

STATEMENT BY ISRAEL (Presented by Israel)

Madam Secretary General,
Mr. President of the Assembly,
Mr. President of the Council,
Ministers of Transport and Heads of Delegations,
Distinguished Delegates,

It is my great pleasure to be with you here today at 39th Session of the ICAO Assembly.

On behalf of the Delegation of Israel I would like to thank the President of the Council of ICAO, the Secretary General of ICAO and the Government of Canada for their hospitality and efforts to host this important event, and wish all of us a successful session.

Israel joined ICAO in 1949, 5 years after the inception of the organization and only one year after its birth as a nation. Aviation has always been a crucial and strategic lifeline to our country, and a major international gateway for people and goods. The last decade has seen a significant growth in the international air traffic to and from Israel, reaching almost twice the global average growth in the last 3 years, since the signing of the open skies agreement between Israel and Europe.

Maintaining safety and efficiency of our air transport system in conjunction with such intense growth is our primary goal which can only be achieved by adherence to international standards and improvement of our Air Traffic Management system performance. This is why during the last year Israel has formulated and signed a comprehensive agreement with Eurocontrol and joined the EU SAFA programme.

These advancements, however, could not have occurred without first strengthening our oversight system foundations.

Over the past 5 years, Israel has achieved significant goals in the establishment of a robust regulatory framework based on ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices.

Our main achievement was the promulgation of a new Air Navigation Law which replaced the former law. This main accomplishment paved our path to establish modern regulations and to build an effective national oversight system for civil aviation in Israel, with the valuable assistance of our colleagues from the FAA.

Our major efforts were recognized by a significant progress in the level of effective implementation of international standards, as concluded in the USOAP-CMA ICVM conducted in 2014.

This achievement enables us to adopt a proactive approach and to focus on our next challenge which is the implementation of a State Safety Program (SSP) in order to manage aviation risks more effectively.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President of the Council, for recognizing our progress in resolving our safety oversight deficiencies and awarding Israel the Council President Certificate.

The State of Israel recognizes the critical role of USOAP as a driver of change and a contributor to the safety of international civil aviation and strongly supports ICAO efforts for the smooth transition to the Continuous Monitoring Approach.

Distinguished delegates,

The aviation world is constantly changing. One of these changes is the rapidly evolving field of remotely piloted aircraft systems. This creative and innovative industry challenges us as regulators every day and in various aspects: First is the evolving technology which already allows the operation of autonomous systems in addition to remotely piloted systems; second, the expanding applications of these unmanned systems presented by the industry; and third the vast proliferation of these systems worldwide.

The successful integration of the unmanned systems into the civil aviation system requires a great investment of time and efforts and close cooperation with all stakeholders.

This is why Israel fully supports and actively participates in the important work of ICAO RPAs panel and contributes from its experience and expertise to the process of establishment of new standards for unmanned systems.

However, not all changes are positive in nature.

We are witnessing an increasing level of threats against civil aviation around the world.

The past year has seen attacks against airports, airplanes and passengers across Europe and around the world with the purpose of disrupting the lives of millions of our fellow civilians.

Attacks against civil aviation are not "regular" terror attacks.

Attacks against civil aviation will always receive special attention and greatly influence not only the country in which the attack takes place but also the countries that fly to that destination and in some cases the entire region. Unfortunately, Israel has been forced to accumulate experience and pioneer the development of the technological solutions necessary to deal with such threats as MANPADS, rocket attacks against aviation infrastructure and airport landside unlawful interference.

These attacks affect us all and so demand cooperation between us all. We must be open to learn from one another, share best practices and assist each other.

The State of Israel is open to cooperation with ICAO and all member states in the field of civil aviation security, and more specifically in the spirit of the No Country Left Behind initiative. The key to our success is working together.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to make an additional announcement concerning Israel's commitment to join the international efforts to fight global warming and I therefore announce that we join the GMBM scheme on a voluntary basis from 2021.

Thank you.