



የኢትዮጵያ ዘወድ መኅበር

THE CROWN COUNCIL OF ETHIOPIA

HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ERMIAS SAHLE-SELASSIE HAILE-SELASSIE
PRESIDENT

A SHARED VISION

TRIBUTE FROM HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ERMIAS SAHLE SELASSIE HAILE SELASSIE
President, The Crown Council of Ethiopia



ON THE OCCASION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF AVDYNE AEROSERVICES LLC
July 26, 2025

It gives me great honor to salute AvDyne AeroServices LLC on the occasion of its 25th anniversary, and to recognize the visionary leadership of Mr. Jerome Hodge, whose commitment to excellence in aviation maintenance science continues the noble tradition of the Tuskegee Airmen. Among those hallowed pioneers was Colonel John C. Robinson, a graduate of the Tuskegee Institute's mechanical engineering program, founder of the Coffey Aviation School — America's first aviation academy established by an African American aviator — and a dedicated Pan-Africanist who answered Ethiopia's call in her hour of need.



*Aviator and Pioneer
Colonel John C. Robinson*

At the request of my grandfather, His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I, Colonel Robinson organized Ethiopia's first air force, trained its early aviators, and helped launch Ethiopian Airlines. His ultimate

sacrifice in 1954 — giving his life on an aviation mission in service to Ethiopia — remains a beacon for all who believe in the transformative power of courage, knowledge, and unity among peoples of African descent.



(l-r) Mr. Timothy James, Managing Director of The Elevate Group of Boston, HH Prince Ermias; Captain Abiy Mekonnen Berehe



(l-r) Mr Jerome Hodges, President and CEO AvDyne Aeroservices, LLC and Mrs Hodges; Woizero Kunjina Andualem; and Captain Abiy Mekonnen Berehe, Chief Commercial Officer

In that same spirit, AvDyne stands today as a bridge between the African American experience and the modern renaissance of aviation on the African continent. Founded by CEO Jerome Hodge and his wife Mrs. Denise Hodge, AvDyne has grown from a principled vision into one of the leading aviation maintenance companies in the United States. Mr. Hodge — a 21-year veteran of the United States Air Force, where he served with distinction as a Master Sergeant and Flight Engineer — embodies the precision, leadership, and discipline essential to aerospace success. As a former President of the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen Inc., he carries forward the enduring flame of those who proved themselves in war and peace against all odds.

Supporting him are a remarkable team, including Vice President Gregory Hodge and Chief Operating Officer Gabriel J. Christian, Esq., past President of the East Coast Chapter Tuskegee Airmen and trusted legal advisor to the Ethiopian Crown Council — whom I first met in 1993 and who graciously invited me to the Tuskegee Airmen Christmas Dinner in 2012. Mr. Christian has been instrumental in helping to reconnect the African Diaspora with the Ethiopian heritage, and it was he who, in 2023, brought about a deeply personal and emotional reunion between myself and my dear elementary school friend, Captain Abiy Makonnen Behre, after 47 years of separation. That reunion, which took place at the East Coast Chapter Tuskegee Airmen Youth in Aviation Breakfast, was a moment of profound joy and reflection—made all the more powerful by the shared purpose we now hold in the aviation renaissance uniting Africa and its Diaspora.

Today, Captain Abiy Makonnen Behre serves as Chief Commercial Officer of AvDyne and has been a driving force behind its expansion of operations with PSA Airlines, a regional carrier for American Airlines. The son of the legendary Captain Makonnen Behre, one of Ethiopian Airlines' earliest and most respected pilots, Captain Abiy carries forward his family's proud aviation legacy with dignity and excellence.



Representative of East Coast Chapter Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. (ECCTAI), the oldest and largest chapter of the renowned Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.



HH Prince Ermias

We also recognize Chief Technical Officer Gedeon Kidanu, a graduate of the Ethiopian Airlines Aviation Academy, whose technical leadership helps power AvDyne's operations at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), where more than 190 Ethiopian aviation engineers serve with skill and professionalism.

This historic collaboration reflects a sacred legacy — one that began with the partnership between Ethiopian Airlines and Trans World Airlines (TWA) nearly 90 years ago, and which has helped Ethiopia develop world-class aviation capabilities. Today, AvDyne AeroServices stands firmly within that continuum of excellence, innovation, and transatlantic partnership.

As Ethiopian Airlines continues to expand its mission of uplifting African aviation, we look forward to even greater collaboration with AvDyne AeroServices, JAG-Elevate, and our international

allies. These bonds are forged in shared history and mutual respect, and they offer a vision of unity and progress for the generations to come.

To the AvDyne family, I extend my deepest gratitude and admiration. May your continued success inspire all who labor for unity, scientific advancement, and the uplifting of Africa and its children worldwide.

Happy 25th Anniversary!

May our partnership continue to rise on the wings of excellence, and may future generations look back on this moment as the renewal of a proud and sacred journey.

God bless you.

His Imperial Highness Prince Ermias Sahle Selassie Haile Selassie
President, Crown Council of Ethiopia