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ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

PLENARY

Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States

STATEMENT BY ERITREA

(Presented by Eritrea)

Honourable President of the Assembly
Honourable Secretary General
Honourable Council Members
Honourable Delegates
Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me at the outset, to seize this opportunity to extend warmest greetings to the distinguished delegates of this August Assembly from the people and the Government of the State of Eritrea and further extend their very best wishes for successful deliberations at the 42nd Assembly.

Having said that I would further like to express my gratitude to the Mayor of Montreal and the people and Government of Canada for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to my delegation.

In the same vein, I would further wish to express my deepest gratitude to the ICAO Secretariat Visa Support and the High Commission of Canada to Kenya for the indispensable support and relentless effort expended to facilitate the acquisition of Entry visa to Canada for my delegation to participate at this August Assembly.

Furthermore, I want to underpin, that my country Eritrea, has, post-independence in May 1991 made remarkable success in maintaining and sustaining Air Navigation Safety and Security, by putting in place a cutting edge technology on communication and navigation systems, in turn making the Eritrean Air space more safe and secure to fly and moreover; reconfigured the Asmara Flight Information Region (ASM FIR) and opened a new route, linking PortSudan- Asmara direct, in light of the war in the Sudan, which the ICAO ESAF Regional office Directorate expressed its appreciation for the prompt and timely action taken by the State of Eritrea.

Over and above that, my country Eritrea, has proposed for opening of two parallel routes at either side of the existing UG650 to relieve the flight congestions reported by a number of operators, within and across the Eritrean Airspace, cognizant of the turmoil engulfing the region and by and large the war in the Sudan.

Moreover, in mid-2025, my country Eritrea got engaged in the construction of ICAO AVSEC compliant state of the art airport fencing system built of sliding concrete slabs, fitted with barbed wires at the top, incorporating hidden CCTV cameras at strategic locations to deter any intrusion.

Thus, setting a standard way above the ICAO requirement, augmented by installation of all types of scanners at sensitive locations.

Pertaining to development of its human resources, my country Eritrea launched ICAO approved Government Safety Inspector courses (GSI along with National Aviation security Instructor, National Aviation Security Inspector, Air Navigation and Aerodrome theoretical and practical training, at the Eritrean School of Aviation (ESA).

Apart from that, my country Eritrea has modernized its ground support equipment, for safe secure and efficient services to the travelling public.

To that effect, one operator, convicted of such acts, had its permits terminated and fund blocked at the State National Bank, pending court ruling for compensation to victims.

Interestingly, my country Eritrea, for the last 34 years, since its independence in 1991, never had any accident.

Looking at developments from the other side of the coin, post the dreadful 9/11 accident, ICAO responded by launching what is called USOAP and USAPs.

Undoubtedly, the initiative taken and resolution passed by the ICAO to mitigate aviation safety and security threats at global level is of utmost significance, giving no room for compromise.

Nevertheless, it is regrettable to witness flaws in the overall mechanisms applied for implementation interalia; immense subjectivity, redundancies, lack of transparency, appropriateness, and articulation, particularly, on the protocol questions related to “Organization”, which has miserably failed to address paradigmical differences between and among States

Bearing that in mind, it is inappropriate and indeed, misleading to solely depend on numerical values as a yardstick in conducting the USAP/USOAPs.

At best, audits ought to focus on the end result and not necessarily on the means to the end, so far as the end result conforms to the ICAO established norms and standards.

To a large extent, what matters most is, not how much of what a member state owns, rather, it is how best the respective member state makes use of what it has to produce the output required to realize the objective sought.

To that end, Eritrea strongly believes that, the time is ripe for the ICAO to meticulously and comprehensively review the USAP and USOAP to create a win win environment and by and large for justice to prevail without diminishing the core principles of safety and security and realize the no country left behind objective.

Honorable President
Honorable Delegate

Such an approach would, in turn deny unscrupulous auditors from crucifying and robbing the image of member states under the guise of Universal Safety and Security Audit Programs.

Typical event is the case, where the State of Eritrea carried out track record universal security audit program in 2024, my country, Eritrea score 62.5% as opposed to 75.5% in 2012 and 81.75% in 2019 respectively, apparently, a manifestation of system inappropriateness and double standard technique pursued, diametrically opposed to cardinal principles enshrined in the International Civil Aviation Convention and by and large, the ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

As the result of, and out of desperation, Eritrea filed a complaint to the ATB/ICAO to mend the crucifixion and subsequently give my country Eritrea the percentage score it rightly deserves or discard the October 2024 USAP audit as null and void and repeat it by an independent, impartial and trustworthy USAP audit team leader, but no breakthrough yet, except lame excuses and cover ups.

Contrary to such misconceptions, however, on March 8, 2000, at the 159th Session of the CAO council meeting, in Montreal, the late President and Secretary General of the ICAO Dir. Assad Kotaite, rightly said that Eritrea is an island of peace and stability, which holds true now.

Furthermore, on the burning issue of climate change, its impact and drive for mitigation in general and that of aircraft gas emission in particular, it must be borne in mind that only 2% of the total emission is attributed to aircraft as opposed to the 98 from industries, surface and sea transport, bush fire, and wars.

It is thus, paradoxical to hammer on the 2% and set a target date 2050 to get rid of the current AVGAS and replace it with BIOGAS, leaving the 98% aside. Which would have fundamental repercussion, on the global air transport market, leading to denial including marginalization of emerging economies from exercising their right full market niche.

Ironically, the first conference for integrated mitigation of pollution was launched way back in 1988 (37 years ago).

Sad enough, industrialized countries apart from holding glamorous conferences, resolutions and untenable pledges and pledges no tangible result is yet borne.

Worst of all, the issue now became more politicized which is of grave concern to humanity in light of the ongoing global disasters shaking our planet.

Cognizant of that fact despite, multi-pronged challenges encountered my country Eritrea has undertaken integrated environmental protection measures to promote the cause of its citizens across the board in general and food security and that of poverty eradication in particular.

Last but not list, I call upon the ICAO to finalize and distribute standardized procedures related to operations of balloons, gliders and drones as well.

Thank you!

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