



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 21: United Nations 2030 Agenda - Sustainable Developments Goals (SDGs)**

**UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)**

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 40th Session of the ICAO Assembly adopted Resolution A40-21, *Aviation's contribution towards the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The Resolution demonstrates how the delivery of the results of ICAO's Strategic Objectives, especially through the implementation of the No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative, contributes significantly to the realization of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This working paper presents a report on ICAO's activities in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the cooperation and partnerships with States and other United Nations bodies to achieve related targets.

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

- a) recognize the importance of international solidarity and multilateral partnerships and mechanisms in support of an inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic recovery that promotes sustainable development of international civil aviation and advances the achievement of the SDGs;
- b) encourage Member States to consider providing greater support to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), particularly through development assistance, South-South and triangular cooperation; and
- c) adopt the revised Assembly Resolution which is contained in the Appendix to this paper.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to all Strategic Objectives.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	The ICAO activities referred to in this paper are expected to be undertaken within the resources available in the 2023-2025 Regular Budget and/or from extra-budgetary contributions as guided by the ICAO Business Plan 2023-2025.
<i>References:</i>	Resolution A40-21, <i>Aviation contribution towards the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i> Resolution A39-23, <i>No Country Left Behind (NCLB) Initiative</i> A/RES/70/1, <i>Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i> ICAO Business Plan for 2023-2024-2025 <i>Doc10140, Assembly Resolutions in force (as of 4 October 2019)</i>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Safe, secure, efficient, viable and sustainable international civil aviation is a cornerstone for worldwide socio-economic development, especially in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The COVID-19 pandemic imposed massive disruptions to movement of passengers and cargo in an unprecedented way, which in turn stunted economic growth.

1.2 As a result of the pandemic, progress made on many areas related to sustainable development were halted or reversed, exacerbating the challenges of achieving the SDGs in the *Decade of Action*. Yet the aviation sector continues to remain an essential enabler of the 17 SDGs and the underlying 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda and supports the Decade of Action. The analytical mapping of how ICAO's work around its Strategic Objectives is supporting the SDGs provides a powerful testimony on just how deeply the Strategic Objectives and the SDGs are intertwined.<sup>1</sup> Other resources such as the Aviation Benefits Report<sup>2</sup> and ATAG's Benefits Beyond Borders report<sup>3</sup> reinforce the overall message around aviation's contribution to the achievement of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

1.3 In line with Assembly Resolution A40-21, *Aviation Contribution towards the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, and driven by the urgency and ambition of the Decade of Action, ICAO remains fully committed to work in close collaboration with States and other stakeholders to support the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, ICAO is an official observer on the Inter agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and is also the custodian agency of global indicator 9.1.2 Passenger and Freight Volumes, by Mode of Transport. The data and analysis ICAO provides is reflected in the annual global SDG progress report and in the online UN platform for monitoring the progress towards the SDGs.

## 2. UPDATE ON AVIATION'S CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE SDGS

### 2.1 Advocating the benefits of aviation in support of the SDGs

2.1.1 In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought international air travel to a near standstill in an unprecedented way. ICAO brought its 193 Member States together with stakeholders from the aviation sector who jointly displayed international cross-sectoral collaboration leading to the Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) series of reports and guidance for "reconnecting the world".

2.1.2 Recognizing the importance of aviation in the global COVID-19 pandemic recovery efforts, ICAO was invited to the meetings of the UN Executive Committee (EC) and Deputies Committee (DC) held in June and July 2020. During these meetings, ICAO proposed a number of recommendations, which led to the inclusion of a civil aviation perspective in the UN Secretary-General's Policy Brief on COVID-19 and Transforming Tourism, published in August 2020.

2.1.3 In addition, ICAO participated in the United Nations Second Sustainable Transport Conference, which took place in Beijing, China in October 2021, and actively engaged in substantive preparations of the Conference, including through provision of input to the Inter-agency Report of the Conference as well as the thematic Concept Notes. Approximately 1 000 participants representing over 130 governments, UN system and stakeholders joined the event in-person, with thousands more joining

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.icao.int/about-icao/aviation-development/pages/sdg.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.icao.int/sustainability/Documents/AVIATION-BENEFITS-2019-web.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://aviationbenefits.org/>

virtually from around the world. Seven Heads of State and Government addressed the Conference, as did 44 Ministers, and other high-level government representatives.

2.1.4 Since the adoption of the Resolution A40-21, ICAO has continued its contribution to the thematic reviews of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), held annually under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In 2021, ICAO was invited to organize a side event on the margins of the HLPF to highlight the importance of a sustainable and resilient restart and recovery of aviation for the recovery of the global economy, including travel, trade and tourism.

2.1.5 Active participation of ICAO in a variety of fora and UN-led publications and reports provided opportunities for stronger advocacy around the SDGs and inspiring accelerated actions in the aviation industry. ICAO participated through speaking engagements in major events related to the transport industry, and advocated for the importance of aviation and ICAO's activities in support of sustainable development in initiatives of the leading entities including, UN entities, World Economic Forum (WEF), Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) Consortium, as well as the private sector and research institutions. Joint statements, participation in working groups and arrangements with UN entities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), to name a few, were key in advocating the role of aviation in COVID-19 recovery efforts.

## **2.2 Strengthened partnerships to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and ICAO Strategic Objectives**

2.2.1 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development itself is an aspirational global partnership for development across economic, social and environmental objectives. Reinforced in resolution A40-21, ICAO considers partnerships as strong enablers that significantly assists the Organization to accelerate and scale up its efforts in enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of ICAO's work.

2.2.2 In the 2020-2022 triennium, there were some 38 Assembly Resolutions in force that referred to enhanced cooperation, coordination and collaboration with partners and stakeholders. Partnerships enhance efficiencies, and can generate potential cost savings and economies of scale, optimize resources, avoid duplication and allow for broadening the scope of our technical work and expertise. Partnerships are of particular significance to successful mobilization of resources. In response to various internal evaluations and an external audit, as well as the emphasis placed by the Assembly and Council, important progress was made in the way ICAO addresses issues related to the formation and management of partnerships in a manner that enhances transparency, good governance and accountability, following the development of the *ICAO Partnership Framework Guidance Material* as well as revised *General Secretariat Instructions on Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Similar Arrangements (GSIs)*. The Guidance Material, which complements the *ICAO Policy on Interactions with External Parties* and the revised GSIs, provides internal guidance for Secretariat staff on the policies, processes and procedures related to partnership activities.

2.2.3 In addition, in 2021 the ICAO Partnerships Platform was launched. The Platform serves as an organizational repository of ICAO's partnerships and collaborative relationships. The consolidated database includes profiles on partnerships by Strategic Objective, functional area, and agreement type.

2.2.4 As part of ICAO's ongoing activities around partnerships and collaborations in support of ICAO's core mission, new partnerships were facilitated between ICAO and leading entities, including arrangements with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children's Fund

(UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the World Economic Forum (WEF). Many of ICAO's partnership activities during this period focused on COVID-19, and aimed at increasing the ICAO's delivery capacities, outreach and advocacy, and creating funding opportunities.

2.2.5 Following the invitation to join the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and in line with Resolution A40-21, the ICAO Secretariat has been in discussions with the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) as well as some of its members to assess various considerations regarding membership of ICAO in this Group. The UNSDG serves as a high-level forum for joint policy formation and decision-making, and guides, supports and oversees the coordination of development operations in 162 countries and territories. UNSDG Membership provides access to the multi-million UN multi-partner trust fund to support implementation of programmes, including in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. Today, the UNSDG unites 36 UN entities and related organizations, which jointly work together to deliver results for sustainable development. Engagement with the UNSDG would potentially lead to inclusion of ICAO and aviation in relevant deliberations around strategies and the UN policy work in a more systematic way.

2.2.6 Furthermore, it is important to not lose sight of the importance of innovation in aviation in driving effective partnerships for the benefit of the aviation industry. In this regards, the organization of the Industry Consultative Forum (ICF) and its inaugural first meeting, as well as the Second ICF meeting on Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) and Lower Carbon Aviation Fuel (LCAF), which took place in 2021 and 2022 respectively, have been novel yet crucial steps in engaging with industry stakeholders to identify the most significant challenges faced by the industry in relation to innovation.

### **2.3 Enhancing sustainable aviation through robust planning and monitoring at the global, regional and national levels**

2.3.1 In 2019, the Secretariat developed draft guidance for States to establish a National Aviation Planning Framework as a means for coordinating, prioritizing and managing the development of a State's air transport system in a consistent and sustainable manner. The Framework includes the essential components of a Civil Aviation Master Plan (CAMP) which aims to address the interaction of various aspects of aviation at the State level including capacity and efficiency, safety, security and air transport facilitation, and includes an overview of linkages to other planning processes at national, regional and global levels to ensure the implementation is consistent with the State's overall national development goals.

2.3.2 Following the development of the above-mentioned guidance, ICAO embarked on the development and implementation of the Project of the Development and Delivery of a new ICAO Civil Aviation Master Planning (CAMP) Course. This engagement provides quality and competency-based training to those responsible for sustainable development within a Civil Aviation Authority and other governmental entities to develop CAMPs that promote the comprehensive and sustainable development of a State's civil aviation system in a manner that is in alignment with a State's economic and social development goals and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretariat is in the process of updating the National Aviation Planning Framework guidance around resilience and preparedness plans.

2.3.3 Furthermore, supported by the Council and the 39th Assembly, ICAO developed, in 2019, a Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) Aviation Needs Analysis. Since the release of the Analysis, a PSIDS Report Implementation Roadmap has been developed around the recommendations formulated in the Analysis and various action items of the Roadmap continue to be implemented.

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 In order to more strongly advocate for the interlinkages between enhanced air transport systems and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, ICAO invites its Member States to continue to position aviation as an enabler of the SDGs, and include references to the SDGs in their aviation national plans. Member States are encouraged to make use of the opportunity of presenting voluntary national reviews at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and include aviation in their reporting to the Forum.

3.2 Members States are also encouraged to consider providing greater support to LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, particularly through development assistance, South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of aviation, in line with Assembly Resolutions A40-21 as well as A40-22, *Resource Mobilization*.

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## APPENDIX

### DRAFT ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION

#### ~~A40-21~~ A41/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);

*Recognizing* that the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development is the prime venue where States, through the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), deliver an update on annual progress and challenges on implementation towards the achievement of the SDGs at a national level;

*Recognizing* the importance of global frameworks to support the Strategic Objectives of ICAO;

*Recognizing* the importance of effective implementation of regional and national plans and initiatives based on the global frameworks;

*Recognizing* that a clearly defined relationship between broader national development plans and strategies and national aviation policies, plans and frameworks is essential to enable the prioritization and optimum allocation of resources to aviation;

*Recalling* the unprecedented global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, destabilizing the aviation industry, including profoundly affecting its workforce, and hampering the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDG progress;

*Recognizing* the importance of international solidarity and multilateral partnerships and mechanisms in support of an inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic recovery that promotes sustainable development of international civil aviation and advances the 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 report on aviation, as an enabler of sustainable development, within their VNRs, through establishing linkages with other relevant SDGs;
4. *Encourages* Member States to include clear references to the UN SDGs in their relevant national plans, with the objective of showcasing the contribution of aviation to the UN SDGs and national economies;
5. *Urges* Member States to enhance their air transport systems by effectively implementing ICAO 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;
6. *Encourages* Member States to consider establishing a clearly-defined relationship between their national development plans, and national civil aviation policy, plans and strategies, as well as relevant underlying plans and programmes;
7. *Urges* Member States to ensure that frameworks and capabilities are developed and implemented as necessary and that structures for partnership and collaboration at national, regional and international levels are put in place to ensure resilience of the civil aviation sector to future global challenges in order to ensure continued contributions of aviation to attainment of the SDGs;
8. *Encourages* Member States to enhance their efforts around collaboration and effective partnerships in support of development of civil aviation in particular in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, especially through development assistance, South-South and triangular cooperation;
9. *Encourages* Member States to enhance the resilience of their aviation systems through including crisis preparedness plans and risk management measures in their aviation policies, planning and operations

in order help to maintain essential mobility for air passenger and the transport of critical goods in the face of crises while ensuring the safety of aviation workforce;

610. *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;

711. *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;

812. *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;

913. *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; and

140. *Declares* that this Resolution supersedes ~~39-25~~A40-21 on *United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development—Sustainable Development Goals*.

— END —