



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 38TH SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 17: Environmental Protection**

**EXPECTATIONS AND DESIRABLE OBJECTIVES OF THE 38TH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL AVIATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE — PERSPECTIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

(Presented by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The file of the impact of international aviation on climate remains one of the priorities of ICAO and its Secretariat. In spite of the constant work on this issue since the conclusion of the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly, no decision has been taken on the question of international aviation and climate change that would help in reaching any decision during the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly.

Ever since resolution 37-19 of the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly “*Consolidated Statement of Continuing ICAO Policies and Practices Related to Environmental Protection — Climate Change*”, options were studied in the field of general policy, to limit the impact of aircraft engine emissions on the environment. Proposed solutions were prepared and these included technical, operational and economic measures, noting the impact of such measures on the developing as well as developed countries. But the opinions and proposals of States have been varied, and this in turn affected the conclusion of a collective universal agreement.

As the nature of the problem is known to be universal, therefore, the solution must be universal. All interested parties should cooperate with ICAO to reach a unified decision to achieve the objects of aviation towards the environment. Emphasis should be made on the need to avoid unilateral measures and to avoid the impact of any suggested solutions on the air traffic movement in developing countries.

This working paper reviews the perspective of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia towards issues of international aviation and climate change.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) review the information contained in this working paper; and
- b) take into consideration the viewpoint of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as contained in paragraph 5.1 of this working paper.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective C – <i>Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Air Transport</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	No additional resources requested.
<i>References:</i>	Doc 9958, <i>Assembly Resolutions in Force (as of 8 October 2010)</i>

<sup>1</sup>Arabic version provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The question of the impact of international aviation on the environment has been one of the most important issues of discussion in ICAO. The protection of the environment has been one of the strategic objectives of ICAO and has been a responsibility on the shoulders of all parties concerned.

1.2 During the last two decades, this issue has been given special attention, even though international aviation contributes a small percentage of gases to the atmosphere (2% of all emissions). However, fear that this percentage will increase in the future with the continuous development of aviation, discussions at meetings have emphasized the need to find the best possible mechanisms to reduce, as much as possible, the impact of emissions of international aviation on the climate.

1.3 The basket of measures that have been emphasized to solve the problem included technical, operational and economic measures. The technical measures included improvement of fuel engine efficiency so that they may offer the same amount of energy by burning a lesser quantity of fuel. Operational measures include air traffic management measures such as flight in shorter paths or reduction of the aircraft weight. Economic measures include measures based on market mechanism, like the emission trading scheme.

1.4 The market-based measures have been a point of discussion upon which several States have raised reservations (by virtue of their conditions and potential). Thus, several meetings and Council sittings were held to discuss the proposed basket of measures in general, together with granting special attention to market-based measures.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Following recommendations of the 36th Session of the Assembly in 2007, the ICAO Council established a Panel for International Aviation and Climate Change to lay down a serious programme of work on international aviation and climate change and to submit its recommendation to the Council. Among the most important results of this Panel was its recommendations to avoid duplication of measures that have been established for the same problem and the need to develop a general framework of the market-based measures.

2.2 Accordingly, a resolution was taken by the Assembly in 2010 (Resolution A37-19) which recommended the development of a universal framework for the market-based measures on the basis of the guidelines attached to the resolution which should be studied in detail until the 38th Session of the Assembly.

2.3 Ever since then, the Council of ICAO continued to discuss this matter in its meetings and meetings of its Air Transport Committee. During its 197th Session in November 2012, The Council recommended the establishment of a high level panel of senior government officials who may be nominated by their administrations to prepare recommendations on the general policies for consideration by the Council, in accordance with Resolution A37-19. The objective was to prepare a proposal for an Assembly resolution to be presented to the Council, which in turn will present it to the 38th Session of the Assembly.

2.4 The High Level Panel met three times, in December 2012, January/February 2013 and March 2013. In the last Panel meeting, comments by its members were presented on a draft resolution to the 38th Session of the Assembly, for the part that does not include the market-based measures as well as the proposals and comments on market-based measures. Such document became the starting point for all

discussions of the Council following that meeting. There are still many differences in the viewpoints on several points of the resolution.

### 3. CHALLENGES

3.1 International aviation and climate change is a question that requires a lot of research and study. It should be dealt with within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Therefore, it should always be recalled that it would not be an easy task to reach an agreement in ICAO on a matter that has not been approved in the United Nations. No agreement has been reached yet in the United Nations on how to deal with the carbon dioxide emissions resulting from air and marine transport.

3.2 The unilateral measures will make the mission more difficult and more complicated, as this will affect the interests of other concerned countries. This will eventually affect the air transport industry as a whole.

3.3 There will be no solution that satisfies all parties so long as the developing States bear the consequences of the historical responsibility of developed States in respect of the impact of international aviation on climate.

3.4 The conditions and capacity of States do differ and this will impact the possible contribution of each State in solving the problem of climate change.

3.5 The aspirational goals and the sustainable alternative fuel as well as the market-based measures that have been mentioned in Resolution A37-19 are part of a basket of measures. Emphasis on these measures rather than the other technical and operational measures will affect the unified resolution in this respect.

### 4. CONCLUSION

4.1 In recognition of the important role of civil aviation in economic progress, access to global markets and communication with peoples of the world, especially the developing States, as well as the role of civil aviation in sustainable development of such States, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is cognizant of, and attaches great importance to the file of international aviation and climate change. The Kingdom is hopeful that a collective agreement will be reached through ICAO within the framework of the UNFCCC, which provides for the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the historic responsibility of States.

4.2 The Kingdom supports that no individual actions should be taken by States or regions whose impact will touch the interests of other States without mutual agreement between them. The measures taken should cater for the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities as well as the special and differentiated circumstances of States and non-discrimination. Such agreement should be applicable to the bilateral and collective levels and should take into account the needs of the developing and remote States.

4.3 The Kingdom, like many other developing States, seeks to achieve continuous progress in the air transport movement, to match the growth it witnesses on the economic and population levels. It is expected that the volume of the transport industry in the Kingdom by the year 2020 will be more than

twice as large as it was in the year 2005. Therefore, the Kingdom is keen that it and the other developing States should have the opportunity to achieve the desired development, like the developed States.

## 5. **RECOMMENDATION**

5.1 In the light of the above, the Assembly is invited to take into account the viewpoint of the Kingdom with regard to international civil aviation and the climate change. This viewpoint may be summed up in the following:

- a) to urge studying the identification and development of mechanisms to facilitate the provision of technical and financial assistance to the developing countries, and facilitate their access to the existing and new financial resources, technology transfer, capacity-building, and measures to adapt to the environmental impacts, in order to implement the cooperative efforts of ICAO and the States collectively;
- b) to urge the study of innovative ideas on funding sources to cover the cost of adaptation measures, and technology transfer without resorting to the imposition of fees or taxes on the consumption of aircraft fuel;
- c) to urge focusing on more effective measures, other than the market-based ones, to reduce emissions. These include the operational measures represented in the air traffic management, modernization of fleets and improvement of air navigation systems, as there is unanimity on such measures;
- d) further study should be undertaken by the Secretariat to assess the economic impact of market-based measures on the developing and remote States, as provided in paragraph 18 of Assembly Resolution 37-19; and
- e) in respect of aspirational goals, any decision taken should pay attention to the circumstances, capacity and contribution of each developing and developed State to the concentration in the atmosphere of greenhouse gas emissions from aviation. It is they that decide how States voluntarily contribute to the realization of the universal aspirational goals.

— END —