

Thank you Mr. President.

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to take this opportunity, on behalf of the delegation of the Russian Federation, to thank you, Mr. President, the Secretary General of ICAO, and the Secretariat of ICAO for the excellent organization of this highly important event, notwithstanding all the difficulties faced at this time. This Conference has undoubtedly marked an important stage in the preparations for the 41st session of the ICAO Assembly.

The pandemic has reminded us yet again of the fragility of our global community. It is important to note, however, that all the delegates were unanimous in their opinion that these global challenges can only be met by the world aviation community joining its efforts in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the Chicago Convention.

The delegation of the Russian Federation strongly supports ever wider cooperation between public health agencies and civil aviation authorities and the enhancement of flight safety by developing and strengthening global and regional cooperation with full respect for the sovereign rights of all ICAO Member States.

At the same time, we call upon States to hold dear the fundamental principles of the Chicago Convention, in particular when our unity is important not only for the sustainable development of the industry, but also for the very future of our civilization. In this regard, we call for the exercise of particular caution in revising the fundamental provisions of Annex 13 of the Chicago Convention, which have fully proved their worth over the last 60 years.

It is clear that, in the face of new challenges, digital information technology will play a crucial role in the rebuilding of international aviation connectivity. This has been directly demonstrated by our conference.

As observed by Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, in his address on 21 October, “countries should set aside their ambitions and work together, including in the context of combating the COVID-19 pandemic”.

The delegation of the Russian Federation would therefore like to reiterate its affirmation of the importance of a smooth resumption of cross-border air travel based on mutual recognition of vaccines, medical certificates and the global interoperability of digital systems for the issuance and recognition of such certificates, with due respect for confidentiality and the principles of personal data protection.

The Russian Federation supports the proposal for the development of new standards and recommendations to monitor and ensure compliance with health-related provisions, to be consolidated in a special chapter of Annex 9.

We strongly support the development and introduction of innovative contactless and remote technologies and technical means that will help to prevent the spread of infectious diseases when international air travel is restored.

We firmly believe that all States should support global supply chains, emergency and humanitarian responses and the rapid distribution of vaccines, all of which are heavily dependent on air transport capacity.

In this process, the ICAO slogan “No country left behind” takes on particular significance and should be reflected in paragraph 13 of our joint Declaration,.

It is impossible to deny the degradation of the global climate. The Russian Federation incontrovertibly recognizes the contribution of the aviation industry to combating climate change through such steps as the establishment of international aviation teams to fight forest fires and other natural disasters. **This issue was not discussed during our Conference, however, and there is no sound reason for its inclusion in paragraph 12 of the Declaration. We support the views of the delegations that have suggested its deletion from the text of the joint Declaration.**

On behalf of the delegation of the Russian Federation, I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our full support for the activities by ICAO to forge and sustain bonds of friendship and understanding between nations and peoples of the world so that international civil aviation can develop in a safe and orderly fashion and that international air travel can be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and carried out in a sound and economical manner.

Thank you for your attention.