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Agenda Item 2: Statements by delegations of Contracting States and of Observers

STATEMENT

[Presented by the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation,
(EUROCONTROL)]

Air Traffic Management in Europe has been making excellent progress over the last few years.

Since the 33rd General Assembly of ICAO in 2001, there has been a rapid expansion in traffic. Traffic levels fell sharply in 2002, but have now surpassed their former levels. Indeed, in Europe, the 29,000 flights per day threshold was crossed on 18 June this year. The most air traffic ever recorded in Europe was on 10 September with 29,495 flights on that day.

Delays are being contained. In fact, that portion of delay which can be attributed to the en-route part is falling: for the last year in Europe, en-route was responsible for only 15% of delay overall, with airports responsible for 17% and airlines 54%.

Unit costs have fallen slightly, giving airspace users some leeway in recovering from the economic constraints they have been facing since the 33rd General Assembly.

Europe is in the process of redefining Air Traffic Management. To this end, a number of initiatives -- institutional, operational and technical -- are being examined and adopted.

Besides being deeply involved in these developments, EUROCONTROL is perfecting new procedures and techniques in a variety of areas. Many of these are suitable for global application and EUROCONTROL is willing to make them available to ICAO for that purpose.

For this General Assembly, EUROCONTROL has worked in close coordination with the European Civil Aviation Conference and the European Commission to prepare a set of Working Papers on air traffic management matters.

These papers put forward proposals on:

- A Global Model for the Implementation of Safety Management in Air Traffic Management
- Enhancement of ATM Safety Oversight Capabilities
- ATM-related Security Initiatives in Europe
- Air Navigation Services Performance
- Development of a Contractual Framework leading towards a Long-term Legal Framework to govern the Implementation of GNSS
- Air Traffic Management's Contribution to Aviation Environmental Protection.

These proposals are a faithful representation of EUROCONTROL's work. **Safety** and **Security**, twin issues of the highest importance for aviation, are given priority status, as is revealed in the three papers prepared for the General Assembly. Besides, safety is also a major focus in ATM performance review.

Indeed, **Performance Review** itself is of fast-growing value: since the 1990s, there has been a move from "technical/operational" solutions to "performance-oriented" strategies. Many States have adopted performance-oriented strategies for ANS, including the 41 States of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC).

The results are gratifying. To take one example, challenging delay targets have been set and met, traffic increases notwithstanding. On the economic front, European air navigation service providers undergo annual benchmarking processes to identify best practices and areas for improvement.

Cumulatively, these measures have had a demonstrable effect on the improvement of air navigation services' performance in Europe.

It is of prime importance to codify the use of **Satellite Navigation** systems.

Satellite technology is global and therefore poses a difficulty for States which, under the Chicago Convention, are responsible for the service provided in their airspace – whether or not they actively provide it.

The issue is further complicated by the fact that the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) will not only be used by aviation – there are many other users and potential users of the system.

The institutional issues are complex – and the legal, liability and cost recovery ones no less so.

A draft Contractual Framework has been drawn up to elaborate States' and operators' responsibilities. It sets out conditions for implementation and operation. This regulatory agreement also emphasises safety and liability.

Aviation **Environmental Issues** are being increasingly featured in the media.

In particular, concern is being voiced over the possible damage caused by contrail-induced cirrus clouds. EUROCONTROL and the European Space Agency are sponsoring a study into this phenomenon and its potential impact.

A key improvement which is due to be introduced throughout Europe from 2005 onwards is the Continuous Descent Approach. This procedure makes for a noticeable reduction in noise levels and also reduces fuel burn and emissions.

EUROCONTROL continues to devote effort to international cooperation in environmental affairs and to finding workable operational measures to alleviate the environmental impact of aviation at and around airports. It also monitors environmental performance and does all it can to mitigate the effect of aviation on the climate generally.

A major Airport Conference will take place soon (27-29 October) in Brussels: environmental matters will be addressed.

Conclusion

Nothing that EUROCONTROL does is done in isolation. Acute awareness of the intrinsically global nature of aviation prevails throughout; knowledge and experience are shared with interested parties.

EUROCONTROL's activities and spheres of interest are not confined to the European continent alone. Close relationships are maintained with neighbours in Africa, the Middle East and, in particular, North America.

This notion of cooperation, of collaborative decision-making and of information-sharing is central to the Organisation's activities. More programmes are now being run in common. In short, the harmonisation of equipment, training, programmes and standards is leading directly to the overall goal: the creation of a safe and seamless sky for the entire European continent and the world.

EUROCONTROL stands firmly with ICAO in mutual attempts to address the challenging issues facing aviation world-wide.

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