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Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States

STATEMENT BY JAPAN

(Presented by Japan)

Good morning, everyone.

I am NAKANO Hiromasa, the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan. On behalf of the Government of Japan, I am honored to address the ICAO Assembly.

Let me first express my sincere appreciation for the leadership of His Excellency Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano, President of the Council, and His Excellency Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar, Secretary General, in developing international civil aviation.

I also wish to pay tribute to the staff of the ICAO Secretariat for their tireless efforts in supporting its activities.

Last December, ICAO launched its 2026–2050 Long-Term Strategic Plan.

Inspired by the vision of “Safe Skies, Sustainable Future”, it serves as a beacon to guide the future of international civil aviation.

At its core, the plan defines three lofty aspirations: zero fatal accidents, net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and a sustainable and inclusive aviation system accessible to all.

Japan highly values this strategy and hereby reaffirms its strong commitment to contributing to its realization.

Today, I would like to share some of the areas to which Japan attaches particular importance.

Aviation Safety and Security

First, let me address safety and security.

Achieving zero fatal accidents in international civil aviation is a long-cherished aspiration of humanity, and the foremost priority of ICAO’s long-term strategy.

Japan firmly believes that safety and security form the very foundation of aviation. Guided by this conviction, we are intensifying our support for the effective implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices, while cooperating to enhance oversight capacity and risk management.

Moreover, drawing on lessons and knowledge gained from accidents and incidents in Japan, we are actively contributing to international discussions on the development of global standards, including runway safety and other initiatives that will strengthen global aviation safety.

At the same time, it is indispensable to strengthen the resilience of Communication, Navigation and Surveillance systems. In recent years, GNSS Radio Frequency Interference has already emerged as a real and pressing threat in various parts of the world. While monitoring those situations, Japan will actively contribute to comprehensive review to address this challenge under the ICAO framework.

Aviation safety and security cannot be secured by any single country alone. Given interconnection of our systems, Japan will continue to work with global partners to ensure safe and secure skies for all.

For this purpose, given that Japan's position remains unchanged, it is important that all members who are active in the international civil aviation community and adhere to international rules are involved in discussions through substantive participation in ICAO meetings and other activities.

Furthermore, the repeated ballistic missile launches by North Korea threaten the peace and security of the region and the international community. We strongly condemn this violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, as well as the significant threat it poses to the safety of international civil aviation.

We note with deep regret that little progress has been made despite the resolutions adopted at the previous Assembly, condemning violations of the Chicago Convention by North Korea, Russia, and Belarus as undermining the safety of international civil aviation. Japan will continue to work closely with ICAO and relevant member countries to urge them to fulfill their obligations under the Chicago Convention.

Environment and Sustainability

Second, environment and sustainability.

The goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, as advocated by ICAO, serves as a common compass for the international community in shaping a sustainable future for aviation. Japan firmly supports this objective.

To that end, Japan is promoting the introduction of new aircraft technologies, improving operational efficiency, and expanding the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuels.

Japan has been engaged in CORSIA, ICAO's only global framework for reducing CO2 emissions in international aviation, from its inception, and will continue to support its effective implementation and worldwide uptake.

A Sustainable and Inclusive Aviation System to All

Third, a sustainable and inclusive aviation system accessible to all.

In recent years, international civil aviation has faced severe trials, ranging from the pandemic to geopolitical turbulence.

However, future challenges—such as emerging infectious diseases and geopolitical risks—may arise again.

Therefore, establishing resilient systems is essential for the sustainable growth of international aviation. Drawing on its extensive experience in disaster response and risk management, Japan will actively contribute to ICAO's initiatives.

Japan is actively participating in the operational testing of Trajectory-Based Operation, which is being conducted jointly across the Asia-Pacific region to achieve more efficient and stable air traffic management.

We will continue to advance our efforts in this field, thereby contributing to further progress not only in the Asia-Pacific region, but also in the global aviation community.

Technological innovation is also indispensable for the sustainable development of aviation.

Japan, with safety as its foremost priority, is enabling small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) to operate over people to facilitate cargo transportation, while also promoting the use of Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) to enhance the movement of people and goods.

We are actively engaged in the development of international rules and will continue to contribute to the establishment of globally harmonized safety standards.

At the same time, nurturing the next generation of aviation professionals remains one of the highest priorities.

Japan fully recognizes the importance of training environments and educational infrastructure, and will work with a wide range of partners to promote the development of future aviation expertise by sharing best practices.

The election of the next Council President

Finally, it is a great honor for Japan to present Ambassador ONUMA Toshiyuki as our candidate for the next President of the Council.

Ambassador ONUMA has been engaged in a wide range of fields, including international air services negotiations, environment, safety, air navigation, and budget management. He also served in the Legal Bureau of the ICAO Secretariat, and more recently, has gained valuable experience as a member of the ICAO Council.

Over nearly three decades of dedication to civil aviation administration, he has cultivated the professional depth and vision required to lead ICAO into the future.

Furthermore, in addition to his profound understanding of ICAO's mission and strategic goals, Ambassador ONUMA is distinguished by his integrity, outstanding coordination skills, and proven leadership. With the ability to listen attentively to diverse views while guiding the Council with fairness and balance, he stands as Japan's unique and most fitting candidate for this vital role.

The Government of Japan is confident that Ambassador ONUMA's leadership will make a significant contribution to the further advancement of ICAO and to the sustainable development of international civil aviation.

We will therefore extend our full support to his candidacy in the upcoming election.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we also support the prioritization of ICAO's activities and optimization of its human resources, so that the Organization can deliver maximum impact within its limited budget and staffing.

Japan shares the strategic goal of "No Country Left Behind". I sincerely hope that this Assembly will mark a milestone, significantly advancing international civil aviation toward the realization of all long-term strategies under this strategic goal.

Thank you very much.

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