

SAA, Kenya Airways aim for 'formidable' pan-African airline

South African Airways (SAA) and Kenya Airways have signed a strategic partnership framework which marks a milestone in the two companies' plans to form a pan-African airline by 2023.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

This after the two airlines signed a memorandum of cooperation in September to share knowledge, expertise and technology moving forward.

The latest strategic partnership framework was signed during a ceremony in the presence of President Cyril Ramaphosa and his Kenyan counterpart President Uhuru Kenyatta during the latter's State Visit to South Africa.

SAA chairperson John Lamola said the agreement for the envisioned intra-Africa airline will have positive knock-on effects on other sectors.

"The partnership will improve the financial viability of the both airlines by creating the most formidable air transport connection in Africa by benefiting from at least two attractive hubs of Johannesburg and Nairobi. It will ignite the Kenya and South Africa tourism circuits, which account for significant portions of the respective country's GDP," Lamola said.

Kenya Airways chairperson Michael Joseph added that the partnership will contribute to the vision of the Africa Continental

Free Trade Area by easing travel between the East and Southern African countries.

"It will increase connectivity through passenger traffic, cargo opportunities, while enhancing the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA). The geolocation of the two countries will make the Pan-African Airline Group attractive by creating the most formidable Airline Group that is expected to take advantage of strengths in South Africa, Kenya, and Africa," Joseph said.

In a joint statement, the two airlines said the strategic partnership framework will pave the way for more cooperation.

"The signing...will see both airlines work together to increase passenger traffic, cargo opportunities, and general trade by taking advantage of strengths in South Africa, Kenya, and Africa. It is expected that the partnership will improve the financial viability of the two airlines. Customers will also benefit from more competitive price offering for both passenger and cargo segment," the two airlines said.

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