



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**AASA STATEMENT ON UK RELAXING TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON SOUTH AFRICA AND OTHER SOUTHERN AFRICAN NATIONALS**

*14 December 2021, JOHANNESBURG* –The Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA) is relieved that sense has prevailed, and the UK has decided to relax the travel restrictions that were hastily imposed on South Africa and other Southern African countries following the announcement of the identification of the Omicron variant by South African scientists last month.

“It was clear from the start that restrictions, the intentions of which are debatable, were counter-productive and ineffective. We trust that policy makers and political leaders will take their lead from science and harmonise their adoption of measures for safe air travel that are recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and its UN sister body, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). At the same time, governments that have imposed restrictions on air travel ought to provide financial relief to airlines, their service providers and employees who have all been negatively affected by these restrictions,” said AASA CEO, Aaron Munetsi.

**About AASA**

AASA represents most of the airlines in the SA Development Community bloc on matters of common interest relating to government policies, legislation, regulations, planning, operational efficiency, safety, security, taxes, charges, and other matters affecting its members’ sustainability and the provision of affordable and accessible air transport throughout the region.

AASA was established in 1970 and currently has 17 airline members and 35 associate members, including infrastructure service providers, aircraft and engine manufacturers and other industry suppliers, ground handling companies and allied industry bodies.

AASA is a regular participant and contributor to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and International Air Transport Association (IATA) and supports their initiatives in the region.

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