

Government takes over Soroti flying school

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By Damali Mukhaye

KAMPALA: Cabinet has approved the proposal for the government of Uganda to take over sole ownership of the East African Civil Aviation Academy (EACAA), in Soroti District in eastern Uganda.

Government spokesperson Mr Ofwono Opondo on Tuesday said the school which was initially jointly owned by the countries in the East African Community (EAC) Including Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania is now going to be taken over by Uganda.

Mr Opondo explained that following the collapse of the EAC in 1995, the three countries retained one school within the academy with Kenya taking over the training of maintenance engineers, Tanzania took school of communications and Uganda took over training of pilots. He, however, noted that the other two governments stopped funding the school after the revival of the EAC hence the government of Uganda has to take over sole ownership and maintenance.

“Cabinet on Monday approved the proposal by the works and transport ministry for the government of Uganda to take over the ownership and management of the academy. Uganda had earlier proposed that the school of aviation in Soroti be part of the infrastructure the countries have to date not contributed any money,” Mr Opondo said.

He added that “The government of Uganda has been suffering all the costs in this school so we

now think that the other two countries no longer have interest in it; that is why we have moved formally to take over.”

Mr Opondo noted that the takeover will enable Uganda to fund the training of the commercial pilots and aircraft maintenance engineers for the Uganda Peoples’ Defence Air Forces, Uganda Police Air Wing, and the executive (Presidential) jet, commercial and general aviation. He said that the academy will also be feeding the newly revived Uganda Airlines which is slated to resume soon.

“When we resume the training of pilots within the country, it will save the country colossal sums of foreign exchange which would be used for training pilots and aircrafts maintenance engineers abroad or overseas,” Opondo said.

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