



## **ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

#### **Agenda Item 14: Aviation Security — Policy**

#### **ENSURING EFFECTIVE AVIATION SECURITY IN THE COVID-19 RECOVERY WORLD**

(Presented by Czechia on behalf of the European Union and its Member States<sup>1</sup>, the other Member States of the European Civil Aviation Conference<sup>2</sup> and the Member States of the African Civil Aviation Commission<sup>3</sup>, and by China)

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

It is vital that effective aviation security continues to underpin industry recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has had an enormous impact on the aviation industry, and many changes have occurred as a result, but the threat to aviation remains, and it continues to evolve. Maintaining vigilance and avoiding complacency are of utmost importance. Against this background, the Working Paper highlights the importance of revising the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) and its Roadmap as a priority task. The paper advocates the development of clear monitoring and reporting processes of the GASeP as a means to enhance aviation security globally, without distracting from the compliance with Annex 17 Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), leveraging existing data and resources, as well as mechanisms to target capacity development. The paper also highlights the importance of building on and maintaining the momentum of the ICAO *Year of Security Culture* and advocates ICAO to take next steps to support the meeting of the objectives of the GASeP.

<sup>1</sup> Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.

<sup>2</sup> Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

<sup>3</sup> Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) Request that the ICAO Secretariat, with the support of the Aviation Security Panel, prioritise revisions to the GAsEP and its Roadmap, informed by a stock-taking exercise on lessons learned from the experience of the implementation and management of aviation security during the COVID period, taking into account the areas and issues identified in this Working Paper;
- b) Request the Secretariat to develop a process for the systematic and regular review of the GAsEP and its Roadmap, as well as establishing clear monitoring and reporting processes, leveraging existing data and resources;
- c) Urge the Secretariat and States to make resources available as required for effective use of GAsEP as a means to enhance aviation security globally, without distracting from compliance with Annex 17 SARPs, including through targeted capacity building support where necessary; and
- d) Request the Secretariat and States to develop practical activities in partnership with industry to build on the ICAO *Year of Security Culture* so that momentum is not lost and gains and benefits are consolidated and expanded.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the <i>Security and Facilitation</i> Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None
<i>References:</i>	

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The ICAO Global Aviation Security Symposium 2021, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, recalled the necessity to maintain vigilance and avoid complacency in the protection of civil aviation against acts of unlawful interference. It further highlighted the range of challenges and actions taken to keep employees and passengers safe, mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus, respond to dramatic shifts in air travel demand and workforce issues, all while maintaining effective security levels.

1.2 The Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Conference on COVID-19 adopted on 22 October 2021 notes the commitment to ensure a safe, secure, and orderly flow of traffic with operational readiness of aviation.

## 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE SECURITY IN LIGHT OF THE CONTINUED THREAT

2.1 The threats and challenges of aviation security constantly evolve, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic recovery phase. Noteworthy developments experienced during this period include the impact of the pandemic on the Insider Threat, attacks from a distance (drones), terrorist radicalization, and notably cyber-attacks (see A41-WP/74, EX/36, Development of a Framework for Cybersecurity). Moreover, on-going and recent geo-political developments continue to have potentially profound impacts on the overall threat and risk picture for civil aviation.

2.2 While the aviation sector continues to operate in a financially challenging environment, the application of effective security measures continues to be of the utmost importance. In addition to the human impact, a successful terrorist attack would be exceptionally damaging to the industry's post-COVID recovery. States are encouraged to reaffirm their commitment to strengthening aviation security worldwide in light of the continuing threat to civil aviation since the adoption of the Declaration on Aviation Security at the 40th Session of the ICAO Assembly.

## 3. REVISION OF THE GLOBAL AVIATION SECURITY PLAN (GASEP) AND ITS ROADMAP

3.1 The Global Aviation Security Plan and its Roadmap have been a useful and relevant framework to advance aviation security and have helped to raise the profile of aviation security at the political level. The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges as well as opportunities in implementing the priority actions of the GASep, and demonstrated the necessity of its revision.

3.2 It is important that the revision of the GASep and its Roadmap takes place as a matter of priority to ensure that it remains relevant and continues to address existing and emerging threats. With the support of the ICAO Aviation Security Panel, such revision should be informed by a lessons-learned exercise from the pandemic, and which could take into account the following elements:

- a) Identification of possible new security vulnerabilities where security standards may have deteriorated during the pandemic.
- b) The developing role of innovation and technology to secure aviation in the COVID-19 recovery phase.

c) The critical importance of ensuring secure air cargo supply chains, which has been further underscored by the pandemic and its recovery. Efforts have been deployed in the area of advance cargo information systems, for example, with the deployment of the European Union's Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI). There may also be scope for stepping-up efforts in the development of more advanced dedicated air cargo security screening equipment.

d) The essential role and importance of maintaining a competent, motivated and well-trained workforce. As aviation activities resume, it will be important that Member States, organizations and industry take actions to guarantee and maintain staff competencies that existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This could include refresher or new training on security procedures, processes, awareness, as well as on threats and legal requirements.

e) Opportunities for efficiencies in the AVSEC system in areas such as remote oversight and monitoring options, resource allocation, innovative security procedures and training techniques. The focus could be on best practices implemented in a manner that aids facilitation while ensuring underlying security objectives are met.

3.3 There is a need to develop clear monitoring and reporting processes for GAsEP as a means to enhance compliance with Annex 17 SARPs, leveraging existing data and resources, as well as mechanisms to target capacity development. Within the ICAO Secretariat, aviation security should be considered on an equal level to safety as an ICAO priority, including in the allocation of resources needed to promote the use of the GAsEP and to provide for an effective audit programme. States should also be encouraged to assist each other in their efforts to enhance security, being guided by the GAsEP when prioritising and optimising resources; and provide targeted capacity building, as set out for example in A41-WP/283, EX/123 *Aviation Security Capacity Building Through the CASE I and CASE II Projects*.

#### 4. SECURITY CULTURE

4.1 In the context of the above, there is also a need to consolidate the gains and maintain the momentum of the highly impactful and successful ICAO *Year of Security Culture* initiative. This will be crucial in maintaining the sustainability of the security system, promoting coordination, cooperation, motivation and involvement of all parties in the system. It is ever more important now, given that the social and professional bonds among employees that contribute to effective security culture have been disrupted by absences and changes caused by the pandemic.