

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY COMMITTEE/ MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Hon. Ministers

Dignitaries present

Stakeholders in the aviation industry

It is a pleasure to address people making it happen every day in one of the key pillars of Rwanda's economy that has greatly contributed to the acceleration of the country's economic growth.

Today's Aerodrome Emergency Exercise, is the second of its kind at Kigali International Airport. It is a mandatory exercise in line with Rwandan regulations and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)'s Standards and Recommended Practices. It is a requirement that the exercise be done every after two years to develop preparedness for emergency situations amongst airport staff and stakeholders.

During this exercise, each integral part of an emergency unit has to be exposed to enhance knowledge, understanding and be able to respond with urgency to a crisis.

And like the common adage goes, 'practice makes perfect'. We need to perfect the emergency drills because each second we lose might mean that a life is lost. Though we deal with uncertain situations, our priority is to save lives. It is too precious to lose one person. That is why we must fine-tune the key aspects of command, communication and coordination skills during this exercise. It is important that the practice is continuous with the purpose of strengthening our in-house capabilities as well as

incorporating worst case simulations every time we do an emergency full scale exercise.

Another vital reason why emergency drills must be taken seriously is that airport operations must resume as soon as possible. To note, is that we have made major investments to ensure an intact economy, therefore, in the face of a crisis we should strive to ensure that this intactness is preserved because after you have saved lives, you need to consider the Return On Investment.

It is therefore paramount to note that, airport staff and stakeholders alike must be fully involved in these exercises to be prepared at all times because a crisis is an unexpected event, it does not alert anyone, it doesn't have shape or form and it happens when we least expect it.

So, with these drills, we expect the formation of a strong emergency team with a knowledge to base on when making decisions that will ensure damage control during a crisis.

I thank you for your kind attention.