



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

**IMPLEMENTING PARAGRAPH 15 OF ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION A42-26:
A CROSS-CUTTING APPROACH TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF AIR
TRANSPORT**

(Presented by Brazil, and supported by 18 LACAC Member States¹)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assembly Resolution A42-26 requested the Council, in its paragraph 15, to develop policy that would enhance coordination on cross-cutting issues related to the Strategic Goal of Economic Development of Air Transport, integrate economic development considerations systematically across the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) activities and programmes, and implement a cross-cutting agenda that ensures effective pursuit of the Strategic Goal of Economic Development of Air Transport. This approach calls for Economic Development considerations to be reflected across the Organization's agenda, including in standard-setting, work programmes, policies and frameworks, implementation activities, guidance, studies and other initiatives, as appropriate.

The Seventh Worldwide Air Transport Conference (ATConf/7) provides an appropriate opportunity to identify practical and actionable considerations that may assist the Council in implementing this mandate. Building upon the proposal submitted by Brazil at the 42nd Session of the Assembly (WP/141), this paper suggests a number of elements that could contribute to the development of the policy envisaged in paragraph 15 of Assembly Resolution A42-26, including focused deliverables and actions for immediate implementation or during the next triennium.

Action: The action by the conference is detailed in paragraph 3.2.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Goals: <i>The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All; and No Country Left Behind.</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	N/A
<i>References:</i>	N/A

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).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Assembly Resolution A42-26 strengthened the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Strategic Goal on Economic Development of Air Transport by requesting the Council, in paragraph 15, to develop policy that would enhance coordination on cross-cutting issues related to economic development, integrate economic development considerations systematically across ICAO's activities and programmes, and implement a cross-cutting agenda. This entails a request for the Council and the Secretariat to ensure that the Strategic Goal on Economic Development is pursued across all items of the Organization's agenda.

1.2 Economic development interacts with ICAO's work in areas such as safety, security, air navigation, facilitation, environmental protection, innovation and implementation support. Effective implementation of paragraph 15 therefore requires coordinated action across the Organization.

1.3 The adoption of paragraph 15 reflects the Assembly's recognition of the need for a more integrated approach to the Economic Development Strategic Goal.

1.4 The Seventh Worldwide Air Transport Conference (ATConf/7) provides an appropriate forum to identify practical considerations that may assist the Council in developing the policy requested by the Assembly.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Economic Development as a Cross-Cutting Consideration

2.1.1 The agenda of ATConf/7 highlights the centrality of the economic development of air transport. Infrastructure investment, financing, consumer protection, human capital, digital transformation, artificial intelligence and cleaner energy all influence the economic development of international civil aviation.

2.1.2 These issues increasingly cut across ICAO's Strategic Plan and reinforce the need for coherent and coordinated implementation throughout the Organization.

2.1.3 A cross-cutting approach should also recognize aviation's role as a development tool and the socio-economic benefits generated by connectivity, including direct and indirect contributions to national economies. ICAO can reinforce its advocacy in this area by supporting the measurement of aviation's economic and social benefits and by encouraging States to consider aviation appropriately in national development and economic planning.

2.1.4 Such an approach should be consistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) concerning equal opportunity, the sound and economical operation of international air transport, meeting the needs of the world's peoples for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport, and avoiding economic waste caused by unreasonable competition. Accordingly, the economic implications of ICAO activities and initiatives should be considered, as appropriate, from the perspectives of fairness, competition, non-discrimination, market access and equitable participation. This includes due consideration of the economic regulation dimension of relevant issues, as well as the interests of the economic development of the aviation sector and the respective perspectives of regulators, industry and consumers.

2.1.5 The transformation of *No Country Left Behind* (NCLB) into a strategic goal reflects the importance given to the subject, but this must not imply disregarding the promotion of NCLB while pursuing the other strategic goals. NCLB must remain a transversal objective across ICAO.

2.1.6 Reflecting this concern with the operational nature of the NCLB goal, it would be valuable to hold a dedicated discussion on the considerations, measures, and tools the Organization applies in implementing it. ICAO would benefit from a toolkit to help put the NCLB goal into practice.

2.2 From Policy Direction to Implementation

2.2.1 Assembly Resolution A42-26 establishes a clear policy direction. The next step is to translate that mandate into practical guidance capable of supporting coordinated implementation across ICAO.

2.2.2 In this regard, the policy envisaged in paragraph 15 could promote a “One-ICAO” approach by encouraging coordination among Headquarters, Regional Offices and implementation support activities, while ensuring that ICAO initiatives systematically take into account:

- a) expected economic development outcomes;
- b) implementation considerations for member states;
- c) financing and investment requirements;
- d) implementation support and capacity-building needs; and
- e) the particular circumstances of developing countries and states with particular needs.

2.2.3 Such an approach would strengthen coherence and effectiveness without creating additional regulatory obligations.

2.2.4 Implementation should be supported by strengthened capacity-building and strategic support in air transport economics. This includes developing talent and institutional capacity within Member States, the Secretariat and relevant industry stakeholders, and ensuring that Regional Offices can promote practical solutions and strategies responsive to regional circumstances. ICAO should also remain responsive to evolving industry trends and provide timely economic and regulatory guidance to States, including on emerging business models and regulatory arrangements that can support growth, market access, effective participation and fair competition.

2.2.5 Where ICAO initiatives may entail significant economic consequences, including through standards, guidance or new policy frameworks, consideration should be given, as appropriate, to their economic impact and the economic viability of implementation, taking into account the capabilities of Member States and the needs of developing countries and States with particular needs. Implementation support, including financing, should be identified alongside initiatives, with attention to improving access to funding for aviation infrastructure and State oversight functions and to addressing infrastructure and airspace capacity constraints.

2.2.6 Finally, regarding NCLB, while it is often invoked as a general principle, ICAO should enhance its effectiveness by preparing a document compiling:

- i. all the concerns associated with NCLB; and
- ii. the possible concrete measures and actions within the Organization to advance the NCLB goal.

2.3 Possible Elements of the Policy Envisaged in Paragraph 15 of Assembly Resolution A42-26

2.3.1 Policy coherence

- Promote the systematic consideration of economic development across ICAO's policies, strategies, work programmes, guidance material and standard-setting activities, as appropriate.

2.3.2 Implementation support

- Strengthen coordination among implementation support activities, technical assistance programmes, financing initiatives and Regional Offices, consistent with the NCLB Strategic Goal. This should also recognize the horizontal importance of economic matters and promote better coordination among ICAO Bureaux and technical panels, and give due consideration to the expectations, demands and needs of the recipients of cooperation provided by or through ICAO.

2.3.3 Partnerships

- Promote cooperation with multilateral development banks, regional financial institutions, United Nations (UN) entities and other development partners to facilitate aviation economic development. Cooperation should also seek to strengthen links with relevant tourism and trade sectors, where appropriate, to support connectivity and sustainable demand for air transport.

2.3.4 Monitoring

- Provide for periodic reporting to the Council on progress achieved in implementing paragraph 15 of Assembly Resolution A42-26, including focused deliverables and actions for the next triennium, with a view to informing the 43rd Session of the Assembly.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 ATConf/7 provides a timely opportunity to identify practical considerations that may assist the Council in developing the policy requested by paragraph 15 of Assembly Resolution A42-26.

3.2 Accordingly, the Conference is invited to recommend that the Council, in developing that policy, consider measures aimed at:

- a) promoting policy coherence by systematically integrating economic development considerations, including economic and regulatory impacts, implementation viability, fairness, competition, non-discrimination and equitable participation, across ICAO's activities and programmes;
- b) strengthening coordination among ICAO Bureaux, technical panels, Regional Offices and implementation support activities under a “One-ICAO” approach, including capacity-building and strategic support in the economic development of air transport;

- c) enhancing cooperation with development and financing partners, including multilateral development banks, regional financial institutions, UN entities and relevant tourism and trade sectors in support of sustainable aviation development, giving due consideration to the needs of recipients of support provided by or through ICAO; and
- d) periodically reviewing progress in implementing paragraph 15 of Assembly Resolution A42-26, including deliverables obtained and actions for the next triennium, and reporting thereon to the 43rd Session of the Assembly.

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