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**WORKING PAPER**

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**ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION**

**TECHNICAL COMMISSION**

**Agenda Item 33: Aviation safety and air navigation monitoring and analysis**

**OVERFLIGHT OF CONFLICT ZONE ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT  
OF TACTICAL INFORMATION SHARING**

(Presented by the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO))

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Overflight of conflict zones remains a sensitive topic and the need to gather and disseminate information in a timely fashion is mandatory in scenarios subject to rapid changes. The current information sharing mechanism could be improved through a complementary tactical system, involving directly Air Navigation Services Providers, with the aim to make the information available through existing means of communication.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to

- a) agree on the proposed approach;
- b) urge ICAO to develop guidance material in the specific field, endorsing CANSO support;
- c) endorse States to continuously strive to improve information sharing on the risk of active conflict zones; and
- d) endorse the urgency for collection and notification of changes in threat scenario keeping ANSP's and aircraft operators informed in a timely fashion mode.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Reduction of insurance costs; enhanced risk prevention minimization of costs related to crisis management and social implications.
<i>References:</i>	Annex 17 — <i>Security — Safeguarding International Civil Aviation against Acts of Unlawful Interference</i> Doc 8973, <i>Aviation Security Manual</i>

<sup>1</sup> English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish versions provided by CANSO.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On 17 July 2014, a scheduled passenger flight Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 (MH17), was en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur. The aircraft was operating at FL330 in the Dnipropetrovsk flight information region (FIR), above temporary restricted areas. The flight disappeared from radar to the west of the radio navigation point TAMAK and communication with the crew was lost.

1.2 This terrible accident of MH17, resulting in the loss of 298 lives, highlighted the risk posed by overflying of conflict zones. It has called the attention of the aviation community on the need to adopt appropriate mechanisms for timely dissemination of information, particularly in order to allow airlines and aircraft operators to safely plan their flight over possible Conflict Zones.

1.3 The nature of conflicts could be various and include, *inter alia*, escalations of asymmetric warfare, tactical actions of insurgents, provoking skirmishes between the armed forces of countries in political tension and even non deliberated launches of weapons in areas out of the political control by legitimate States. Conflicts could also impair the safety of flights on high seas, when the dangerous use of weaponry expands outside the territory of sovereignty.

1.4 Initiatives to better define the legal framework of information sharing, including the proposal for amendment of Annex 17 Standard 2.4 – endorsed by CANSO – reflect the concerns about the risk posed by the subject matter and the need to respond accordingly.

1.5 On the same line, CANSO considers worthy of note the actions posed by some Contracting States and organizations at regional level (e.g. European Commission working group on “Risk to aviation from conflict zones” and EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency) Task Force on conflict zones) with the aim to implement active assessment processes and information sharing.

1.6 Nevertheless, the level of risk of overflight on conflict zones is an element that can be subject to rapid changes. This could depend, for example, on the type of conflict, the nature of the contenders, the changes in consistency of weapons and the dynamic movement of the fighting front. These changes, often sudden and unpredictable, could not be compatible with the time required by formal analysis of the existing response mechanisms and may result in lack of information coverage, which could lead to significant risks to civil aviation security.

## 2. PROPOSED APPROACH

2.1 CANSO considers that the significant effort in providing sound and complete information to all relevant civil aviation Stakeholders should be coordinated, considering the capacity of ATM System, to provide immediate information to airspace users, in case of a sudden change of scenario.

2.2 In the spirit of cooperation among Contracting States and referring to Standard 2.4 Annex 17, CANSO believes that there is room to improve the reaction time of the system. This should be done by immediate information sharing to ATM Services, especially if originated by the same State concerned by conflict and/or adjacent States, by immediate release of NOTAMs or broadcast communications, both through Aeronautical Fixed Telecommunication Network (AFTN) and direct communications to aircraft which could be concerned by hazards deriving from conflicts.

2.3 This approach has the advantage for airlines and pilots to be able to directly respond to rapidly changing scenarios. This will be valid for aircraft in flight, when the flight plan is to be finalised or when the aircraft operator can use this information in its risk assessment.

2.4 Finally, CANSO is able to play a key global role in defining ATM best practices in order to implement such additional “common sense” based measures. CANSO will support ICAO in enhancing safety of civil aviation by contributing the updating of guidance material accordingly.

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Information sharing and awareness on risks related to overflight conflict zones is time sensitive.

3.2 Due to possible and unforeseeable changes in conflict scenarios the current system of information sharing is insufficient

3.3 CANSO promotes that Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSP’s) could play a crucial role by receiving adequate and timely information from the State concerned or adjacent States. This information should be shared to aircraft in flight by direct communication and by AFTN to aircraft operators.

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