

A35-12: Protection of the health of passengers and crews and prevention of the spread of communicable disease through international travel

Whereas Article 44 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation states that "The aims and objectives of the Organization are to develop the principles and techniques of international air navigation and to foster the planning and development of international air transport so as to: ... meet the needs of the peoples of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport";

Whereas Article 14 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation states that "Each contracting State agrees to take effective measures to prevent the spread by means of air navigation of cholera, typhus (epidemic), smallpox, yellow fever, plague, and such other communicable diseases as the contracting States shall from time to time decide to designate, and to that end contracting States will keep in close consultation with the agencies concerned with international regulations relating to sanitary measures applicable to aircraft";

Whereas the worldwide transmission of communicable diseases by means of air transport, and the threat thereof, have increased in past years;

Whereas Assembly Resolution A29-15 urges all contracting States to take necessary measures to restrict smoking progressively on all international passenger flights with the objective of implementing complete smoking bans by 1 July 1996;

Whereas the increasing number of elderly and handicapped persons travelling by air and the increasing duration of international flights may pose additional risks to the health of passengers and may give rise to more frequent medical emergencies on board;

Whereas ICAO forecasts a five per cent annual increase in the number of passengers in the foreseeable future, thus potentially increasing the occurrence of medical emergencies during air travel;

Whereas the communication technologies have made possible in-flight diagnosis and treatment of passengers by doctors based at ground facilities;

Whereas health issues are becoming a consideration for some in their decision to fly or not, with a potential for highly detrimental impact on the economy of airlines and airports;

Whereas there is a need to coordinate for global application the considerable activity and progress on health issues by ICAO, some contracting States, the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Tourism Organization (WTO-OMT) and international organizations such as the Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA), International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine (IAASM), International Air Transport Association (IATA), Airports Council International (ACI) and other interested organizations;

The Assembly:

1. *Declares* that the protection of the health of passengers and crews on international flights is an integral element of safe air travel and that conditions should be in place to ensure its preservation in a timely and cost-effective manner;
2. *Requests* the Council to review existing SARPs related to passenger and crew health and develop new SARPs where appropriate with due consideration of global health issues and recent developments in air transport operations;

3. *Requests* the Council to establish suitable institutional arrangements to coordinate efforts by contracting States and other members of the international civil aviation community aimed at protecting the health of passengers and crews;
4. *Requests* the Council as a matter of priority to develop Standards and Recommended Practices in the appropriate Annexes to the Convention in order to address contingency plans to prevent the spread of communicable diseases by air transport;
5. *Urges* all contracting States, in the meantime, to ensure the implementation of existing SARPs related to the health of passengers and crews;
6. *Requests* the Council to support further research on the consequences of air transport on the health of passengers and crews;
7. *Requests* the Council to report on the implementation of this resolution in all aspects to the next ordinary Session of the Assembly.