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ASSEMBLY — 38TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 17: Environmental Protection

**SOUTH AFRICA'S APPROACH AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON
AIRCRAFT NOISE CURFEWS**

(Presented by South Africa)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper describes how night curfews in various parts of the world impact the global aviation industry and recommends a way of addressing the problem in line with ICAO recommendations.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) ensure that ICAO continues to play a leadership role in developing policy guidance to address night curfews and encourage its use by States;
- b) ensure that ICAO continues to monitor States' practices on night curfews and assess their impact on the operation of air services; and
- c) request States and Regions that have imposed night curfews to review their policies.

<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>	The work involved will be undertaken within the resources included in the regular programme budget.
<i>References:</i>	A38-WP/25, <i>Developments in Civil Aviation and the Environment</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The issues arising from night curfews that have existed for many years continue to remain despite the fact that advancement in aircraft engine technology has contributed considerably to noise abatement in the past two decades.

1.2 Assembly Resolution A27-11 (still in force), invited States “to consider the possible relaxation of operating restrictions for aircraft meeting the requirements of Chapter 3 of Annex 16 – Environmental Protection, including the easing of night curfews and/or quotas for off schedule arrivals by such aircraft”.

1.3 While the measure of night curfews can help reduce the aircraft noise problem at the airport, it can also have an impact on the operation of air services, particularly international services to and from the airport, and the economic well-being of the local community and the country at large.

1.4 In 2013, at the Worldwide Air Transport Conference, the ICAO Secretariat pointed out that 161 airports handling international scheduled passenger and/or all cargo air services, worldwide, are subject to night flight restrictions. Of the 161 international airports that are subject to night flight restrictions, 66% are located in Europe, 16% are located in North America, 8% are located in Asia/Pacific, 5% are located in Latin America and the Caribbean, 3% are located in Africa and 2% are located in the Middle East.

2. DISCUSSIONS

2.1 The aviation industry is already beset with quite a number of challenges that include night flight restrictions. South Africa and most of the States are not immune to these challenges by virtue of it being the farthest from its major trading partners.

2.2 The number of aircraft in operation is normally much lower late at night than during the rest of the day. Curfews will eliminate or substantially reduce aircraft noise. Curfews and operating restrictions do, however, affect the aviation industry's ability to facilitate the movement of people and goods.

2.3 Night flight restrictions have a particular impact on all cargo carriers, particularly on express operations. The business model for express delivery service, on which the modern “just in time” manufacturing systems depend, is structured around early evening pick-ups and early morning arrivals. For this reason, night flying is essential to the model.

2.4 Night flight restrictions also significantly impact network carriers by reducing their ability to offer connecting services in the morning or evening.

2.5 In 2008, during the Conference on the Economics of Airports and Air Navigation Services, several States pointed out that night curfews imposed at some airports, resulted in an increase in financial costs for airports and airlines.

2.6 Furthermore, the problem of slot coordination and allocation is being compounded by night flight restrictions. This in turn results in increasing aircraft engine emissions with associated impacts on human health and anthropogenic climate change due to diversion of flights to States without curfews. The partial or total removal of night flight restrictions could considerably improve market access, alleviate slot problems and contribute to economic development and trade.

3. **CONCLUSION**

3.1 Significant progress can be made in addressing the challenge posed by aircraft noise if States can adopt amongst others, ICAO's Balanced Approach to Aircraft Noise Management, which will lead to the elimination of most of the curfews that are negatively affecting the movement of goods and freight.

3.2 South Africa is committed to finding an amicable solution to address the challenge of curfews that is hampering the growth of the airline industry around the globe, and therefore supports actions arising from the Assembly Resolution A37-18.

3.3 South Africa supports the continuing work of ICAO in developing a scope of work for a global analysis of the effects of night curfews.

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