



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 29: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

AVIATION'S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper presents the contributions enabled by States' safe, efficient, secure, economically viable and environmentally sound air transport systems towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also provides a report on activities undertaken by ICAO aimed at assisting its Member States in enhancing their air transport systems by leveraging the mechanisms in place with a view to contributing, consequently, to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) encourage States to implement ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), policies, plans and programmes consistent with ICAO Strategic Objectives with a view to contributing, consequently, to achievement of the SDGs;
- b) direct ICAO to further assist its Member States in enhancing their air transport systems and ensure that no country is left behind so that all can foster sustainable development and benefit from improved air connectivity; and
- c) adopt the Assembly Resolution proposed in the Appendix to this paper.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to all Strategic Objectives and all Supporting Implementation Strategies (SIS).
<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.
<i>References:</i>	A39-WP/23 A39-WP/26 C-DEC 205/4 A/RES/70/1 – <i>Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i> Doc 7300, <i>Convention on International Civil Aviation</i> Doc 10046, <i>Second High-Level Safety Conference 2015 Report</i>

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Air transport has proven to be a catalyst for sustainable development. It impacts tourism and trade. It serves as the main mode of transportation to deliver humanitarian relief and response to crises and public health emergencies. It also generates other socio-economic benefits which help eradicate poverty by creating jobs and enhancing air connectivity. Furthermore, this sector is forecast to grow from 33 million departures today to 60 million by 2030. It is well understood by the international aviation community that the benefits enabled by air transport can only be materialized if States have a safe, efficient, secure, economically viable and environmentally sound air transport system.

1.2 The Second High-level Safety Conference (HLSC 2015), held in Montréal from 2 to 5 February 2015, recommended that ICAO participate in the development of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognizing that the sustainable development of air transport is a catalyst for economic and social development (*Second High-level Safety Conference 2015 Report* (Doc 10046), Recommendation 3/1, a) 9), refers). This Recommendation was endorsed by the Council on 15 June 2015 (C-DEC 205/4 refers).

1.3 On 25 September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld> and A/RES/70/1 refer) that includes a set of 17 universal and transformative goals supported by 169 targets. The ICAO Secretary General addressed the UN General Assembly and held various bilateral meetings putting forward a strong case for increased aviation development in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

1.4 The SDGs and targets are integrated and indivisible, and balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The scale and ambition of the 2030 Agenda call for a Global Partnership to facilitate an intensive global engagement of all the goals and targets, bringing together governments, the private sector, civil society, the UN system and other actors to mobilize all available resources for its implementation. Multiple mechanisms, such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. ICAO participates, when applicable and in alignment with its Strategic Objectives, in appropriate mechanisms so that aviation is recognized as an enabler for sustainable development.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Despite its socio-economic significance and before the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, no consideration was given to the fact that air transport is an enabler of sustainable development and that improvements in this sector are intrinsically related and should be embedded within global, regional and national development frameworks. This situation posed challenges for States, especially least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS), in securing resources required for the development and improvement of their air transport systems, and for ICAO to assist States in this endeavour. It also hampered the establishment of partnerships with members of the UN system and other stakeholders to support air transport development.

2.2 ICAO has Strategic Objectives to fulfil its mandate on safety, air navigation capacity and efficiency, security and facilitation, economic development of air transport and environmental protection. Further, ICAO has developed the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) in support of the strategic objectives of safety as well as air navigation capacity and efficiency. ICAO is planning the development of global plans to support the remaining Strategic Objectives during the next triennium. ICAO is the only organization in the United Nations common system with aviation as its mandate. By virtue of the Organization's status as a UN Specialized Agency and in accordance with its mandate, ICAO supports the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development through assisting States in enhancing their air transport systems. In fact, it has been identified that ICAO Strategic Objectives and work programmes directly contribute to the attainment of the SDGs (www.icao.int/about-icao/aviation-development/Pages/SDG.aspx). In addition, one of the agreed global indicators to monitor progress towards achieving SDG 9, Target 9.1, relating to infrastructure development is passenger and freight volumes carried by mode of transport. ICAO also continues to propose other global indicators to monitor specific SDGs and related mechanisms. In more general terms, it can also be said that the overall enhancement of the air transport systems of Member States which ICAO aims to achieve through its strategic objectives and global plans will also foster opportunities for progress to be made in the area of gender in the aviation sector, and which will contribute to the overall gender goals included in the UN SDGs. These actions reflect the strong relation that aviation has with sustainable development.

2.3 Consistent with Article 44 of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* (Doc 7300), one of the objectives of ICAO is to develop principles and techniques of international air navigation and foster the planning and development of international air transport so as to inter alia meet the needs of the peoples of the world for such an air transport system. To achieve this objective, ICAO serves as the global forum for its 191 Member States and industry groups to reach consensus on Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), policies and global plans to coordinate multilateral strategic progress and growth of international air transport. In turn, Member States implement these SARPs, plans and policies to ensure that their local civil aviation operations conform to global norms. This allows the effective operation of aviation's global network in every region of the world and its resulting socio-economic benefits.

2.4 One of the main challenges of ICAO today is to continue ensuring a safe, efficient, secure, economically viable and environmentally sound air transport system as aviation develops and the changing needs of States and industry expand. Without the required investments, the collaboration of multiple States to modernize and expand aviation infrastructure as well as to ensure SARPs implementation, the opportunities for aviation as an economic development enabler may be constrained.

2.5 With a view of supporting its Member States in need, ICAO launched the No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative that focuses on assisting States on effectively implementing SARPs, plans and policies (A39-WP/23 refers). In this regard, ICAO is exercising its role as an advocate for aviation within the UN system to garner the political will necessary to support aviation improvements, such as was demonstrated by the ICAO World Aviation Forum (23 to 25 November 2015). ICAO also embarked in the establishment of a resource mobilization capacity to inter alia assist States in facilitating access to funds in order to enhance their air transport systems (A39-WP/26 refers).

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The draft Assembly Resolution presented in the appendix demonstrates how the delivery of the results of ICAO's Strategic Objectives, especially through the implementation of the NCLB initiative, contribute significantly to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. While ensuring that no country is left behind, ICAO will continue assisting States to enhance their air transport systems in order to foster aviation's contributions to all three pillars of sustainable development, social, economic and environmental and the attainment of the SDGs among Member States, the UN system, the donor community and all relevant stakeholders.

**APPENDIX
DRAFT ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION**

29/xx: Aviation's contribution towards the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Recognizing that air transport is a catalyst for sustainable development and that it represents an essential lifeline for least developed countries (LDCs), and especially for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS) to connect to the world;

Recognizing that air transport connectivity is of utmost importance for the economic, social and territorial cohesion of Member States and their populations;

Recognizing that the benefits enabled by air transportation can only materialize if States have a safe, efficient, secure, economically viable and environmentally sound air transport system;

Whereas the No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative aims at assisting States in effectively implementing ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), plans, policies and programmes, as well as addressing Significant Safety and Security Concerns so as to ensure that all States have access to the significant socio-economic benefits of air transport;

Whereas the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* that includes a set of seventeen universal and transformative goals supported by 169 targets that balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development;

Recalling that the scale and ambition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development call for a global partnership that will bring together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors to mobilize all available resources for its implementation;

Whereas the delivery of ICAO Strategic Objectives on safety, air navigation capacity and efficiency, security and facilitation, economic development of air transport, and environmental protection contribute to the attainment of the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

The Assembly:

1. *Urges* Member States to recognize the significant contributions of aviation to sustainable development realized by stimulating employment, trade, tourism and other areas of economic development at the national, regional and global levels, as well as by facilitating humanitarian and disaster response to crises and public health emergencies;
2. *Directs* the Council and the Secretary General, within their respective competencies, to demonstrate that ICAO continues to serve as an advocate for aviation by raising awareness among Member States, including relevant authorities beyond the air transport sector, the United Nations system, the donor community and all relevant stakeholders about aviation's contributions to sustainable development and the attainment of the SDGs;

3. *Urges* Member States to enhance their air transport systems by effectively implementing SARPs and policies while at the same time including and elevating the priority of the aviation sector into their national development plans supported by robust air transport sector strategic plans and civil aviation master plans, thereby leading to the attainment of the SDGs;
4. *Directs* the Secretary General to consider the special needs and characteristics of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, identified within the framework of the United Nations, in the coordination, prioritization, facilitation and implementation of assistance programmes aimed at enhancing their air transport systems;
5. *Directs* the Secretary General to continue monitoring and reviewing, when applicable, the contributions made towards the attainment of the SDGs through the implementation of ICAO Strategic Objectives and work programmes;
6. *Directs* 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 implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development so that aviation is recognized and prioritized as such by Member States in their development plans; and
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to enhance existing and establish new partnerships with Member States, the aviation industry, the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, financial institutions, donors and other actors to assist Member States in enhancing their air transport systems with a view to contributing, consequently, to the attainment of the SDGs.

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