



ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

PLENARY

Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States

STATEMENT BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

(Presented by the Russian Federation)

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary General,

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of the delegation of the Russian Federation, I am pleased to welcome all the participants and observers to the 41st ICAO Assembly and once again express the hope that our work will take place in a spirit of friendship and mutual understanding, cooperation and mutual support.

At the same time, I must say some things that perhaps have never before been heard in this hall of the ICAO Assembly. Please listen closely to them.

In recent years we have witnessed a steady trend whereby a number of States are attempting to use ICAO as an instrument of political pressure on States that allow themselves to pursue independent policies on domestic and international issues.

I would like to invite all delegates to reflect on what we are now saying about the prospects for the continued existence of the Organization as a forum for the international aviation community to strengthen friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world so that international civil aviation can develop in a safe and orderly manner and that international air transport services may be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and operated soundly and economically. In this connection, I should like to reiterate the historic words of the preamble of the Chicago Convention, which states that “the future development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world, yet its abuse can become a threat to the general security”.

I want to believe that the Assembly will strongly condemn public pronouncements made on behalf of a group of States that they are trying to destroy the civil aviation of other States, as well as the actions of

¹ Russian version provided by the Russian Federation

those States, including the imposition of bans on the use of sovereign airspace on the basis of discrimination on national grounds.

As a result of those actions, over 50 million square kilometres of the airspace previously in existence, representing 10 per cent of the total airspace of the Earth or 37.5 per cent of the national airspace of all countries of the world, has ceased to exist. Of those 50 million square kilometres, 26 million square kilometres are controlled by the Russian Federation, within whose borders lie the shortest routes connecting European and North American countries with the countries of South-East Asia - the world's centre of economic growth.

It should be noted that Russia, being the largest country in the world in terms of land area and having a developed aviation industry and aviation personnel training system, is the least affected by external negative factors. Thus, despite the reduction in international air traffic caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the civil aviation sector of the Russian Federation in 2021 showed an increase of more than 20%, in domestic air traffic, surpassing the level achieved in 2019. At the same time, a network of 535 routes has been formed in the Far Eastern Federal District alone, which will be developed in stages between 2022–2025.

At this moment, the historic mission of ICAO Member States is to stop the destructive actions of individual states in order to save the Organization and its outstanding achievements in strengthening international cooperation over the past 78 years.

Unless these critical challenges to the Organization are addressed, we cannot effectively continue our work together for the sustainable development of international civil aviation; we cannot unite in the face of the threats to humanity posed by climate change; and, most important, we will devalue the future work of the Organization.

In view of all this, the Russian Federation hopes that the ICAO Assembly will adopt a resolution on the incompatibility of unilateral restrictive measures affecting international civil aviation with the provisions of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, and, based on this resolution, will call upon those States to immediately desist from violating the Chicago Convention in order to restore its application in all ICAO member countries.

We all remember well that one of the main conditions for the adoption of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction System for International Aviation (CORSIA) was that it should be “a single global carbon offsetting scheme, as opposed to a patchwork of State and regional MBMs”, as stated in the preamble to ICAO Assembly resolution A40-19. But what do we see today? Not only do the European Union and the United Kingdom not intend to abolish their Emissions Trading Systems (ETS), but they are increasing the tax burden on other States' airlines. Against this backdrop, we are discussing various integrated scenarios for the Long-Term Aspirational Goal for International Aviation CO₂ Emissions Reductions, for which the industry must pay an unprecedentedly high bill – amounting to between \$274 billion and \$1.5 trillion.

I would like to stress that the Russian Federation has consistently supported the harmonious technological development of international civil aviation with the participation of all ICAO Member States. All the scenarios of the Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) assume a set of elements relating to the technological development of the industry, and for this reason the Russian Federation supports the adoption of such a goal after a comprehensive assessment of possible consequences for the sustainable development of the industry, in particular, in developing countries.

At the same time, we believe that the parallel implementation of the CORSIA and LTAG projects will without a doubt impose an unsustainable burden on the industry.

In this regard, the Russian Federation proposes that the Assembly consider a scenario of an evolutionary transition from CORSIA to LTAG. As we know, fires emit the same amount of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere as international civil aviation does every year. I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that Russia has in the past repeatedly proposed the creation of an international aviation service to combat forest fires and other natural disasters, which would offset all carbon emissions from international civil aviation, including other greenhouse gases, and in consequence achieve carbon neutrality in the international civil aviation sector as early as mid-century.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure all delegations that the Russian Federation has been and remains open to all forms of mutually beneficial international cooperation on the basis of mutual respect and consideration of national interests, including under the auspices of ICAO.

In conclusion, I wish all participants in the 41st session of the ICAO Assembly effective and fruitful work in the spirit of friendship and mutual understanding for the benefit of the world aviation community.

Thank you for your attention!

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