

## **A Jacket, a Journey, and a Joyful Descent: Dickson Nyibule's Farewell**

After more than four decades in the skies, there are few stories within Kenya Airways that carry the depth, grace, and quiet impact of Dickson Nyibule's journey. A name synonymous with dedication, professionalism, and warmth, Nyibule is not just retiring from a career; he is closing a chapter that has touched continents, connected cultures, and shaped generations of cabin crew.

### **But beyond the uniform, who is Dickson Nyibule?**

To many, he is a mentor. To others, a steady presence in the cabin. And to those who have had the privilege of flying alongside him, he is unforgettable, defined not just by his title as Flight Purser, but by the calm authority and kindness he carried on every flight. Colleagues describe him simply as: cool, calm, and collected.

### **A Journey That Almost Didn't Begin**

Dickson's story with Kenya Airways began in July 1986, but not in the way one might expect. On what was meant to be his first day, he arrived at the airline's headquarters, appointment letter in hand, only to be told his intake had been nullified. For a moment, everything stood still.

"What do I do now?" he asked.

"Just go back," came the reply.

A week later, a call changed everything. On 8th July 1986, he reported back and began a journey that would span four decades. Part of the pioneering "District Focus Group," representing Mombasa alongside colleague Samuel Mwavita, Nyibule entered an aviation world defined by aircraft like the Boeing 707, DC-9, and Fokker 27. From local routes to global destinations, he grew with the airline, witnessing and contributing to its evolution. Two years later, he found himself in Frankfurt training on the Airbus A310, a moment that marked not just technological progress, but personal possibility.

### **A Dream That Flew Further Than Expected**

Long before aviation became his life, Nyibule had a simple dream to work, save, and one day afford a ticket to London. He didn't just make that trip. He spent 40 years flying the world. What kept him going was not routine, but purpose. A deep pride in his role. A belief in service. And a commitment to people, whether ensuring safety at 35,000 feet or supporting colleagues through the airline's Embrace peer support programme.

### **Moments That Stay With You**

Forty years in the skies come with countless memories, but for Nyibule, it is the human moments that endure. From mentoring young crew to managing difficult in-flight situations, each experience reinforced the emotional depth of the role. One particularly intense moment involved a couple in conflict mid-flight, an incident that tested not just his professionalism, but his empathy. Then there were the extraordinary moments. Nyibule had the rare honor of flying with four Presidents of Kenya: **Daniel arap Moi, Mwai Kibaki, Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto.**

## **Growth, Leadership, and Legacy**

Nyibule's journey reflects the transformation of aviation itself, from an era without onboard entertainment to today's highly regulated, technology-driven environment where cabin crew play a critical role in communication and decision-making. His own defining moment came on 11th December 2006, when he earned the title of Flight Purser after an earlier setback. It was a hard-won promotion and deeply deserved.

Beyond titles, however, his proudest achievements lie in people, mentoring crew, upholding standards, and leading the Embrace Team, where he helped colleagues navigate personal and professional challenges. His legacy is clear, professionalism, integrity, and leadership rooted in calmness and fairness.

## **Strength Through Turbulence**

Behind the uniform is a story of personal resilience. In the late 1990s, Nyibule faced one of his toughest battles, alcoholism. What began casually became a serious challenge that nearly cost him his career. A turning point came unexpectedly, when a rumor circulated that he had lost his job. It forced a moment of reckoning. From that day, he made a decision.

**Today, he has been alcohol-free for 17 years.**

With support from family, the airline, and his own determination, he rebuilt his life, emerging stronger, grounded, and even more committed to helping others.

## **The Man Beyond the Cabin**

Away from the skies, Nyibule values simplicity, quiet moments, long walks, reading, and time with family. A father of twins and part of a close-knit household, he credits his wife and family for providing the balance that sustained his demanding career. After 40 years, retirement is not an end, but a transition into a life of reflection, mentorship, and well-earned rest.

## **The Jacket That Tells a Story**

To mark his final chapter, Nyibule chose a celebration as unique as his journey, the Retiring Jacket. Across destinations, with crew from around the world, he has captured moments, each photograph a symbol of connection, memory, and shared experience. The jacket is more than a farewell. It is a story you can see.

## **Words for Those Still Climbing**

To the next generation, his message is simple. Stay committed. Stay humble. Respect the profession. And to the Kenya Airways family. Keep faith. Reignite. Reconnect. Above all, he reminds crew that seeking support is not a weakness, it is wisdom.

## **The Final Descent**

On 22nd May, Dickson Nyibule will make his final descent as a cabin crew member. It will not simply mark the end of a career, but the completion of a remarkable journey, one that began with uncertainty and ends with distinction. Of the original group he started with, he remains the only one still flying.

The last man standing.

**Because legends don't just retire.**

They leave behind a standard. Thank you, Dickson Nyibule, for 40 years of excellence, for the lives you have touched, the skies you have graced, and for showing us what it truly means to fly.