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WORKING PAPER

SEVENTH WORLDWIDE AIR TRANSPORT CONFERENCE
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Agenda Item 3: Strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks
3.3: Strengthening emergency planning mechanism and consumer protection for a resilient aviation system

MODERNIZATION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION/PASSENGER RIGHTS PROVISIONS AND THE NEED FOR AN EMERGENCY PLANNING MECHANISM

(Presented by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and supported by 17 LACAC Member States[2])

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper describes the resiliency of the Venezuelan State in response to commercial aviation challenges such as COVID-19 and the recent earthquake of 24 June 2026. The General Conditions of Air Transport of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) include rules to guarantee passenger protection. These rules include emergency measures for: public health emergencies of international concern (PHEIC), and; natural disasters or other major events that incur a state-of-emergency declaration by the National Executive.

The consumer protection framework needs to be reinforced by combining risk detection with strategies for the rapid, safe and efficient adaptation and recovery of air transport services. It is therefore essential to evaluate and strengthen civil aviation emergency plans and align them with passenger protection regulations.

A practical and replicable framework is proposed, for greater compatibility between emergency plans and passenger protection regulations.

Action: The Conference is invited to:

a) urge States to evaluate and strengthen their regulatory framework for consumer protection, incorporating harmonized approaches to emergency assistance during mass disruptions, taking into consideration:
   - compatibility between the different emergency plans that are established;
   - stakeholder accountability;
   - training of personnel in emergency management including passenger assistance; and
   - creation of an inter-institutional committee for emergency response which would be activated through inter-institutional protocols in the event of civil aviation disruptions; and

b) urge States to develop passenger assistance protocols, including guidance and information for exceptional circumstances, and procedures to follow during an emergency.

Strategic Goal:	This working paper relates to the Strategic Goal: *The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All*.

[1] Spanish version provided by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

[2] Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Financial implications:	N/A
References:	Doc 10227, *Assembly Resolutions in Force (as of 3 October 2025)* Assembly Resolution A42–26, *Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies in the air transport field* Doc 10221, *Assembly 42nd Session. Montréal, 23 September–3 October 2025. Economic Commission. Report* *ICAO Basic Principles for Consumer Protection (ICAO Basic Principles)*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) has dealt with the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and recently, two earthquakes that impacted part of the productive sectors and disrupting operations at the country's main airport. Since air transport is a fundamental pillar of connectivity with the rest of the world, and in order to mitigate damage in emergency situations, measures are needed to protect human life and care for passengers.

1.2 The Venezuelan State guarantees the development of commercial aviation in accordance with the precepts of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), and is staunchly committed to safeguarding the inherent rights of passengers in public air transport. Air transport providers must adhere to strict quality standards, including adequate information to users about the commercial products and services offered.

1.3 The passenger protection regulations established in Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), updated in 2024, align to the basic principles established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) with respect to consumer protection. These regulations include emergency measures in response to: public health emergencies of international concern (PHEIC), and; natural disasters or other major events that incur a state-of-emergency declaration by the National Executive, in accordance with the rules of the applicable legal framework. The intent is to build the trust of the traveling public, and ensure the rapid, safe, reliable and sustainable recovery of international air operations.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 A mass disruption can hinder stakeholder communication and coordination of passenger protection and assistance due to unclear boundaries between the responsibilities shared by airlines, intermediaries and concessionaires. As well, different regulatory frameworks across States can cause delays and impede efficient and effective responses to an emergency.

2.2 The challenge is to simultaneously ensure operational resilience and passenger protection, by establishing mandatory formal communication channels in emergency situations among airlines, airports and authorities. In addition, mechanisms should be created to trigger passenger protection measures in a state of emergency in order to protect human life and guarantee assistance.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 A more robust regulatory framework for consumer protection with provisions for mass disruption response, links to emergency plans, as well as coordinated governance among stakeholders, will contribute to a safe, reliable and resilient air transport system.

3.2 Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) remains committed to implementing the recommendations of ICAO on passenger protection, recognizing the positive impact of sustainable actions to enhance the trust of the traveling public.

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