



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

Agenda Item 38: Human Resources Management and Gender Equality

**ESTABLISHING THE ICAO ‘WOMEN SHAPING AVIATION’ AWARD
ADVANCING GLOBAL RECOGNITION OF WOMEN IN SUPPORT OF ICAO’S GENDER
EQUALITY STRATEGY**

(Presented by Kazakhstan)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper proposes the establishment of a formal ICAO Assembly recognition award titled “Women Shaping Aviation” as part of ICAO’s broader gender equality strategy.

The initiative aims to highlight and celebrate the exceptional contributions of women in global aviation by recognizing three distinguished professionals during every ICAO Assembly session.

These recognitions would include a certificate of achievement and a formal commendation during the Assembly. By institutionalizing this award, ICAO can elevate the visibility of women leaders in aviation, reinforce its commitment to gender equality as embedded in Assembly Resolution A41-26 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—particularly Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls)—and inspire the next generation of women to pursue aviation careers.

This initiative directly supports ICAO’s gender equality objectives: building capacity and awareness, enhancing representation, increasing accountability, and encouraging engagement with external partners.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) Endorse the proposal to create the “Women Shaping Aviation” recognition award program;
- b) Request the ICAO Council to develop eligibility criteria, nomination procedures, and selection mechanisms for implementation from the next Assembly;
- c) Encourage Member States and aviation stakeholders to support and promote the initiative;

*Strategic
Goals:*

This working paper relates to the High Priority Enabler “*Gender Equality and Attracting New Talent to Aviation*” to achieve the Strategic Plan of ICAO. It also contributes to realizing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

<i>Financial implications:</i>	Implementation of the actions contained in this Paper by the ICAO Secretariat would be subject to availability of funds such as voluntary contributions.
<i>References:</i>	Doc 10184 - Assembly Resolutions in Force (as of 7 October 2022) ICAO Strategic Plan 2026-2050 <i>Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i> (Sustainable Development Goal 5)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ICAO has demonstrated sustained commitment to promoting gender equality in aviation, as reflected in Assembly Resolution A41-26: *ICAO Gender Equality Programme Promoting the Participation of Women in the Global Aviation Sector*, the Global Aviation Gender Summits, and its alignment with the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the respective Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 on Gender Equality.

1.2 Achieving gender equality in aviation requires more than policy alignment—it necessitates the full participation of women across all levels of the industry. Women’s representation is a fundamental enabler of inclusive growth, innovation, and safety in global aviation. Enhancing this participation is directly linked to ICAO’s gender equality objectives to build capacity, raise awareness, ensure accountability, and foster engagement with external partners.

1.3 Despite existing frameworks, women remain significantly underrepresented in technical, operational, and leadership roles within aviation. Recognizing and celebrating the achievements of women is not only a matter of fairness but a strategic investment in sector-wide progress.

1.4 Kazakhstan proposes a new recognition event during ICAO Assembly — “Women Shaping Aviation” — under which three outstanding women will be formally recognized at each ICAO Assembly for their contributions to the advancement of global aviation. This would serve as both a symbolic and practical step toward visible, high-level support for gender diversity in the sector, while directly contributing to the realization of ICAO’s gender equality objectives.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 Existing ICAO gender initiatives have focused on policy development, awareness campaigns, data collection, and technical assistance programs. However, there is a growing recognition of the need to complement these efforts with visible, inspirational recognition of role models who have shaped aviation.

2.2 By formally acknowledging accomplished women every three years during the Assembly, ICAO can:

- a) Reinforce its leadership in promoting gender equality;
- b) Provide global visibility to the contributions of women in aviation;
- c) Inspire young women and girls to consider aviation as a viable and rewarding career path;

- d) Encourage States and organizations to identify, support, and celebrate female leaders within their jurisdictions; and
- e) Operationalize its gender equality objectives through measurable, recurring recognition.

2.3 The proposed initiative responds directly to ICAO's gender equality goals by:

- a) Building capacity and enhancing awareness through enhanced visibility and global recognition at the Assembly;
- b) Enhancing gender representation by showcasing role models from diverse regions and disciplines;
- c) Increasing accountability by inviting States and organizations to identify and nominate candidates based on merit and impact; and
- d) Further engaging external partners, including international organizations, academic institutions, and industry stakeholders, in supporting and promoting gender equity in aviation.

2.4 The award program also aligns with ICAO's commitments to the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), and helps translate high-level declarations into tangible, recurring action.

3. **PROPOSED STRUCTURE**

3.1 It is proposed that ICAO establish a recurring recognition program titled "Women Shaping Aviation" to be implemented during every ICAO Assembly.

3.2 The program would:

- a) Recognize three women (from any ICAO region or professional background) for their outstanding contributions to global civil aviation over the preceding three years;
- b) Nominees may represent fields such as air navigation, safety oversight, aviation medicine, regulatory reform, engineering, operations, training, and leadership, ensuring inclusivity across aviation disciplines;
- c) Include a formal certificate, an official ICAO commendation during the Assembly, and optionally, a brief presentation highlighting their achievements; and
- d) Allow nominations to be submitted by ICAO Member States, accredited international organizations, aviation industry stakeholders, and relevant academic or professional bodies.

3.3 The ICAO Council, with support from the Secretariat and in consultation with Member States, would be responsible for developing the operational framework of the program. This would include:

- a) Transparent eligibility criteria and merit-based evaluation standards.

- b) A fair, regionally representative nomination and selection process overseen by a diverse and independent review panel; and
- c) Guidelines to ensure regional and occupational balance among awardees while maintaining excellence as the core criterion.

3.4 To further promote the visibility and impact of this initiative, ICAO may establish a dedicated section on its official website featuring:

- a) Awardee profiles and career highlights;
- b) Testimonials or short video interviews sharing their journeys and contributions;
- c) Educational resources linking gender equality to aviation safety, innovation, and capacity-building; and
- d) An archive of past recipients and nomination processes to foster transparency, engagement, and institutional memory.

3.5 This platform would serve as both a gender equality awareness tool and an inspirational showcase to promote the participation of women in aviation globally.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 This proposal complements existing gender initiatives by adding a recurring, high-visibility recognition mechanism to celebrate women's leadership and achievement in aviation.

4.2 ICAO's institutionalization of this recognition program would strengthen the visibility of its gender equality agenda, reaffirm its role in global leadership, and inspire broader participation of women in the aviation workforce.

4.3 The Assembly is invited to support the establishment of the "Women Shaping Aviation" recognition award program and request the ICAO Council to begin its design and implementation for the next triennium, with alignment to ICAO's gender equality objectives, Assembly Resolution A41-26, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

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