Boeing, Ethiopian Airlines Announce Order for 20 737 MAX 8s

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CHICAGO, Sept. 20, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] and Ethiopian Airlines today announced an order for 20 737 MAX 8s. The order, previously unidentified on the Boeing Orders & Deliveries website, is worth more than $2.1 billion at list prices and also includes options and purchase rights for a further 15 737 MAX 8s. The order represents the largest single Boeing order by number of airplanes from an African carrier.

"Today's order underlines our commitment to our 15-year strategic plan, 'Vision 2025', in which Ethiopian will strive to become the leading airline group in Africa carrying 18 million passengers per annum," said Tewolde Gebremariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, during a visit to the Association for the Promotion of Tourism to Africa National Forum in Chicago. "The 737 MAX will form a key component of that strategic vision, enhancing our single-aisle fleet and keeping us at the forefront of African aviation."

The 737 MAX incorporates the latest technology CFM International LEAP-1B engines, Advanced Technology winglets and other improvements to deliver the highest efficiency, reliability and passenger comfort in the single-aisle market. The 737 MAX will be 14 percent more fuel-efficient than today's most efficient Next-Generation 737s – and 20 percent better than the original Next-Generation 737s when they first entered service. The 737 MAX has a total of 2,294 orders from 47 customers worldwide.

"This historic order for Boeing and our partner Ethiopian once again positions the carrier at the heart of African aerospace innovation with the acquisition of the 737 MAX," said Van Rex Gallard, vice president of Sales for Latin America, Africa and the Caribbean, Boeing Commercial Airplanes, speaking in Chicago. "Throughout the years, Ethiopian has consistently led the way in introducing new airplane types to passengers across Africa. Today's record order signals its commitment to continue that tradition."

Ethiopian currently serves more than 83 destinations across five continents from its base at Bole International Airport in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian flag carrier's partnership with Boeing has existed for more than half a century, with a current fleet of more than 50 Boeing airplanes that includes Next-Generation 737s, 757s, 767s, 777s, 787 Dreamliners and a cargo fleet of 757s, 777 Freighters and MD-11s.

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