



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

A39-WP/288

P/13

16/08/16

(Information paper)

ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

PLENARY

Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States

STATEMENT BY SINGAPORE

(Presented by Singapore)

President of the Assembly,
President of the ICAO Council, Dr Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu,
Distinguished Delegates,

SINGAPORE: 50 YEARS IN ICAO

1. This year marks 50 years of Singapore's membership in ICAO. We joined ICAO just a year after our nation's independence in 1965. At our maiden appearance at the 16th ICAO Assembly in 1968 in Buenos Aires, my predecessor laid out Singapore's vision for ICAO: "Singapore fully supports the noble aims and objectives of ICAO... so that international civil aviation can be further fostered and developed to bring about greater friendship, harmony and understanding amongst nations and peoples of the world".

2. Fifty years on, Singapore remains convinced of this vision. Civil aviation in Singapore has come a long way. The first passenger flight landed at our then Paya Lebar International Airport in 1955. Today, Singapore Changi International Airport handles more than 55 million passengers. The growth in our aviation sector was made possible only by ICAO's leadership in putting in place a global framework that allows international civil aviation to develop in a safe and orderly manner. Singapore has benefitted greatly as a Member State. In our development journey, we are also thankful to fellow Member States for their friendship, support, and training assistance.

3. We believe that Singapore, in turn, should pay it forward. We have been actively contributing resources and expertise to help advance international civil aviation, as well as to support the commendable "No Country Left Behind" initiative. Singapore participates actively in the discussions at ICAO fora on various issues, ranging from aviation safety and security, training and capacity building, to air traffic management, air law, and environmental protection, in order to ensure that more States benefit from the opportunities brought about by aviation.

BEING FUTURE-READY AND FOSTERING STRONGER COLLABORATION

4. Aviation is a key driver of globalisation and economic growth. In this regard, I am glad that the air traffic outlook over the next few decades is overwhelmingly positive, brought about by greater liberalisation of air services. In Southeast Asia, we have implemented an ASEAN Single Aviation Market in support of the ASEAN Economic Community. There are similar open skies

agreements in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and the European Union. North America and in particular, the United States, along with Singapore, was a pioneer of the multilateral, multi-regional, and cross-oceanic Multilateral Agreement on the Liberalization of International Air Transportation (MALIAT). Looking ahead, ASEAN and the European Union are starting negotiations on a cross-regional Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement, which would be the world's first bloc-to-bloc agreement.

5. These liberalisation initiatives will spur growth in air traffic, but they also bring challenges. States will need to foster closer collaboration to address concerns which would be accentuated as more airlines fly between our countries.

6. One key concern is safety. This does not just affect lives, but confidence in flying and the global aviation system. Not all States may have achieved satisfactory levels of safety oversight. We must continue to push ahead with ICAO's Global Aviation Safety Plan, and regional efforts to coordinate and develop safety initiatives.

7. The sector is also facing more and increasingly complex aviation security challenges. The recent spate of terrorist attacks including at the Brussels and Istanbul airports underscores this. Cyber-attacks will also be an increasingly prevalent and menacing threat. We look to ICAO's leadership to bring Member States together to take comprehensive, robust, and coordinated measures. In particular, we look forward to the development of a Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) following this Assembly.

8. At the same time, we should continue to look into air traffic flow issues, in order to maximise the benefits that can be reaped from open skies. In support of ICAO's Global Air Navigation Plan, Singapore has collaborated with other Air Navigation Service Providers to implement Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM) for more efficient air traffic flow, thus avoiding unnecessary delays and fuel burn. We are also strongly supportive of ICAO's Asia Pacific Seamless ATM Plan, and ASEAN's aspiration towards a Seamless ASEAN Sky, which was inspired by the US' NextGen and Europe's Single European Sky ATM Research (SESAR) programmes. To this end, Singapore has set up a Centre of Excellence for Air Traffic Management and invested in a new, state-of-the-art air traffic management system to service the 600,000 aircraft traversing the Singapore FIR annually.

CONCLUSION

9. On this note, let me conclude by affirming Singapore's strongest support for ICAO's various transformational plans. With these plans, we can collectively keep air travel safe, efficient and sustainable for another 50 years.

10. Thank you.

Mr. Khaw Boon Wan,
Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Transport

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