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DRAMATIC MBM AGREEMENT AND SOLID GLOBAL PLAN ENDORSEMENTS HELP DELIVER LANDMARK ICAO 38TH ASSEMBLY

MONTREAL, 4 October 2013 – The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) concluded a landmark 38th Assembly today, receiving endorsement from its Member States on sector-wide strategic planning and exceeding many expectations when it agreed to develop a global market-based measure (MBM) for international aviation.

“This MBM agreement is an historic milestone for air transport and for the role of multilateralism in addressing global climate challenges,” affirmed ICAO Council President Roberto Kobeh González. “Once again, our States have shown that significant boundaries can be surpassed when we agree to recognize and accommodate our varying circumstances while progressing together towards common goals. Through perseverance and compromise by our Member States and the guidance of our Assembly President and Executive Committee Chair, France’s Michel Wachenheim, we have ultimately determined our greener way forward.”

ICAO’s States agreed to report back in 2016 with a proposal for a global MBM scheme capable of being implemented by 2020. Major efforts will need to be undertaken in order to address the challenges and accommodate specific concerns of developing countries going forward.

NEW STRATEGIC TOOLS TO MANAGE THE DOUBLING OF AIR TRAFFIC

The 38th ICAO Assembly also strongly endorsed two revised and significant ICAO Global Plans. Now served by complementary collaborative methodologies and clear operational performance objectives in the areas of Safety and Air Navigation, the new ICAO strategy documents will be instrumental to how States and industry unite over the coming decades to safely expand air traffic capacity and efficiently accommodate the projected doubling of air traffic by 2030.

“ICAO has received clear support at this Assembly for the global and tactical planning across all of five of our 2014-16 strategic objectives,” stressed ICAO Secretary General, Raymond Benjamin. “These decisions will now help us to ensure and enhance air transport’s critical role in securing and facilitating the free movement of people and goods, expanding global markets and promoting broader and more sustainable social and economic prosperity worldwide. We have much work still before us but also a very clear mandate from our States to continue leveraging collaboration and partnership to ensure practical and effective progress across the board.”

In all, 1,845 participants from 184 Member States and 54 observer delegations helped make the 38th Assembly the largest in ICAO’s history. A brief summary of the meeting’s results with respect to ICAO’s: Safety; Air Navigation Capacity & Efficiency; Security & Facilitation; Economic Development of Air Transport; Environmental Protection; and Legal objectives, follows.

38th ICAO Assembly: Summary of Major Developments

Safety Still Paramount

In the Safety domain, the 38th ICAO Assembly reiterated global aviation's first and guiding commitment is to reduce the rate and number of accidents worldwide. It also confirmed this work will now be guided by incremental targets established in a revised ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) which received strong Assembly endorsement.

The revised GASP gives ICAO a clear mandate to continue driving greater transparency, collaboration and responsiveness in safety improvement through real-time analysis and reporting cycles and greater regional accountability. It also sends a strong message that collaboration and partnership on air transport's sector-wide safety challenges remains essential to delivering positive results.

Based on further Assembly support it received, ICAO will be furthering these efforts in the years to come through more intensive engagement with all regional players, and the sensible protection and sharing – where appropriate – of critical safety information.

Air Navigation Capacity & Efficiency

Continuing Safety progress will now be enhanced by complementary Air Navigation analysis and reporting cycles, as confirmed by the Assembly's similarly strong endorsement of the revised ICAO Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).

The GANP will permit ICAO to practically and flexibly realize the long-sought after goal of a globally-harmonized Air Navigation system. With its extensively-detailed aviation system block upgrade modules, the revised GANP provides unprecedented levels of transparency and planning certainty to States, regional implementation groups, service providers, airspace users and industry stakeholders. It provides clear guidance on the required operational targets and supporting standards needed over the next 15 years, not to mention the specific technologies, procedures and regulatory approvals these will be based on.

Security and Facilitation

By endorsing the Council's Decisions on Security and Facilitation, the Assembly confirmed ICAO's emphasis on achieving greater balance between effective control measures and system-wide connectivity and efficiency. Risk-management-based prioritization, mutual recognition of equivalent security measures and other key principles will now serve as foundational components to future Security and Facilitation discussions in ICAO.

ICAO Member States further acknowledged the progress made since the 37th Assembly in enhancing civil aviation security, notably through the strengthening of Annex 17 Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) dealing with air cargo, the delivery of technical assistance and cooperation in all regions, and the completion of the second cycle of the Organization's Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP).

The Assembly also endorsed new directions in the Security and Facilitation area, such as the Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) to security audits and ICAO's new Traveller Identification Programme strategy. Above all, the Assembly outcomes reinforced that success in aviation Security and Facilitation must be built on a foundation of improved international cooperation.

Economic Development of Air Transport

The Assembly endorsed the new ICAO Strategic Objective aimed at the Economic Development of Air Transport. Also endorsed were the recommendations delivered by the Sixth Worldwide Air Transport Conference (ATConf/6) and the Organization's future work plan in the areas of forecasting, economic analysis and statistics.

ICAO will consequently have a stronger mandate for the coming triennium to lead development on a long-term vision for liberalization, a global regulatory framework and related policy guidance. Key to these efforts will be the development of international agreements to facilitate liberalization of market access, air carrier ownership and control and air cargo service, as well as ICAO's continued provision and enhancement of the ICAN facility to support States' efforts in international air transport liberalization.

The development of core principles for consumer protection were recognized by the Assembly as a further matter of priority for ICAO, as was the development of guidance on the impact of taxation and charges on air transport. The Organization was also directed to provide guidance on: the funding and financing of aviation infrastructure development; safety, security and economic oversight functions; as well as incentive mechanisms to support the timely implementation of the aviation system block upgrade modules.

Environmental Protection

In the area of Environmental Protection, the Assembly recognized ICAO's tremendous progress during the last triennium, and reaffirmed its collective aspirational goals and agreed on a comprehensive strategy to progress all elements of the basket of measures namely technology, operations and alternative fuels and set forth a very ambitious work programme for capacity building and assistance to States in the development and implementation of their action plans to reduce emissions.

The development of a new aircraft noise Standard was clearly welcomed by the Assembly, and further work towards the establishment of robust particulate matter and CO₂ emissions Standards by the 39th Assembly in 2016 was fully encouraged. ICAO's achievements with environmental tools were similarly supported, notably with respect to its Fuel Savings Estimation Tool which facilitates assessment of the environmental benefits of operational measures. Also strongly endorsed was ICAO's continuing work to aid wider implementation of sustainable alternative fuels.

The submission of State Action Plans, representing more than 80 per cent of international traffic during the last triennium, was recognized as a significant achievement by the Assembly. ICAO also received separate and strong signs of support for this work through announcements of related financial assistance by the Global Environment Facility and the European Union (EU).

In addition to ICAO's many recent achievements and future work with new technologies, operational measures and sustainable alternative fuels to improve aviation's environmental performance, the topic of a global solution for a market-based measure to augment these technical and operational efforts was a more complex area where full Assembly consensus was concerned.

In the end, ICAO forged a landmark MBM agreement amongst its States, realizing another historic and important first for air transport as it now becomes the only major industry sector to have a multilateral global MBM agreement in place to help govern future greenhouse gas emissions.

Legal Developments

In the legal field, the Assembly adopted a resolution to promote the ratification of the Beijing Convention and the Beijing Protocol of 2010. These two new treaties have broadened and strengthened the global aviation security regime to meet new and emerging threats.

The Assembly also adopted another resolution to promote the ratification and urge universal adoption of the Montreal Convention of 1999, in order to realize the full benefits from its implementation. This instrument modernizes the legal regime regarding air carrier liability and facilitates the use of paperless air transport documents.

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.

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