



ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

ECONOMIC COMMISSION

Agenda Item 35: Economic Regulation of International Air Transport — Policy

ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL MEASURES IN THE CONSUMER CARE STANDARDS OF THE AIR TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

(Presented by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and supported by Panama and Dominican Republic²)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the consequences generated by the COVID-19 pandemic on all sectors of production, one of those most affected has been air transport, the fundamental pillar that permits connectivity with the rest of the world. To mitigate the damage caused by the pandemic, measures have been implemented with a view to the recovery of civil aviation, adopting the recommendations of the national public health authorities, as well as the provision enshrined in Article 14 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) on the prevention of the spread of diseases. Accordingly, the inclusion in the General Conditions of Air Transport of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) consist of four chapters covering, among other aspects, guidelines on cases of Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), natural disasters or another event of such magnitude as to result in the declaration of a state of alert by government authorities. In that connection, over and above the rights of passengers in normal operating conditions, it is necessary to attend to matters relating to emergency situation, and the need to standardize and improve consumer protection guidelines associated with the passenger's air transport rights.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) take note of the information contained in this working paper; and
- b) continue to develop regulations on air transport consumer protection, which give guidance to Member States on measures that protect and assist passengers in emergency situations, procedures and protocols to be enforced and compatibility with established emergency plans in order to draw up a regulation that ensures sustainable and safe international air transport development.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Objective — <i>Economic Development of Air Transport</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), Article 14 Resolution AE6-1, <i>Air Transport Consumer Protection</i> Resolution AE6-3, Balance Measures between Consumer Protection and the Financial Sustainability of Airlines during the Pandemic established by the World Health Organization (WHO)

¹ Spanish version provided by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

² Member States of the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (LACAC).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) has faced the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic in all sectors of production. As air transport is a fundamental pillar that permits connectivity with the rest of the world and with a view to the recovery of civil aviation, measures have been taken for the recovery of civil aviation, by adopting the recommendations of the national public health authorities, as well as the provision in Article 14 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) on the prevention of the spread of diseases.

1.2 The Venezuelan State ensures the development of commercial aviation in accordance with the provisions enshrined in the Convention on International Civil Aviation and is effectively committed to safeguarding the inherent rights of passengers and users of the public air transport service so that it is provided under strict quality standards under which users may receive adequate information on the service provided by the air carrier.

1.3 The regulation in force in the Venezuela State on passenger care, entitled “General Air Transport Conditions”, is consistent with basic principles established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) relating to consumer protection, and setting criteria that carriers must take into account, from the issuance of the air ticket to the completion of the journey.

1.4 One of the main objectives of the inclusion of extraordinary measures in the current regulation in case of an emergency is to strengthen users’ trust in the public air transport service, in the interests of rapid, safe, reliable and sustainable international air operations after the COVID-19 pandemic and any similar event that may occur in future.

2. INCLUSION OF EXTRAORDINARY EMERGENCY MEASURES IN THE GENERAL AIR TRANSPORT CONDITIONS OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

2.1 Four chapters have been included in the above-mentioned regulation and they cover, among other aspects, guidelines on cases of Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), natural disasters or another event of such magnitude as to entail a declaration of a state of alert by government authorities.

2.2 Similarly, airlines will be required to submit to the Aeronautical Authority a service quality contingency plan containing exceptional measures to address any extraordinary situation.

2.3 To ensure quality service for passengers and users, airlines are required to provide information on the emergency situation and on the exceptional conditions that will be applied in the provision of the public air transport service.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The Venezuelan State has been resilient to the challenges posed to commercial aviation by COVID-19. This paper shows how the State has implemented measures to ensure that the coordinated action taken by stakeholder organizations would create an environment conducive, under the emergency situation response, to the recovery and reactivation of the civil aviation sector. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) remains committed to implementing the recommendations of ICAO on consumer protection,

in recognition of the positive impact of the management of sustainable measures in order to build trust among the travelling public.

3.2 It is therefore recommended that regulations on air transport consumer protection continue to be developed, that Member States be given guidance on measures to protect and assist passengers in emergency situations, procedures and protocols to be enforced and compatibility with established emergency plans in order to draw up regulations that ensure sustainable and safe international air transport development.

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