



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

Agenda Item 38: Human Resources Management and Gender Equality

GLOBAL AVIATION GENDER EQUALITY

(Presented by South Africa)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the leadership of ICAO two Global Aviation Gender Summits were hosted in pursuit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality and the ICAO Assembly Resolution A42-26: *ICAO Gender Equality Programme promoting the participation of women in the global aviation sector*.

There is no empirical data that supports the notion that by empowering women, the industry is compromising the integrity of the aviation system in any way. Globally women leaders have shown great business and leadership results both in public and professional positions. Gender equality and meritocracy are therefore not mutually exclusive. The outcomes of the two Summits hosted with ICAO emphasises the need for the collection of data and the analysis of the same to ensure that decisions are based on evidentiary information as opposed to opinions. Furthermore, by sharing programmes that yield positive results, member States are able to learn from each other thereby contributing to the progress and achievement of the 50/50 target by 2030.

South Africa has responded positively to the above and many other actions and is sharing the progress achieved by South African aviation stakeholders on gender equality and representation.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) acknowledge that gender inequality is one of the factors that has the potential of holding the industry back;
- b) acknowledge the good examples of gender equality in some States and encourage all States to share best practices;
- c) encourage Member States to ensure the integration of women issues in existing programmes such as NGAP and similar programmes;
- d) request the Secretariat to establish a mechanism for tracking progress on the action plans and sharing of ideas and benchmarking;
- e) encourages ICAO and Member States to ensure that there are aviation industry specific Women Empowerment programmes at Global, Continental and State level to build capacity for the industry.
- f) note the progress achieved by South Africa in addressing gender equality targets; and
- g) request the Secretariat to combine the Global Aviation Gender Summit and the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals Summit and ensure that they are hosted at least once every two years.

Strategic Goals:

This working paper relates to all Strategic Goals and all High Priority and Supporting Enablers, particularly those related to gender equality in aviation.

<i>Financial implications:</i>	The cost implications will be informed by the programmes adopted by each Member State in their respective action plan. The cost of hosting the Gender Summit to be borne by the host State.
<i>References:</i>	A/RES/70/1, <i>Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i> ICAO Assembly Resolution A39/30 ICAO Assembly Resolution A39/25 ICAO Assembly Resolution A41/26 Global Aviation Gender Summit, Cape Town, South Africa, Communique, 2018 Global Aviation Gender Summit, Madrid, Spain, <i>Rising to the Challenge, A Call to Action for Moving from Aspirations to Achieving Gender Equality in Aviation</i> ICAO Data Analytics, 13 February 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The 41st Session of the ICAO Assembly adopted Resolution A41-26: *ICAO Gender Equality Programme promoting the participation of women in the global aviation sector* and called for several actions to be taken by member States and Regions.

1.2 In particular, the Assembly outcomes urged regional and international aviation organisations and the international aviation industry to demonstrate strong, determined leadership and commitment to advancing women's rights and to taking the necessary measures to strengthen gender equality by establishing supporting policies, as well as the establishment and improvement of programmes and projects to further women's careers within the aviation sector. Furthermore, and amongst others, the 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.

1.3 In 2018 ICAO in collaboration with South Africa, hosted the first ever Global Aviation Gender Summit effectively creating a platform for engagement, sharing of best practices and exchanging ideas on how the aviation industry will achieve the UN SDG Goal number 5 on Gender equality by 2030. This summit concluded with a communique that called for mainly four actions from Member States and stakeholders namely, to develop policies and action plans and advocate and demonstrate commitment from the top; eliminate or mitigate biases and stereotypes in the home and schools in order to increase the access of girls to STEM education; for ICAO and its Member States, together with international aviation partners, to work together to collect, analyse and share global gender disaggregated data on a voluntary basis; and to accelerate gender equality in aviation through partnerships with stakeholders sharing common vision and goals on gender.

1.4 Building on the success of the first summit, the Ministry of Transport Mobility and Urban Agenda on behalf of the government of Spain, hosted the second Global Aviation Gender Summit which took place in Madrid, Spain to further the objectives of gender representation in professional and leadership positions.

1.5 The Global Aviation Gender Summit 2023 committed to accelerate achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women across the aviation sector by undertaking the following key actions – data collection and analysis; gender policies and gender mainstreaming; decent work, career development and working conditions; and leadership and role models.

1.6 According to ICAO, out of 965 341 personnel queried across the six regions – Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America/ Caribbean, Middle East and North America, 94,87% of the personnel is male and only 5,13% of the personnel are female. (Source: ICAO Data Analytics, 13 February 2024).

1.7 A breakdown of these statistics indicates that 3,11% of AMEs, 21,12% of ATC's and 4,69% of ATPLs are female in all six regions combined.

1.8 In Africa, in particular, 2,79% AME's, 5,21% ATPL and 15,01% ATC's are female.

2. **DISCUSSION**

2.1 South Africa supports the ICAO Gender Equality Programme. South Africa considers the Global Network of Gender Focal points and Global Ambassadors Programme as key tools for gender equality and is fully represented and participates on the Global Network of Gender Focal Points platform.

2.2 Through this network, ICAO and its Member States work together to promote equal opportunities for women across all areas of the aviation industry, contributing to a more inclusive and diverse sector.

2.3 On the contrary it is proven that diversity contributes positively to the aviation system. Gender equality and meritocracy are not mutually exclusive. The notion that gender representation may lower standards is not supported by statistics anywhere in the world.

2.4 Gender representation remains important across all industries not just in aviation and this is the reason why platforms such as the Global Aviation Gender Summit are critical to influence and encourage action and progress on this important subject.

2.5 From 2018, it took ICAO 5 years to host the next summit in 2023, and it has now been three years since the last summit. Notwithstanding the impact caused by Covid-19, consistency and commitment remains in perpetuating ongoing dialogue and engagements on gender equality until such time the UN SDG Goal of sneering sufficient representation of women in critical structures. Platforms such as the Summit demonstrates commitment and encourages accountability amongst member States.

2.6 **ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY SOUTH AFRICA SINCE 2018**

2.6.1 The International Society of Women Airline Pilots ranked South Africa third after India and Ireland respectively in a study measuring female pilots in the cockpit. In this study 9.8% of pilots were female in the 2021 study.

2.6.2 In South Africa, 29,6% of AME's, 70,4% of ATC's and 8,5% of ATPL's are female.

2.6.3 Under the leadership of the National Regulator, South Africa established a platform in the form of the National Aviation Gender Summit for the aviation industry to share best practice on gender equality initiatives from 2019 to date;

2.6.4 South Africa collects data in relation to women empowerment with the following progress having been achieved to date:

2.6.4.1 The South African Government demonstrates the commitment to gender equality at the highest leadership structures with supporting legislation and policies. The position of the Minister of Transport has been occupied by females for almost 15 years and the government appointed female Chief Executive Officers in all the aviation public entities.

2.6.4.2 All the public aviation entities have a 50/50 female/male split in the Board of Directors.

2.6.4.3 Gender representation is also visibly demonstrated in the Top Leadership structures where on average the gender split is 49/51 female/male split.

2.6.4.4 Five out of nine International Airports are managed by female airport managers.

2.6.4.5 In relation to the employee population, all aviation public entities employ on average 50/50 gender split.

2.6.4.6 Meaningful progress is noted in the appointment of Technical personnel such as Air Traffic Controllers, inspectors, etc. where on average there is a 35/65 female/male split.

2.6.4.7 In 2022 the Airports Authority appointed the first female Fire Chief who is responsible for the biggest and busiest airport (OR Tambo International Airport) in Africa.

2.6.5 South African public entities have introduced a number of Women empowerment programmes as follows:

2.6.5.1 One-on-one and group Women Mentorship Programmes were launched since 2020 by the National Regulator;

2.6.5.2 The Airports Authority partnered with DukeCE and rolled out the ACSA Women in Power programme in 2021 for female airport managers and female airside operations managers.

2.6.5.3 Under the leadership of the National Regulator, the Captains of the Industry in the aviation sector signed a pledge committing to prioritise Women Empowerment in their organisations. These leaders have started reporting on the progress of their efforts during the annual National Aviation Gender Summit;

2.6.5.4 The aviation sector collects and shares data on gender empowerment in the organisation's Internship, Learnership, Trainee and internal and external bursary programmes.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 By approving the actions proposed in this Paper, the Assembly supports the promotion and participation of women in the aviation sector, in line with Assembly Resolution A41-26. Let us conclude with this South African phrase, Igama lamakhosikazi, malibongwe (Let the name of women be praised).

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