



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 28: No Country Left Behind (NCLB) Initiative**

**STRATEGY ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND RESPONSE MECHANISMS IN AVIATION**

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In March of 2015, Member States of the United Nations (UN) adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which sets forth a roadmap for a cross-sectoral, coordinated approach to disaster risk reduction. The international community has made a major shift in its response to emergencies and disasters from a culture of reactive measures to one of a disaster risk reduction. Disaster risk reduction includes disciplines such as disaster management, disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness. The international civil aviation community has made a similar transition from a reactive safety culture to a proactive/predictive approach to safety and security management. Civil aviation plays an essential role in supporting assistance to States and regions affected by natural disasters, conflicts and pandemics.

Several ICAO Annexes stipulate requirements for States related to emergency planning and disaster relief. In this respect, Annex 9 — *Facilitation* has long contained provisions for States for border control formalities regarding disaster responses. However, ICAO has not established a programmatic approach to crises as the Organization's responses have largely been organized in an ad hoc fashion. A draft Resolution on the establishment of an ICAO crisis response mechanism and strategy on disaster risk reduction in aviation is proposed to the Assembly for adoption and is intended to further the objective of ICAO to “meet the needs of peoples of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport” and embody the principal concepts of the Sendai Framework.

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

- a) note the provisions of Annexes 1, 6, 9, 11, 14 and 19 relating to emergency planning and disaster response;
- b) note the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction by UN Member States and the endorsement of the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB);
- c) endorse the ICAO strategy on emergency preparedness and response; and
- d) adopt the Assembly resolution proposed in the appendix to this paper.

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| <i>Strategic Objectives:</i>   | This working paper relates to all Strategic Objectives.                                                                                                                             |
| <i>Financial implications:</i> | The activities referred to in this paper will be undertaken subject to the resources available in the 2017-2019 Regular Programme Budget and/or from extra budgetary contributions. |

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| <i>References:</i> | <p>Annex 1 — <i>Personnel Licensing</i><br/> Annex 6 — <i>Operation of Aircraft</i><br/> Annex 9 — <i>Facilitation</i><br/> Annex 11 — <i>Air Traffic Services</i><br/> Annex 14 — <i>Aerodromes</i><br/> Annex 19 — <i>Safety Management</i><br/> Doc 7300, <i>Convention on International Civil Aviation</i><br/> ICAO Business Plan<br/> UN A/RES/69/283, <i>The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030</i><br/> (available at <a href="http://www.unisdr.org/">http://www.unisdr.org/</a>)<br/> <i>United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience</i> (CEB, April 2013) (available in English only at <a href="http://reliefweb.int/report/world/plan-action-disaster-risk-reduction-resilience">http://reliefweb.int/report/world/plan-action-disaster-risk-reduction-resilience</a>)<br/> <i>International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Joint Radiation Emergency Management Plan (JPLAN) of the International Organizations</i> (available in English only at <a href="http://www-pub.iaea.org/books/">http://www-pub.iaea.org/books/</a>)</p> |
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 One of the primary objectives of ICAO is to “meet the needs of the people of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport”. Civil aviation plays an essential role in supporting assistance to States and Regions affected by natural disasters, conflicts and pandemics. Air transport has proven to be a catalyst for sustainable development; it also serves as the main mode of transportation to deliver humanitarian relief, particularly to least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS). Air operators assist in the evacuation of people stranded by natural disasters or victims of conflict. Airports have become staging points for first responders, relief supplies, cargo deliveries and refugee transfers.

1.2 The preamble to the United Nations (UN) Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience (April 2013), as endorsed by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in March 2013, addresses the vital importance of disaster risk reduction to the entire UN System. It states that “Responding to the dramatic increase in extreme weather events and mega-disasters is one of the great challenges of our present age”. Disaster risk reduction includes disciplines such as disaster management, disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness. The action plan is intended to accelerate the integration of disaster risk reduction into all UN country-level operations in response to the rising levels of disruption to millions of lives each year from disasters. Thirteen UN organizations<sup>1</sup> have prioritized disaster risk reduction in their 2014-2017 strategic work plans and included disaster risk reduction in their results-based monitoring frameworks.

1.3 Over the past ten years, disasters have continued to exact a heavy toll and, as a result, the well-being and safety of persons, communities and countries as a whole have been affected. Over 700 000 people have lost their lives, over 1.4 million have been injured and approximately 23 million have been made homeless as a result of disasters. The total economic loss was more than \$1.3 trillion. Based upon the experience gained over the past few decades, States have adopted a series of UN frameworks addressing disaster response including the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World

<sup>1</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHABITAT), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), World Food Programme (WFP), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and the World Bank

(1994, Yokohama, Japan); the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (2005, Hyogo, Japan); and most recently the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (2015, Sendai, Japan). The Sendai Framework sets forth a scope and purpose, expected outcome, goal, targets, priorities and guiding principles to coalesce disaster risk reduction actions across sectors by States at local, national, regional and global levels. An important element in the Sendai Framework is reinforcement of other post-2015 international agendas including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.4 Several ICAO Annexes have provisions that stipulate requirements for States in respect of emergency planning and disaster relief. Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing*, Annex 6 — *Operation of Aircraft*, Annex 11 — *Air Traffic Services*, Annex 14 — *Aerodromes* and Annex 19 — *Safety Management* provide Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for States relating to emergency planning and response. Annex 9 has long contained provisions for States addressing border control formalities in respect of responses to disasters. Annex 9 contains provisions that address facilitation of relief flights following natural and man-made disasters which seriously endanger human health or the environment, as well as similar emergency situations where United Nations assistance is required. In addition, Annexes 9 and 14 contain provisions for States regarding their preparations for international outbreaks of communicable diseases.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Over its more than seventy-year history, ICAO has responded to numerous crises including aviation specific occurrences, as well as natural and man-made disasters that affect aviation. For example, ICAO has been involved in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Joint Radiation Emergency Plan (JPLAN) of the International Organizations on emergency preparedness and response. Ultimately, ICAO's involvement proved to be very valuable in March 2011 when an earthquake and tsunami struck the north-east coast of Japan and devastated the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. During the emergency, ICAO led an informal ad hoc transportation task force. The task force was formalized as the Working Group on Air and Maritime Transportation (WG-AMT) under the Inter-Agency Committee on Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies (IACRNE) responsible for the coordination of arrangements by relevant organizations for preparation and response to radiation accidents. As another example, ICAO has been actively involved in efforts to mitigate the effects of pandemics; both in terms of the spread of infectious diseases and the impact on the continuity of international civil aviation.

2.2 ICAO, however, has not established a programmatic approach to crises as the Organization's responses have largely been organized in an ad hoc fashion. The existing Standards address States' responsibilities in respect of emergency planning, response and border control management. At present, there is no consolidated ICAO mechanism that specifically addresses the ICAO response to crises including aircraft accidents, natural and man-made disasters, acts of unlawful interference and pandemics that significantly impact air transport and affect public confidence. The primary objective for an ICAO mechanism for crises response should be to review and establish, as may be necessary, structures and protocols to enable more effective emergency response assistance and coordination at Headquarters and regional offices, as well as an international point of contact network for aviation emergency responses involving national, regional and international organizations. A guiding principle for the ICAO policy should recognize that States are primarily responsible to prevent and reduce disaster risk and any response undertaken by the Organization should be guided by, and in concert with, the State(s) affected.

2.3 A major transition in the international community's response to disasters is a shift from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. Civil aviation has made a similar shift in the transition from

a reactive culture to a proactive/predictive approach to safety, security and border control management. Emergencies and disasters, both at the regional and international level, can have an adverse effect on aviation infrastructures and, consequently, impede air transport operations in times of need. A robust aviation response to disasters requires development of resilient aviation infrastructures, compliant with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and subject to integrated and holistic aviation risk management concepts.

2.4 Organizational procedures are needed to guide both the Organization's tactical response to aviation-specific crises that could affect the safety or continuity of international civil aviation, as well as disasters (man-made or natural) that directly impact the ability for civil aviation to provide timely humanitarian relief. The strategic element of the ICAO approach will aim to improve the resilience of civil aviation infrastructure to disasters. While different in nature, the tactical responses and the strategic approaches are intrinsically linked. For example, assisting States in the development of disaster-resilient civil aviation infrastructures will, in turn, facilitate the tactical response by States when crises occur. Thus, a systematic approach is needed that addresses the key role of the State affected, the multi-sector nature of any crises and the need for ICAO to engage multiple entities to mobilize the resources needed in both a tactical and strategic fashion.

2.5 ICAO activities planned in support of the proposed enhanced mechanism include:

- a) coordination of efforts within ICAO, and with the State(s) affected, the UN System, international organizations and other partner organizations in response to crises resulting from natural and/or human causes;
- b) fostering the implementation of proactive global aviation procedures and crisis preparedness policies in high-risk areas; and
- c) coordination of "assistance-teams" composed of experts from States and/or ICAO during crises in line with the Organization's "No Country Left Behind" (NCLB) initiative.

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The potential for civil aviation to support assistance to States and regions affected by crises, such as natural disasters, conflicts and pandemics, is profound. However, effective disaster risk reduction will require an integrated approach across a wide range of partners, across sectors and, in turn, within the international civil aviation community. The Sendai Framework sets forth a roadmap for a coordinated approach to disaster risk reduction. The international strategy for disaster reduction reflects a major shift from the traditional emphasis on disaster response to disaster reduction and seeks to promote a culture of prevention already underway in ICAO. A systematic approach is needed that addresses the key role of the State affected, the multi-sector nature of any crises and the need for ICAO to engage multiple entities to mobilize the resources needed in both a tactical and strategic fashion. The proposed draft Assembly Resolution would establish an ICAO a crises response mechanism and disaster risk reduction strategy, embodying the principle concepts of the Sendai Framework, to further the objective of ICAO to "meet the needs of peoples of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport".

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## APPENDIX

### DRAFT ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION

#### **28/xx: Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Mechanisms in Aviation**

*Whereas* Article 44 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation states that among the aims and objectives of ICAO are to foster the planning and development of international air transport so as to meet the needs of the people of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport;

*Whereas* the General Assembly of the United Nations endorsed the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 adopted by the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction;

*Mindful* that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, and the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper their sustainable development;

*Mindful* that States are primarily responsible for prevention and reduction of disaster risk and any response undertaken by the Organization should be guided by, and in concert with, the State(s) affected;

*Recognizing* that Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing*, Annex 6 — *Operation of Aircraft*, Annex 9 — *Facilitation*, Annex 11 — *Air Traffic Services*, Annex 14 — *Aerodromes* and Annex 19 — *Safety Management* provide Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for States relating to emergency planning and response, as well as border control formalities relating to relief flights following natural or man-made disasters;

*Recognizing* that disaster risk reduction is an important function of the United Nations System and should receive continued attention, and stressing the need for the international community to demonstrate the firm political determination required to utilize scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries;

*Recognizing* that all States have a vital need for disaster-resilient aviation infrastructure to promote socio-economic development and, in times of need, to support the timely and efficient distribution of aid; and

*Recognizing* that all States can benefit from integrating disaster risk reduction strategies into their Air Transport Sector Strategic Plans.

*The Assembly:*

1. *Urges* States to recognize the significant role of aviation in the context of disaster risk reduction at the national level, including in their Air Transport Sector Strategic Plans;

2. *Urges* States to take into consideration the disaster risk reduction priorities as contained in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in the development of their State emergency response plans as well as in the emergency response plan requirements for aviation service providers;
3. *Directs* the Council to establish a crisis response policy and disaster risk reduction strategy in aviation;
4. *Directs* the Council to assist States in implementing disaster risk reduction strategies in aviation with priority given to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
5. *Instructs* the Secretary General to establish an ICAO mechanism, in coordination with the States affected and neighbouring States, for crises response and assistance;
6. *Instructs* the Secretary General to continue working collaboratively within the United Nations System to ensure timely, coordinated and high quality assistance to all States where disaster losses pose a threat to people’s health and development; and
7. *Instructs* the Secretary General to ensure that ICAO participate, when applicable and in alignment with its Strategic Objectives, in appropriate mechanisms put in place to support the cross-sectorial implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.

— END —