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Montréal, HQ, 16 to 20 November 2026

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

DRAFT REPORT

(13 pages)

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

Note: The Conference considered this Agenda Item in two parts: a) Strengthening consumer protection; and b) Emergency planning mechanisms.

Part a) Strengthening consumer protection

3.3.1 DOCUMENTATION

3.3.1.1 Through WP/6, the Secretariat addressed challenges in the implementation of consumer protection frameworks in the context of evolving air transport markets and large-scale disruptions. The paper identified issues arising from regulatory fragmentation, differing national approaches to passenger protection, and variations in emergency preparedness and coordination arrangements, which may result in inconsistent treatment of passengers during disruptions. It proposed a practical framework to strengthen consumer protection through greater consistency, clearer allocation of responsibilities, enhanced preparedness, improved coordination, and broader information sharing among stakeholders. The conference was invited to consider recommendations aimed at strengthening consumer protection and emergency planning frameworks, promoting more harmonized approaches to passenger rights, and encouraging wider adherence to the *Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air* (Montreal Convention, 1999)

3.3.1.2 In WP/78, Brazil, supported by 18 Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (LACAC)[1] Member States, addressed the use of digital solutions to improve passenger experience, consumer complaint handling and dispute resolution in air transport. Drawing on Brazil's experience, the paper described the use of online dispute resolution platforms and sector-specific digital tools to facilitate access to information, the submission and handling of complaints, and regulatory monitoring. It also highlighted the potential of digital solutions, including real-time communication, automated rebooking and digital vouchers, to improve passenger assistance during operational disruptions and enhance the traceability of assistance provided. The paper requested the Conference to acknowledge the importance of promoting service quality and passenger experience through online dispute resolution mechanisms tailored to the air transport sector, encourage airlines to implement digital solutions that improve and track passenger assistance during disruptions, and recommend that the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) facilitate the exchange of related best practices among States and industry stakeholders.

3.3.1.3 WP/100, presented by Chile and endorsed by 17 LACAC Member States[2], examined the need to ensure that consumer protection legislation is evidence-based, proportionate and consistent with the international regulatory framework. Drawing on Chile’s experience with proposed reforms to passenger rights, the paper highlighted concerns about legislation developed without sufficient data, adequate consideration of the operational characteristics of air transport, or alignment with existing international obligations. It emphasized the importance of balancing consumer protection with competition, affordable air services and regulatory predictability, as excessive or overlapping requirements could increase costs for passengers and affect the development of air services. The Conference was invited to promote the application of ICAO’s Core Principles on Consumer Protection based on objective evidence and

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

public-private collaboration, request ICAO to develop guidance on common standards for collecting and comparing consumer protection data and encourage States to strengthen consultation mechanisms between aviation authorities and industry stakeholders and share good practices.

3.3.1.4 WP/158, presented by Chile and supported by 7 LACAC Member States[3], shared LACAC's experience in applying ICAO's Core Principles on Consumer Protection through a regional framework tailored to the specific circumstances of the Latin American and Caribbean region. The paper argued that the non-binding nature of the Core Principles was intended to accommodate differences among States and regions, and that consumer protection measures should strike an appropriate balance between passenger protection, accessibility of air transport and industry sustainability. Referring to LACAC Resolution AE6-1, the paper highlighted a regional approach that aligns with the ICAO Core Principles while reflecting local market conditions, rather than replicating consumer protection models developed in other regions. The paper requested the Conference to note the LACAC experience, reaffirm the ICAO Core Principles as a global guiding framework, encourage States and regional organizations to apply the Core Principles according to their own circumstances, and recognize that the legal force of such approaches should be determined by each State or region through its own institutional processes.

3.3.1.5 Through WP/27, China shared its experience in supporting first-time flyers as a means of promoting more inclusive access to air transport and enhancing passenger experience. The paper highlighted the role of such initiatives in expanding the aviation population, reducing passenger anxiety, improving familiarity with air travel processes and supporting broader accessibility of air transport, particularly in developing countries. The paper described China's experience since 2021 in implementing measures such as passenger guidance, end-to-end travel assistance, staff training and process improvements, and noted that such initiatives can be implemented at relatively low cost and adapted to different national circumstances. The paper requested the Conference to note China's experience in first-time flyer services and request ICAO to task relevant panels to discuss, study and develop guidance to encourage Member States to prioritize first-time flyer services, share experience and measures relating to such services, and promote the strategy of making air transport more accessible to the general public.

3.3.1.6 In WP/28, China outlined the importance of enhancing accessibility in air transport for persons with disabilities through coordinated regulatory, policy and operational measures. The paper presented China's experience in strengthening accessibility through legislation, standards, guidance material and stakeholder coordination, including consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities. It also emphasized that accessible air transport is inherently international in nature and that differences in regulations, standards and procedures may affect the continuity of services across international journeys. The paper requested the Conference to note China's experience and progress, encourage Member States to strengthen accessibility-related regulatory and standards frameworks and consult organizations of persons with disabilities in policymaking, encourage Member States, air carriers and airport operators to share best practices relating to accessible facilities, service procedures and personnel training, and request ICAO to continue advancing its work on accessible air transport and facilitate the exchange of experience among Member States.

3.3.1.7 Through WP/48, Indonesia examined the regulatory, operational and jurisdictional challenges arising from the growing use of online travel agencies and digital air travel distribution models. The paper highlighted how virtual interlining, self-transfer arrangements and other forms of digital ticket aggregation may create gaps in passenger protection by separating ticket distribution from the operation of air services, particularly during disruptions involving missed connections, baggage transfers and refunds. It also raised concerns that algorithmically generated itineraries linking domestic points through foreign hubs may function as a form of indirect cabotage, circumventing established traffic rights and market access

[3] Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

arrangements, while affecting the application of national regulatory oversight. The paper requested the Conference to recognize the consumer protection and regulatory challenges associated with uncoordinated digital ticket aggregation and virtual interlining, reaffirm the sovereign right of States under Article 7 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), encourage Member States to adopt regulatory measures relating to algorithmic safeguards, passenger disclosures and intermediary accountability, and request ICAO to update Doc 9587 and Doc 9626 to address digital ticket distribution, virtual interlining practices and harmonized consumer protection approaches.

3.3.1.8 In WP/131, Ireland on behalf of the European Union, its Member States[4] and the other Member States of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC)[5], identified several emerging consumer issues for consideration in the review of ICAO's Core Principles on Consumer Protection as requested by the 42nd Assembly. The paper examined developments in the air transport sector since the adoption of the Core Principles in 2015, including the growing role of intermediaries and evolving distribution channels, the evolution of ticketing practices, accessibility and transparency issues, passenger awareness of rights and conditions of carriage, and consumer protection considerations arising during crises, including fare availability and pricing. It noted that these developments may warrant further consideration to ensure that the Core Principles remain relevant and fit for purpose. The paper requested the Conference to recognize the value of the ICAO Core Principles on Consumer Protection and ICAO's role in promoting dialogue and best practices, support the review of the Core Principles as requested by the 42nd Assembly, and consider the issues identified in the paper as part of that review.

3.3.1.9 WP/55 presented by Nigeria on behalf of 54 Member States of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)[6] highlighted the importance of strengthening and harmonizing consumer protection frameworks in Africa to support a resilient, passenger-centred and liberalized air transport market. The paper noted that fragmented consumer protection regimes across the continent may result in inconsistencies relating to passenger rights protection and enforcement. It emphasized that consumer protection should complement liberalization, strengthen passenger confidence and be supported by common minimum principles, effective implementation, capable institutions and regional cooperation, while also forming part of aviation resilience and emergency preparedness arrangements. The paper requested the Conference to recognize consumer protection as an integral component of a resilient, competitive and sustainable air transport system, urge Member States and regional organizations to develop common minimum passenger protection mechanisms for regulatory convergence, and request ICAO to update global guidance, analytical tools and common indicators, and support capacity-building and the exchange of best practices in consumer protection, service-quality monitoring, enforcement and dispute resolution.

3.3.1.10 Through WP/42, Thailand highlighted emerging challenges to air passenger consumer protection arising from evolving distribution channels, cross-border operations and large-scale disruptions. The paper noted that increasing reliance on intermediaries, differing national regulatory frameworks and the growing complexity of the passenger journey may create challenges relating to passenger rights, complaint handling and redress. It also emphasized that disruptions often involve multiple stakeholders across the aviation ecosystem and therefore require a coordinated, whole-of-system approach to consumer protection. Referring to Thailand's experience in applying ICAO's Core Principles on Consumer Protection, the paper underscored the importance of international cooperation, capacity-building, exchange of best

[4] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.
[5] Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and United Kingdom.
[6] Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

practices and regulatory convergence. The paper requested the Conference to encourage States to strengthen national consumer protection frameworks using the Core Principles as a reference, improve passenger awareness and cross-border complaint handling, request ICAO to facilitate capacity-building and the exchange of best practices, explore options to enhance international coordination and regulatory convergence, and review the continued adequacy of the Core Principles in addressing emerging consumer protection challenges.

3.3.1.11 In WP/133, the United Arab Emirates examined the economic resilience implications of disruptions originating from critical service providers outside the aviation sector on which international air transport is increasingly depends. The paper argued that failures involving external providers, such as cloud, software and data-service providers, may affect continuity of service, consumers and connectivity, while creating uncertainty regarding the allocation of disruption costs and the responsibilities of affected parties. It noted that existing ICAO economic regulatory guidance, including the Core Principles on Consumer Protection, does not expressly address such situations and referred to approaches adopted in other sectors for identifying and managing reliance on critical third-party providers. The paper requested the Conference to note the economic consequences of disruptions originating from such providers, recognize that existing ICAO economic regulatory texts do not expressly address the allocation of disruption costs in these circumstances. The paper also recommends that the Council examine, in the follow-up to WP/6 and the review of the ICAO Core Principles on Consumer Protection, whether existing economic regulatory arrangements adequately address continuity of service and the allocation of disruption costs between operators and such providers.

3.3.1.12 WP/161, presented by Uruguay and supported by 20 LACAC Member States[7], addressed the importance of accessibility in air transport as an essential component of air connectivity, facilitation and passenger service quality. The paper noted that persons with disabilities may face barriers across the air transport chain and emphasized the need for coordinated action by States, airports, air operators and other stakeholders to progressively eliminate such barriers through accessible information, adequate infrastructure, harmonized procedures, staff training and consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. Referring to existing international and regional instruments, the paper underscored that accessibility is a matter of non-discrimination, equality of opportunity and full participation. The paper requested the Conference to encourage States to strengthen the implementation of relevant international and regional instruments, promote accessibility measures across the air transport chain, foster the participation of persons with disabilities in policymaking, support studies and data collection to establish baselines and identify barriers, and request ICAO to develop practical tools or checklists to assess accessibility in airports and air transport services.

3.3.1.13 In WP/24, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) addressed the developments in passenger consumer protection since the Sixth Worldwide Air Transport Conference (ATConf/6) and the relationship between passenger rights regimes, consumer priorities and affordable air connectivity. The paper noted the continued proliferation of national consumer protection regimes and associated challenges relating to regulatory fragmentation, legal uncertainty and cost for airlines. The paper further emphasized the importance of ensuring that passengers are informed of their rights and responsibilities throughout the travel journey and proposed the development of guidance materials and a handbook as a practical information tool for passengers, governments and industry stakeholders. The paper also underscored the importance of preserving commercial and pricing freedoms that support competition, consumer choice and affordable connectivity. The paper invited the Conference to request ICAO to develop an Air Passenger

[7] Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Handbook, establish a multidisciplinary group with the participation of States and industry to assist in the development of the Handbook and encourage States to safeguard commercial and pricing freedoms.

3.3.2 **DISCUSSION**

3.3.2.1 The Conference in considering consumer protection frameworks and ICAO Core Principles, expressed broad support for reviewing ICAO's Core Principles on Consumer Protection to reflect developments since their adoption in 2015, particularly the increased role of digital intermediaries and experience gained during major disruptions. Delegates recognized that effective consumer protection strengthen passenger confidence and support the benefits of liberalization. In this regard, the importance of proportionate, evidence-based measures balancing passenger rights with affordability, competition and the sustainable development of air transport was emphasized. The Conference highlighted the benefits of greater consistency, the need to preserve the non-prescriptive nature of the Core Principles taking into account States national and regional circumstances. Regarding the development of an ICAO Air Passenger Handbook, differing views were expressed. While some delegates expressed support for the development of the handbook to help passengers understand their rights before travel and obtain timely, reliable information during disruptions, many delegates cautioned against such handbook, highlighting the burden on resources required to develop and maintain a single reference covering a wide range of national regimes.

3.3.2.2 The Conference noted the emerging challenges related to digital distribution, online travel agencies, virtual interlining and third-party service providers. Many delegates emphasized the need to improve transparency, clear passenger information and clarification of responsibilities among airlines, intermediaries and service providers, particularly during disruptions. Some delegates expressed reservations regarding the characterization of certain itineraries as indirect cabotage noting the lack of legal basis for such and the practical implications of restrictions on such arrangements. Some delegations called for ICAO to develop international guidance to cover these emerging challenges, while others considered that further analysis was needed to determine whether existing guidance already addressed these issues. In this regard, several delegations cautioned that extending regulation to non-aviation entities could impede innovation and emphasized that any approach should avoid imposing disproportionate burdens.

3.3.2.3 The Conference discussed measures aimed at enhancing passenger experience, accessibility and inclusiveness throughout the air transport journey. Many delegates highlighted the potential of digital tools, complaint-handling and dispute resolution mechanisms, passenger assistance during disruptions and first-time flyer initiatives to improve passenger experience and confidence, taking into account national circumstances. The Conference emphasized accessibility and inclusiveness throughout the passenger journey, including assistance for persons with disabilities and first-time travellers. Support was expressed for harmonized procedures, staff training, accessible information and consultation with persons with disabilities. Many delegates emphasized the importance of ensuring consistency with existing ICAO policies, programmes and guidance material, particularly Annex 9 and the *Manual on Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities* (Doc 9984),

3.3.2.4 The Conference noted the following information paper: WP/182 and WP/185 presented by Brazil, WP/196 presented by the Republic of Korea, and WP/119 presented by Thailand.

3.3.3 **CONCLUSION**

3.3.3.1 As a result of the documentation considered and ensuing discussion under Agenda Item 3.3 Part A, the Conference concluded that:

a) ICAO should review the Core Principles to ensure they remain relevant and future-ready, while States should apply them in their regulatory practices in accordance with their national and regional circumstances;

b) States should adopt evidence-based and proportionate measures that balance passenger protection, accessibility, affordable connectivity, competition and commercial flexibility;

c) States should clarify responsibilities across airlines, intermediaries and digital platforms;

d) States should strengthen accessibility throughout the passenger journey, while ICAO should provide practical guidance and tools to support implementation;

e) ICAO should consider guidance on service continuity and passenger assistance when disruptions originate from critical providers outside aviation;

f) States should strengthen cross-border cooperation and implement the Montreal Convention of 1999, while ICAO should provide practical tools, and capacity-building; and

g) ICAO should continue to update its platform on Compendium on Consumer Protection for sharing information on States and regional Organizations' consumer protection regulations and best practices.

3.3.4 RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3/5 — Strengthening emergency planning and consumer protection for a resilient aviation system: Strengthening consumer protection

The Conference recommends that:

a) States should modernize their consumer protection frameworks, guided by the ICAO Core Principles on Consumer Protection, to ensure that they remain evidence-based, proportionate, accessible and responsive to technological developments, emerging business models and large-scale disruptions;

b) States should establish clear responsibilities for air carriers, intermediaries and other service providers throughout the passenger journey, including for passenger information, complaint handling, refunds and assistance during disruptions;

c) ICAO should review and adapt its Core Principles on Consumer Protection to the evolving air transport system, ensuring they remain a relevant and forward-looking global framework supported by practical implementation tools and mechanisms for regulatory cooperation, while preserving sufficient flexibility for different national and regional circumstances; and

d) ICAO should assess whether existing policies and guidance adequately address emerging consumer protection issues, including online travel intermediaries, virtual interlining, accessibility, digital passenger assistance and disruptions involving critical third-party service providers and recommend whether new guidance needs to be developed

Part b) Emergency planning mechanisms

3.3.5 DOCUMENTATION

3.3.5.1 Through WP/140, co-sponsored by the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO), Kuwait presented its experience of regional cooperation in facilitating the continuity of air transport services during a period when operations from Kuwait were not possible. The paper highlighted the role of advance regional arrangements in enabling affected carriers to temporarily operate from airports in neighbouring States during crises, thereby supporting the continuity of passenger and cargo movement and reducing operational and economic disruptions. It identified key areas of regional cooperation, including regulatory approvals, airport capacity and slot management, air traffic management, passenger movement and protection, and cargo, supplies and support services, supported by clear coordination and decision-making mechanisms. The paper requested the Conference to take note of Kuwait's experience and lessons learned, encourage States to establish bilateral or multilateral arrangements for temporary operations during crises, invite ICAO to collect relevant practices and consider developing a guidance or model arrangement for such operations, and urge States and regional groups to test these arrangements through joint exercises and share the resulting lessons learned.

3.3.5.2 In WP/104, Oman addressed the operational and economic implications of geopolitical crises for international air transport and proposed measures to strengthen governance and international coordination. The paper highlighted the impact of airspace closures and flight rerouting on operating costs, air connectivity and global supply chains, and emphasized the role of information-sharing, risk management and cooperation among States and aviation stakeholders in supporting continuity of air transport services during crises. It also proposed an international framework aimed at strengthening governance, service continuity and operational resilience. The paper requested the Conference to acknowledge the importance of governance and international coordination, encourage enhanced cooperation, information-sharing and exchange of best practices, support further study of the impacts of large-scale flight rerouting, and invite ICAO to examine ways of strengthening governance and international coordination to support air transport continuity during geopolitical crises and major operational disruption.

3.3.5.3 Through WP/166, Peru and endorsed by 16 LACAC Member States[8], proposed the establishment of Emergency Regulatory Sandboxes as a mechanism to strengthen the resilience of air transport during pandemics, natural disasters and other major disruptions. Referring to the experience reflected in LACAC Resolutions A24-1 and AE6-3, the paper highlighted the limitations of rigid regulatory frameworks in responding to exceptional circumstances and advocated temporary, proportionate and controlled regulatory flexibility measures to support the continuity of air transport services without compromising safety. It also emphasized the importance of maintaining airport operational governance and the deployment of emergency regulatory measures under the authority of Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs), while balancing consumer protection with the financial sustainability of air carriers during major disruptions. The paper requested the Conference to recommend that ICAO develop guidance and policy frameworks for Emergency Regulatory Sandboxes and other regulatory flexibility mechanisms, urge States to incorporate provisions into national contingency plans to ensure that operational command, airport infrastructure management and the deployment of regulatory flexibility mechanisms remain under the authority of CAAs, and promote a balanced regulatory approach to consumer protection during major disruptions beyond the control of operators.

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

3.3.5.4 In WP/21 Qatar highlighted the importance of integrated crisis preparedness and coordinated action across the aviation ecosystem to strengthen the resilience of international air transport. The paper emphasized that maintaining essential aviation functions during major disruptions requires effective crisis governance, business continuity planning, information-sharing and cooperation among aviation stakeholders. Referring to recent public health emergencies, geopolitical events and airspace restrictions, it also highlighted the role of regulatory and operational flexibility, including mechanisms within air services agreements (ASAs) and related ICAO guidance, in supporting the continuity and restoration of international air services during crises. The paper requested the Conference to recognize the importance of coordinated preparedness across the aviation sector, encourage States to establish mechanisms enabling timely regulatory and operational flexibility, consider mechanisms within ASAs and related arrangements to support the continuity and orderly restoration of international air services during crises, incorporate essential air connectivity into resilience and recovery planning, and request ICAO to continue facilitating the exchange of lessons learned and best practices relating to aviation resilience and continuity of essential aviation functions.

3.3.5.5 Through WP/72, co-sponsored by Egypt, Saudi Arabia presented the need to strengthen economic resilience and national preparedness to support the continuity of international air transport during major disruptions. The paper noted that crises arising from multiple sources may result in similar economic consequences, including loss of connectivity, capacity constraints and increased operating costs, and emphasized the need to translate existing ICAO crisis preparedness principles into practical national arrangements. It proposed the development of a dedicated ICAO Economic Resilience Module and a model National Air Transport Crisis Management and Economic Resilience Strategy to support coordinated preparedness, economic impact assessment, contingency planning and the preservation of essential air connectivity. The paper requested the Conference to recognize that recovery from one crisis does not necessarily demonstrate readiness for future disruptions, encourage States to establish, update and periodically test National Air Transport Crisis Management and Economic Resilience Strategies, request the Council to develop an Economic Resilience Module and a model national strategy together with supporting practical tools, and integrate implementation support within relevant *No Country Left Behind* strategic goal activities, particularly for capacity-constrained States.

3.3.5.6 Through WP/105, Sudan highlighted the challenges faced by civil aviation sectors in States affected by conflicts and wars and the need for enhanced international support to facilitate recovery and long-term sustainability. The paper described the economic and operational consequences of conflicts on air transport and emphasized the importance of technical assistance, capacity-building, infrastructure rehabilitation and access to financing in restoring connectivity and supporting recovery efforts. Referring to Sudan's ongoing recovery efforts, it also underscored the role of civil aviation in facilitating humanitarian assistance and economic recovery. The paper requested the Conference to invite ICAO, in cooperation with its Regional Offices and regional organizations, to expand training and capacity-building programmes for States affected by conflicts, support the rebuilding of institutional and technical capacities, facilitate access to financing, grants and concessional loans for the rehabilitation of civil aviation infrastructure, promote the inclusion of civil aviation recovery programmes in the work plans of regional organizations, and establish an ICAO international mechanism to coordinate technical and economic support for States affected by conflicts and wars.

3.3.5.7 In WP/40, Thailand proposed an integrated Aviation Policy Toolkit to strengthen crisis preparedness and economic resilience in the aviation sector. Referring to recent disruptions, including the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical events and energy volatility, the paper highlighted the limitations of reactive relief measures and emphasized the need for institutionalized emergency planning supported by continuous risk monitoring and data-driven decision-making. It presented a framework comprising seven policy dimensions covering safety, operational capacity, facilitation, economic resilience, connectivity, workforce retention and information-sharing, supported by a four-stage activation mechanism for

preparedness, response and recovery. The paper requested the Conference to invite Member States and aviation stakeholders to strengthen crisis preparedness through data-driven monitoring, risk assessment and evidence-based policymaking, and to request ICAO to develop global guidance and common principles on crisis preparedness, risk monitoring and coordinated regulatory response.

3.3.5.8 WP/168, presented by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and supported by 16 LACAC Member States[9], shared lessons from the June 2026 earthquakes in Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), which severely damaged Simón Bolívar International Airport and disrupted air traffic control operations. Through regional cooperation, the activation of alternate airports and flexible air traffic management, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) restructured 84 per cent of domestic routes and 73 per cent of international routes within eight days, while maintaining humanitarian and cargo operations. The paper emphasized the importance of contingency planning, trained personnel, inter-State coordination and regulatory flexibility. The Conference was invited to encourage States to provide ongoing crisis-management training and request ICAO to develop a Manual on Air Connectivity Resilience to Natural Disasters, including streamlined procedures to grant temporary traffic rights and adjust routes within 72 hours following a major airport closure.

3.3.5.9 In WP/169, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and supported by 17 LACAC Member States[10] highlighted the need to align passenger protection regulations with civil aviation emergency planning mechanisms. Drawing on the experience of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) in responding to major disruptions affecting civil aviation operations, the paper emphasized the importance of effective coordination, communication and passenger assistance during emergencies. It noted that mass disruptions may expose gaps in stakeholder responsibilities and coordination arrangements, and highlighted the need for compatible emergency plans, formal communication channels and coordinated governance mechanisms to support both operational resilience and passenger protection. The paper requested the Conference to urge States to strengthen consumer protection frameworks by incorporating harmonized approaches to emergency assistance during mass disruptions, taking into consideration compatibility among emergency plans, stakeholder responsibilities, training in emergency management and passenger assistance, and the creation of inter-institutional emergency response mechanisms. The paper also requested the Conference to urge States to develop passenger assistance protocols and guidance for exceptional circumstances, and procedures to follow during an emergency.

3.3.6 **DISCUSSION**

3.3.6.1 The Conference discussed the importance of governance, coordination and continuity of air transport services during major disruptions. The Conference noted that recent public health emergencies, natural disasters, geopolitical developments and other extraordinary events had demonstrated the importance of coordinated decision-making, timely information-sharing and cooperation among States and aviation stakeholders. Support was expressed for strengthening regional and international coordination mechanisms, contingency arrangements and communication procedures to facilitate the continuity and orderly restoration of air transport services during crises.

3.3.6.2 The Conference also emphasized the importance of integrating passenger assistance and consumer protection considerations into emergency preparedness and response arrangements through compatible emergency plans, clearly defined stakeholder responsibilities and coordinated governance mechanisms. The Conference highlighted the value of advance planning, inter-institutional coordination

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

and practical arrangements to support the continuity and orderly restoration of air transport services, including through regional cooperation and contingency measures that minimize disruption to air transport users.

3.3.6.3 The Conference also discussed measures to strengthen aviation resilience through preparedness, risk monitoring, contingency planning, recovery planning and implementation support. Delegations highlighted the importance of preserving essential air connectivity during crises and improving States' capacity to anticipate, respond to and recover from major disruptions. Support was expressed for practical tools and arrangements that enhance resilience and facilitate the continuity and restoration of air transport services during crises, including the inclusion of a relevant provision in the Template Air Services Agreement (TASA). Several delegations supported the use of temporary, proportionate and transparent regulatory flexibility measures during exceptional circumstances, provided that safety, security and oversight responsibilities are maintained.

3.3.6.4 While support was expressed for technical assistance, capacity building and institutional strengthening to support recovery following major disruptions, differing views were expressed regarding the scope of certain emergency regulatory measures and proposals that could entail additional ICAO activities or resource implications. Several delegations emphasized that such measures should remain consistent with ICAO's mandate, existing programmes and available resources.

3.3.6.5 The Conference noted WP/129 presented by Colombia and supported by 16 LACAC Member States[11], WP/177 presented by Indonesia and, WP/183 presented by Venezuela and supported by 15 LACAC Member States.

3.3.7 **CONCLUSION**

3.3.7.1 As a result of the documentation considered and ensuing discussion under Agenda Item 3.3 Part B, the Conference concluded that:

a) effective crisis preparedness and continuity of air transport services require coordinated governance arrangements, timely information-sharing, contingency planning and cooperation among relevant stakeholders;

b) resilience planning should integrate operational, regulatory, governance, economic and consumer protection considerations, including the preservation of essential air connectivity during major disruptions;

c) temporary, proportionate and transparent regulatory flexibility measures may facilitate service continuity and recovery during exceptional circumstances, provided that safety, security and oversight responsibilities are maintained;

d) bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation arrangements may support the continuity and orderly restoration of air transport services during major disruptions, including through coordinated operational, regulatory and passenger-service measures;

[11] Belice, Bolivia (Estado Plurinacional de), Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú y Uruguay.

e) practical preparedness, recovery and implementation-support mechanisms, including capacity-building and the exchange of lessons learned and best practices, contribute to strengthening aviation resilience; and

f) ICAO has an important role in supporting States through guidance material, practical implementation tools and implementation support activities, while ensuring coherence with existing ICAO programmes and initiatives.

3.3.8 **RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation 3/6 — Strengthening emergency planning mechanism and consumer protection for a resilient aviation system: Emergency planning mechanisms

The Conference recommends that:

a) States should strengthen emergency planning, coordination mechanisms and information-sharing arrangements to preserve essential passenger and cargo connectivity during major disruptions;

b) States are encouraged to incorporate operational, economic resilience and passenger assistance considerations into emergency preparedness, response and recovery arrangements, including clearly defined stakeholder responsibilities and coordination mechanisms;

c) States should consider establishing bilateral, regional and multilateral arrangements, as appropriate, to facilitate the continuity and orderly restoration of air transport services during major disruptions, including temporary traffic rights, alternative gateways and route adjustments, consistent with the Convention on International Civil Aviation and applicable international law;

d) States should provide temporary, transparent and proportionate regulatory flexibility during exceptional circumstances, where appropriate, while maintaining safety, security and oversight responsibilities; and

e) ICAO should continue to support States through practical guidance, implementation tools, technical assistance, capacity-building activities and the exchange of lessons learned and best practices relating to crisis preparedness, resilience and recovery.

— END —