



International Civil Aviation Organization

Tel.: +1 (514) 954-8220/8221

Website: www.icao.int

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MIDDLE EASTERN STATES AGREE ON STRATEGY FOR ENHANCING AVIATION SECURITY

MONTREAL, 11 April 2012 — States from across the Middle East agreed today on collective action to improve passenger and cargo security throughout the region, as part of a global initiative to counter threats to civil aviation worldwide.

The meeting in Bahrain on 10 and 11 April marked the culmination of a series of regional conferences held in different parts of the world to build consensus in advance of the global high-level security conference to be held at ICAO Headquarters from 12 to 14 September. Representatives of 13 Member States* considered ongoing efforts to improve aviation security in light of the ICAO Declaration adopted in October 2010, and agreed on key steps required to advance the Declaration's implementation.

Participants underscored the need to work more closely together in response to threats and incidents, and stressed that ICAO must continue to address, as a matter of priority, threats to the global air cargo system by enhancing supply chain security.

Kamel Ahmed Mohammed, Minister of Transportation of Bahrain, said the meeting succeeded in promoting aviation security cooperation in a critical area of the world. "States of the Middle East are determined to continuously improve their security systems in partnership with all stakeholders," he stated. "Only through such close cooperation will it be possible to further enhance civil aviation security in the region."

Participants endorsed ICAO's global leadership role in the field of aviation security, both regionally and globally. They called on ICAO and other stakeholders to continue with capacity-building initiatives that help address deficiencies that pose risks to civil aviation security.

"As we strive to enhance aviation security, the priorities of States are ICAO's priorities," observed Raymond Benjamin, ICAO Secretary General. "We must all join forces to eliminate the continuing threat of terrorism."

Joining ICAO and national civil aviation authorities at the conference were regional bodies and international organizations including the Arab Civil Aviation Commission (ACAC), Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Airports Council International (ACI) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Government officials from Australia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States also participated.

**Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.*

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.