



**WORKING PAPER**

**SEVENTH WORLDWIDE AIR TRANSPORT CONFERENCE  
(ATCONF/7)**

**Montréal, HQ, 16 to 20 November 2026**

**Agenda Item 3: Strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks**

**3.2: Enhancing air connectivity through progressive economic and regulatory aviation frameworks for international air transport**

**ENHANCING AIR CARGO AND ITS FACILITATION TO SUPPORT  
GLOBAL TRADE AND CONNECT LANDLOCKED STATES**

(Presented by Kuwait)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This paper demonstrates the importance of air cargo as a fundamental component of international air transport and a key factor in supporting global trade.

**Action:** The Council is invited to:

- a) enhance international cooperation in air cargo through formulating policies and regulatory frameworks that improve the efficiency and seamless movement of goods across borders;
- b) support the streamlining and harmonization of air cargo procedures, seeking to minimize duplication in requirements and procedures, while maintaining the highest levels of security and safety;
- c) accelerate digital transformation in air cargo operations and urge states to implement electronic systems and exchange data securely and effectively; and
- d) expand the international air connectivity network with a view to enabling states and regions, facing geographical challenges or lacking access to the sea, to reach global markets more efficiently.

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Strategic Goal:</i>         | This working paper relates to Strategic Goal: <i>The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All.</i> |
| <i>Financial implications:</i> | There are no direct financial implications.                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>References:</i>             | N/A                                                                                                                                                                         |

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Kuwait, represented by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), emphasizes the importance of air cargo as a fundamental component of international air transport and a key factor in

<sup>1</sup> Arabic version provided by Kuwait.

supporting global trade and supply chains, particularly in view of rapid developments across the global economy landscape and the growing need for fast, efficient, flexible and reliable transport.

1.2 Kuwait considers that enhancing the efficiency of air cargo and facilitating its procedures has an impact that extends even beyond improving the movement of goods among states. It also supports economic development, strengthens states competitiveness, improves supply chain efficiency, facilitates access to urgent or time-sensitive goods, and provides greater opportunities to connect global markets across states and regions with difficulties in accessing seaports.

1.3 As such, Kuwait supports the international efforts led by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aimed at developing a more efficient and integrated air cargo system and facilitating associated procedures, in accordance with the Convention on International Civil Aviation and relevant Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

## **2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 Kuwait dedicates increasing attention to developing civil aviation and air transport and air cargo infrastructure, thereby reinforcing its position as a regional hub for air traffic and logistics services. In this context, Kuwait is at present implementing a number of aviation infrastructure development projects, including:

- a) completion of upgrades to air traffic and air navigation infrastructure, meant to enhance efficiency and safety and accommodate the expected growth in air traffic;
- b) construction and development of a new air traffic control tower to support Air Traffic Management (ATM) capabilities and improve operational efficiency at Kuwait International Airport;
- c) construction of a new runway and development of air traffic facilities, envisioned to boost airport capacity and support the continuity and efficiency of flight operations. Work is currently underway to refurbish the second and first runways; as such Kuwait International Airport is set to have three operable runways in the near future; and
- d) work is progressing to complete Kuwait's Cargo City project, a key project aimed at strengthening national air cargo and logistics capabilities and creating an integrated environment for air cargo handling, storage and related support services.

2.2 Kuwait also emphasizes that investment in those projects constitute part of an integrated vision aimed at building a modern air transport system, capable of responding to international trade and supply chains requirements and enhancing integration between aviation and logistics services.

## **3. THE IMPORTANCE OF AIR CARGO FACILITATION**

3.1 Kuwait considers air cargo facilitation as a key factor in improving the sector's efficiency and competitiveness versus other modes of transport. Hence, development of air cargo should include efforts aimed at:

- a) streamlining and expediting air cargo customs and regulatory procedures;
- b) promoting digital transformation and electronic data exchange among stakeholders;
- c) supporting the application of the single-window concept to cargo procedures;

- d) enhancing coordination among civil aviation authorities, customs, government entities, operators, airlines and freight forwarders;
- e) developing procedures for express shipments and time-sensitive goods;
- f) strengthening the safety and security of air cargo supply chain while facilitating cargo movement; and
- g) encouraging the adoption of internationally compatible standards and procedures to facilitate cross-border cargo traffic.

#### **4. SUPPORTING AIR CARGO LIBERALIZATION AND STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF AIRLINES**

4.1 Kuwait supports initiatives and efforts aimed at further liberalizing air cargo services and creating a more flexible operational and commercial environment, thereby increasing the options available to airlines and air cargo operators and supporting market competitiveness and efficiency. In this context, Kuwait promotes:

- a) ongoing development of regulatory frameworks that facilitate the operation of international air cargo services;
- b) making available greater market access opportunities for airlines and air cargo operators, in accordance with relevant international frameworks and agreements;
- c) provision of relevant facilitations for companies operating in the air cargo sector so as to encourage investment in infrastructure and logistics services;
- d) boosting cooperation among states to reduce restrictions and red tape that may slow cargo movements or increase their cost;
- e) support for innovation and investment in modern technologies that improve the efficiency of cargo, handling, storage and tracking operations; and
- f) endorsing public-private partnerships in the development of cargo facilities and logistics services.

#### **5 AIR CARGO AND SUPPORT FOR LANDLOCKED STATES**

5.1 Kuwait underscores the important role that air cargo can play in supporting states with no access to the sea, or those facing geographical or logistical challenges hindering their access to global markets. Accordingly, Kuwait recognizes that developing international air cargo networks can contribute to:

- a) providing additional effective channels for accessing global markets;
- b) reducing dependence on transport routes that may be long or offer limited options;
- c) facilitating access to high-value or time-sensitive goods and products;
- d) supporting international trade for landlocked States;
- e) strengthening developing states' integration into global value chains and supply chains;
- f) improving access to medical and food supplies and humanitarian aids in emergencies; and
- g) supporting economic development and creating new trade and investment opportunities.

5.2 Conclusion: Kuwait considers that enhancing air connectivity should not be limited to dynamic markets with high levels of commercial activity, but should extend to include states and regions that need to improve their air connectivity and strengthen their ability to access international markets.

## 6. ICAO'S ROLE IN ENHANCING AIR CARGO

6.1 Kuwait supports the central role played by ICAO in setting down frameworks, standards and policies that contribute to the development of international air transport. Kuwait encourages the Organization to continue its efforts in the air cargo domain, particularly by:

- a) supporting the development of international air cargo facilitation policies;
- b) strengthening international coordination among aviation, trade and customs authorities;
- c) advocating digital transformation in cargo procedures;
- d) strengthening integration between air cargo systems and global supply chains;
- e) supporting Member States in developing their air cargo capabilities and infrastructure;
- f) exchanging best practices and experience among States; and
- g) strengthening capacity-building and technical assistance programmes for States that need to develop their air cargo systems.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 In light of the foregoing, Kuwait proposes that the Seventh Worldwide Air Transport Conference (ATConf/7) consider the following recommendations:

- a) enhancing international cooperation in air cargo through formulating policies and regulatory frameworks that improve the efficiency and seamless movement of goods across borders;
- b) supporting the streamlining and harmonization of air cargo procedures and minimizing duplication in requirements and procedures while maintaining the highest levels of security and safety;
- c) accelerating digital transformation in air cargo operations and encouraging states to implement electronic systems and exchange data securely and effectively;
- d) further liberalizing air cargo services and creating a regulatory and operational environment that prompts airlines, cargo operators and investors to develop their services and networks;
- e) supporting developing and landlocked States through capacity-building, technical assistance and exchange of experience in cargo infrastructure, facilitation and digitalization;
- f) promoting the development of air cargo centres and integrated logistics services and connecting them with road, maritime and air transport networks to boost integration among transport modes; and
- g) cementing partnerships between governments and the private sector in financing, developing and operating air cargo facilities and logistics services, in accordance with applicable national and international frameworks.

## 8. CONCLUSION

8.1 Kuwait emphasizes that air cargo is an essential element of the international transport and trade system, noting that developing it and facilitating its procedures will serve to enhance supply chain efficiency, support global trade and broaden opportunities for states to access international markets.

8.2 Kuwait also reaffirms its support for ICAO's efforts in this domain and its readiness to cooperate with Member States, international organizations and the private sector to exchange experience and best practices and develop practical solutions that facilitate air cargo traffic and strengthen connections among global markets, including support for states without access to the sea.

8.3 Kuwait hopes that the ATConf/7 outcomes will contribute to establishing more frameworks and practical recommendations that enhance air cargo efficiency and facilitation, support the liberalization of relevant services and promote investment and innovation, serving Member States' economic and trade development objectives and strengthening the role of civil aviation in achieving more efficient and sustainable global connectivity.

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