



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13: Facilitation Programmes

STRATEGY ON ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

(Presented by Brazil)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopted in 2006, disability has come to be seen as a public policy in human rights, as this group of the population faces inequalities in access to health services, employment, education, transportation, or political participation due to their physical, sensory, and psychosocial condition. Since then, greater attention has been paid to ways to fight discrimination, promote accessibility, inclusion, and respect for people with disabilities.

In transport, the objective of maintaining accessibility along the travel chain can be achieved by determining initial priorities through consultations with people with disabilities and service providers; the introduction of accessibility features in regular maintenance and improvement projects; and the development of low-cost improvements based on universal designs that result in demonstrable benefits to a wide range of passengers. Training of transport officials is also necessary. Thereunto, it is essential to provide reference to service providers in the care of travelers with disabilities, intending to deliver a predictable, pleasant, and dignified travel experience throughout the passenger journey and promote a much broader understanding of established industry processes in alignment with existing key rules and regulations.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) request the Facilitation Panel to discuss accessibility practices, especially after the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- b) recommend reviewing the Doc 9984 – *Manual on Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities* for a consistent and practical approach to accessibility in air transport that allows for the implementation of uniform actions by all member states.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Objective - <i>Security and Facilitation</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None.
<i>References:</i>	Annex 9 — <i>Facilitation</i> (Fifteenth Edition, October 2017) ¹ United Nations Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities ²

¹ https://www.icao.int/WACAF/Documents/Meetings/2018/FAL-IMPLEMENTATION/an09_cons.pdf

² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 More than one billion people live with a disability, and global trends such as population aging and the worldwide growth in chronic health conditions problems show that the prevalence of disability is increasing. Around the world, people with disabilities have poor health, low education access, lower economic participation, and higher poverty rates than people without disabilities.

1.2 Disability is part of the human condition – almost all of us will be temporarily or permanently disabled at some point in our lives, and those who reach an older age will experience increasing functional difficulties. Disability is complex, and interventions to overcome the disadvantages associated with disability are multiple and systemic – varying according to context.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted in 2006, disability has come to be seen as public policy in human rights, as this group of the population faces inequalities in access to health services, employment, education, transportation, or political participation due to their physical, sensory, and psychosocial condition. Since then, greater attention has been paid to ways to fight discrimination, promote accessibility, inclusion, and respect for people with disabilities.

2.2 People with disabilities should not be seen as incapable, for they have skills and participate in various social areas such as sports, technology, politics, and education. In public service or everyday life, it is important to know how to relate to people with disabilities, serving them naturally and recognizing them as citizens and holders of rights and obligations.

2.3 Accessibility is an essential requirement to be guaranteed to people with disabilities. Recognizing and valuing the condition of people with disabilities are the primary means to remove the attitudinal barrier of postures that almost always reflect discriminating and excluding points of view and concepts. Changing attitude is a challenge to overcome to ensure effective inclusion of all. In addition to attitude, some architectural resources promote structural accessibility and create conditions of equality and access.

2.4 In transport, the objective of maintaining accessibility along the travel chain can be achieved by determining initial priorities through consultations with people with disabilities and service providers; the introduction of accessibility features in regular maintenance and improvement projects, and the development of low-cost improvements based on universal designs that result in demonstrable benefits to a wide range of passengers. Training transport officials is also necessary.

2.5 The Contracting States, through public policies, should promote and develop the aviation sector, as well as public investments in airport infrastructure and civil air navigation, helping consolidate air transport as an essential instrument for national integration. Air transport should therefore be seen as a vector for integrating inaccessible regions, available to all citizens with the support for those who need assistance.

2.6 All people should be able to travel safely and independently using methods, procedures, and instruments that identify the barriers and reduce them for people with disabilities to support airports, airlines, and professionals to understand, learn, and meet the needs of all.

2.7 Therefore, it is essential to train the service providers in the care of travelers with disabilities, to deliver a predictable, pleasant and dignified travel experience throughout the passenger journey, and to promote a much broader understanding of established industry processes in alignment with existing key rules and regulations.

2.8 In summary, the main objective proposed in this working paper is to improve the flight experience for all passengers and raise the levels of standardization and quality in the provision of these services, allowing an even more significant portion of the population to enjoy the benefits of air transport, in an equitable and equal way, eliminating architectural, attitudinal and communicational barriers, attacking inequalities and generating awareness for a pleasant trip.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 In this regard, States are urged to:

- a) note the experience and initiatives of the Member States, such as Brazil, in implementing accessibility practices for people with disabilities.
- b) recognize that a harmonized approach to accessibility work in aviation contributes to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

3.2 The Assembly is invited to:

- a) request the Facilitation Panel to discuss accessibility practices, especially after the difficulties faced by the impacts caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic; and
- b) recommend the review of Doc 9984 – *Manual on Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities*, for a consistent and practical approach to accessibility in air transport that allows for the implementation of uniform actions by all Member States.