



Statement from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to the Fourth Session of the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA)

(Poznan, Poland, 1-10 December 2008)

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is highly appreciative of the opportunity to again address the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA). It continues the long and productive relationship between ICAO and the UNFCCC.

ICAO is cognizant of international aviation's climate impact and the commitment of States to find solutions by working through ICAO. The Contracting States of ICAO, during the last Assembly in 2007 (Resolution A36-22), requested that ICAO exercise continuous leadership on environmental issues relating to international civil aviation, including GHG emissions.

Following the decision of the ICAO Assembly, an ad hoc high level group was formed, consisting of 15 senior government officials from States that are geographically representative of developed and developing countries. This Group on International Aviation and Climate Change (GIACC) is tasked to develop the ICAO Programme of Action, a comprehensive framework for addressing the global impact of aircraft emissions. The GIACC has since met twice and is currently considering the establishment of short, medium and long-term aspirational goals for fuel burn for the international aviation sector. The Programme of Action will be reviewed at a high-level meeting of ICAO and it is intended to ultimately reflect the shared vision and strong will of all Member States of ICAO to address emissions from international aviation. It is important to note that the membership of ICAO represents a virtually identical constituency as the States that are parties to the UNFCCC.

ICAO has previously provided information on its efforts to address GHG emissions using various measures such as promulgating Standards, publishing guidance documents, encouraging technology improvements, and pursuing market-based measures. We are particularly pleased with the level of interest shown for ICAO's organized side event, at the Accra Climate Change Talks, in which ICAO, together with main aviation stakeholders, offered information to the Parties involved in the discussions on aviation emissions in these fora.

Today, we would like to apprise AWG-LCA of the latest trends and progress in the aviation sector related to cooperation on research and development of current, new and innovative technology, including win-win solutions.

ICAO and aviation stakeholders fully understand that technological research is essential for development in aviation. Although technology alone cannot resolve aviation's emissions of CO₂, it has been and will continue to be a key element of the solution in improving efficiencies in the air transport system. Significant research and development efforts are underway on further reducing aviation's impact on the environment. These efforts are expected to result in technological solutions that will enable a continuing trend of improvement in aviation efficiencies and benefits that, in turn, will allow ICAO to develop appropriate policies.

ICAO through its Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) has established a process through which independent experts will explore medium and long term technology improvements which will enable ICAO assessments of future trends for aviation to take into account the reductions accrued from future technological and operational gains. As part of this

process, as we meet here in Poznan, a workshop is being conducted in Montreal to review the possible reductions of fuel burn through operational measures.

A new and very promising area for research and development is aviation alternative fuels. This could be a win-win solution in that it will reduce aviation's GHG emissions while reducing its dependency on fossil fuels and stabilizing the associated economic volatility. Much progress has been achieved to date and there are high expectations with the use of more environmentally friendly alternative fuels. Concerted international action will be necessary to translate this possibility into a reality. Next year, in February, ICAO will host a workshop on alternative fuels and aviation. The workshop will lay the groundwork for a conference on the subject in November. ICAO is at the forefront of this international coordination and is leading the way to an internationally agreed road map for the implementation of such new alternative fuels.

It is important to remember that the initiatives and achievements listed in this ICAO statement and any others throughout the process leading up to Copenhagen next December result from cooperative action on the part of major international aviation stakeholders, under the leadership of ICAO. Research and development in aviation technologies, such as advanced materials, improved aerodynamics, and use of alternative fuels, offers great promise and, once developed for aviation, will also trickle down to other sectors for an overall better environmental performance.

Regarding the issue of funding adaptation/mitigation measures in relation to climate change through levies imposed on international aviation, ICAO is concerned over the proliferation of charges and taxes on air traffic, aviation being too often used as an easy target to raise revenue in various fields. It is important to remember that whenever levies are applied to address the protection of the environment, both the principles enshrined in the UNFCCC and the ICAO policies on charges and taxes shall be taken into consideration.

ICAO is also concerned with the simultaneous implementation of several different schemes to address the same aviation CO₂ emissions. Initiatives such as the application of air transport environmental levies, the inclusion of aviation emissions in emissions trading schemes and the use of aviation emissions offset programmes at a government, airline or individual level, would be directed at the same unit of CO₂ emitted by air transport operations.

Thank you for your attention. ICAO remains committed to its continuing close collaboration with the UNFCCC and its subsidiary bodies and wishes you a productive meeting.

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