



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 40TH SESSION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION**

**Agenda Item 51: Status of ICAO Workforce and Human Resources Management**

**GLOBAL AVIATION GENDER SUMMIT OUTCOMES**

(Presented by South Africa)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On 8 – 10 August 2018, South Africa, through the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) and jointly with ICAO, hosted the first ever Global Aviation Gender Summit in Cape Town in collaboration with UNESCO and UN Women. The initiative was spurred by the 2016 ICAO Assembly Resolution A39-30 which called upon “States, regional and international aviation organizations and the international aviation industry to demonstrate strong, determined leadership and commitment to advance women’s rights and to take the necessary measures to strengthen gender equality by supporting policies, as well as the establishment and improvement of programmes and projects, to further women’s careers within ICAO’s governing and technical bodies, the ICAO Secretariat and the global aviation sector”.

This paper reports on the outcomes of the Gender Summit. The action plan agreed to at the Summit is contained in Appendix A.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) take note of the outcomes of the Global Aviation Gender Summit;
- b) encourage States to develop action plans towards the achievement of the proposed programmes emanating from the Global Aviation Gender Summit and to share best practices and experiences by presenting progress against the stipulated outcomes going forward; and
- c) request ICAO to establish a Working Group/Panel that will ensure that the objectives of the A39-30 are realised.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to ICAO Gender Equality Programme.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	No financial implications.
<i>References:</i>	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals ICAO Assembly Resolution A39-30 ICAO Assembly Resolution A39-25

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On 8 – 10 August 2018, South Africa hosted the first ever Global Aviation Gender Summit in Cape Town. The event was jointly hosted by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) and ICAO in collaboration with UNESCO and UN Women.

1.2 The initiative was spurred by the 2016 ICAO Assembly Resolution A39-30 which called upon “States, regional and international aviation organizations and the international aviation industry to demonstrate strong, determined leadership and commitment to advance women’s rights and to take the necessary measures to strengthen gender equality by supporting policies, as well as the establishment and improvement of programmes and projects, to further women’s careers within ICAO’s governing and technical bodies, the ICAO Secretariat and the global aviation sector”. Furthermore, the 39<sup>th</sup> Assembly also reaffirmed its commitment to achieving an aspirational goal of 50/50 (women-men) participation by 2030 at all professional and higher levels of employment in the global aviation sector. The call for action was also in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 which seeks to achieve the following, among others:

- a) end all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere;
- b) ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life; and
- c) adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

1.3 The advancement of women is one of the priorities of the South African government. Since the advent of democracy in South Africa, the meaningful participation of women in all spheres of government as well as the private sector has been supported by a legislative framework which includes, among others, the Black Economic Empowerment Act, the Employment Equity Act and the Skills Development Act. Moreover, South Africa has taken the advocacy of women’s empowerment to even greater heights by establishing a dedicated government department that deals with Women, Youth, Children and People Living with Disabilities.

1.4 The Department of Transport (DoT) of South Africa monitors the implementation of the above legislation in the civil aviation sector and provides quarterly and annual reports. To this end, the agencies reporting to the DoT are required to track and periodically report on statistics of women’s participation in leadership positions, on areas for Skills Development opportunities, as well as on women’s representation in transport technical functions.

1.5 The SACAA has equally taken this cause further by ensuring that at the highest decision-making structures of the Regulator, women representation is 50/50 and all funding towards training and development is concentrated on female students in the areas of piloting, mechanical engineering and aeronautical engineering, where possible.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Summit attracted more than 500 delegates from across the world who convened to discuss critical issues affecting women all over world. The Summit provided a platform for aviators to discuss key drivers as well as inhibitors to women's empowerment. The following are some of the outcomes of the Global Gender Summit:

- a) awareness and understanding of “unconscious bias” at the state, organizational, cultural and individual level;
- b) recognition of the need to shift mindsets to drive inclusive decision-making with a gender lens;
- c) importance of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, especially Goal 5 on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, to underpin the need to include gender and diversity in strategic planning;
- d) necessity for data sharing to enable benchmarking actions to accelerate gender equality;
- e) urgency for global collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data to inform policy makers and to drive actions/implementation on gender related policies in aviation sector;
- f) increase outreach to girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), with a focus on technical studies leading to aviation careers;
- g) aviation to advocate for global STEM programmes and reports;
- h) urge Governments to support STEM programmes related to aviation;
- i) urge aviation sector stakeholders to increase promotion of the sector to youth, facilitating access to education by dispelling stereotypes, and ensuring equal opportunities for girls and boys;
- j) conduct communication campaigns to make aviation sector more known and accessible to young girls and boys;
- h) put measures in place to –
  - i) attract and retain women in aviation and STEM related careers; and
  - ii) overcome barriers associated with workplace stereotypes that have hindered women from developing and advancing careers in the aviation male-dominated sector;
- i) develop policies that eliminate discrimination between genders;
- j) government legislation, to address matters such as pay equity and maternity/paternity leave;
- k) organizational policies that promote work/life balance;

- l) advocate for leadership and mentoring programmes and initiatives to support women in their career development facilitating access to leadership positions;
- m) encourage industry leaders to serve as inspirational role models for women in aviation;
- n) enhance role/accountability of aviation leaders by demonstrating commitment from the top and serving as “Gender Champions”;
- o) examine gender equality through the lens of innovation, fuelling business and organizational success;
- p) identify what constitutes successful gender partnerships to inspire collaboration with industry stakeholders; and
- q) encourage aviation stakeholders to accelerate gender equality in aviation through partnering with entities who have a shared vision and goals on gender.

2.2 At the conclusion of the Summit an action plan was developed and communicated through a communique that was distributed to Member States. The action plan is available at <https://www.icao.int/Meetings/AviationGenderSummit/Pages/default.aspx>.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

South Africa is proud and honoured to have played a part in this ground-breaking initiative and will continue to implement the action plan agreed to at the Summit. It is important that States develop action plans with concrete timelines in order to advance women’s rights in aviation. Such plans need not be isolated but can rather be integrated into existing programmes such as Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) and similar programmes. The advancement of women’s rights is an investment in the future of the Air Transport system and, more importantly, in a sustainable world.

As the South African adage goes “ wathint’ abafazi, wathint’ imbokodo” translated as “[When] you strike the women, you strike a rock.”

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