee to attract more operators and bolstered the Safety and Training Committee in support of its mission to raise standards across the continent.

Close ties with both regional and international bodies have also been established. A milestone meeting with the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) focused on creating and sharing valuable aviation data, enabling the prominent agency to advocate on AfBAA's behalf. Initiatives were agreed that will see AFCAC represent business aviation interests at national CAAs and external agencies such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

"This was a breakthrough discussion, and we are delighted that the AFCAC can better support us in conversations with government and regulatory bodies. This cooperation will benefit all African aviation stakeholders, not just the individual organizations," said Dawit Lemma, Chairperson AfBAA.

AfBAA has also signed MOUs with the Commercial Aviation Association of South Africa (CAASA) and the Airlines Association of South Africa (AASA). Recognizing the influence of each entity, the discussions will help each organization support the other on regional and national issues.

Lemma said: "Communication between the associations is essential for us all to build knowledge, intelligence, and understanding. As well as the agreements with African bodies, we are working with the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), and the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC) to encourage members to adopt the International Standard for Business Aircraft Operations (IS-BAO) and the International Standard for Business Aviation Handlers (IS-BAH)."

With a key focus on raising the profile, the executive also worked closely with organizers of the influential Aviation Africa event to host a dedicated AfBAA pavilion, where members could exhibit on a

shared single AfBAA booth to increase exposure and maximize budget. “Following the success of the Africa Pavilion at Aviation Africa in Kigali, at the 2026 Nairobi event in September, we are repeating the concept with more booths and are delighted that all 12 are now booked.” A keynote speech delivered by Lemma inspired discussion and debate, showcasing the new approach to AfBAA.

Lemma adds: “Our board strategy is based on five key pillars and aims to generate momentum, raise visibility, and support credibility by acting as a single voice with regulators, industry, and international organizations. We are streamlining governance and operations; expanding the aircraft segments that can join; and increasing the Association's visibility outside of Africa. We have also improved our internal and external communications, with regular press coverage and a flow of feedback from our members that helps us to understand and support their needs.”

Craig Middleton, AfBAA Vice Chairperson, added: “AfBAA acts as a bridge, adapting global frameworks to local conditions for effective implementation, which will boost the sector's safety, efficiency, and growth across the continent.

“We are proud to have fulfilled the promises we made when we took up responsibilities in May 2025. We have made great progress on all our set priorities and, thanks to feedback from our growing membership, have highlighted areas of concern and improvement for the next 12 months. It has been a privilege and a joy to have been an active part of the growth of the Association, both in size and stature, over this year, and we have plans to continue this dynamic development in the coming months.”

**Photo 1** – L to R Kevin Storie, CEO CAASA, Dawit Lemma, AfBAA Chair, & Craig Middleton, AfBAA Vice Chair, sign MoU at Aviation Africa 2025.

**Photo 2** – The AfCAC Secretariat & AfBAA discussions at Aviation Africa 2025 result in an MOU.

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