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ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 14: Aviation Security — Policy

DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL AVIATION SECURITY CAPABILITIES THROUGH THE EU-WCO-COLIBRI PROJECT

(Presented by the World Customs Organization)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COLIBRI Project on General Aviation (GA) monitoring and control, financed by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the World Customs Organization (WCO), has, since the launch of the Project in 2019, provided capacity-building activities for the competent authorities in charge of controlling this specific sector (civil aviation, Customs services, police services, air forces, etc.). The Project is currently being implemented in seven (7) Latin American and Caribbean countries, and eight (8) West and Central African countries

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the <i>Security and Facilitation</i> Strategic Objective.
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<i>Financial implications:</i>	None
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<i>References:</i>	Annex 9 – <i>Facilitation</i> Annex 17 – <i>Aviation Security</i> English: https://transfer.wcoomd.org/link/BAImSNppLnONk39gP1S9zY French: https://transfer.wcoomd.org/link/ChozNBulx4ANEIp9X6xzVI Spanish: https://transfer.wcoomd.org/link/krDpTyXF8Xo5Pjqyc2dIDl Portuguese: https://transfer.wcoomd.org/link/Xrfy4V4T5nMkHN183ySq5U
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January 2019, the WCO and the EU, signed a collaboration agreement and joined forces to confront the challenge posed by the use of GA by organized crime. This partnership led to the launch of the COLIBRI Project.

1.2 The COLIBRI Project, implemented within the framework of the WCO Strategic Plan 2022-2025 - Strategic Objective 3: Protection of Society, and part of the European Union's Global Illicit Flows Programme (GIFP), focuses specifically on General Aviation. GA concerns all civil aviation operations for purposes other than commercial transport. In its first phase, the Project has been focusing on the routes that run through Latin America and the Caribbean, and through West and Central Africa to Europe.

1.3 As we know, although most civil airports are open to General Aviation, they are not subject to the same Customs or police inspection mechanisms as Commercial Aviation, even in highly regulated areas. This means that General Aviation represents an opportunity for organized crime and offers a number of advantages to traffickers. It is a fast and discreet means of transport, which can use smaller airports where controls are not regularly carried out, even more so in vast territories or far from populated centres.

1.4 The COLIBRI Project is designed to help the competent authorities to improve the monitoring and control of this specific sector, which is sensitive both in terms of traffic and security, and in fiscal terms.

1.5 The large number of smaller airports that exist in the countries covered by the Project, the variety of activities associated with General Aviation and the reduced control capacity of the competent authorities led to the development of a training plan to increase the capacities of the officers and/or inspectors in charge of monitoring and control tasks.

1.6 The COLIBRI Project established a network of experts from the EU Member States and WCO Members. The COLIBRI experts include police officers, Customs officers and aeronautical inspectors from Brazil, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, France, Mali, Spain and the United Kingdom with extensive and widely recognized experience in General Aviation, who have coordinated the development of a Technical Handbook and a training plan.

2. ONLINE TRAINING AND E-LEARNING

2.1 The restrictions imposed by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the implementation of in-person training activities. In order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the capacity-building component, the experts coordinated by the COLIBRI Project adapted the training to facilitate online delivery. Between June 2020 and October 2021, eleven (11) online courses were held, providing training to more than four hundred (400) officials.

2.2 The online training was also adapted for delivery in e-learning modules, and made available online on the WCO e-learning platform – CLiKC! The e-learning is an additional resource which complements the online training and can be used as a tutorial tool.

2.3 As soon as travel restrictions and measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic were lifted, the COLIBRI Project shifted to in-person training. Between November 2021 and August 2022, the Project provided in-person training to four hundred and thirty-four (434) officials from: Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire,

the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, Paraguay, Brazil, Mauritania, Senegal, Nigeria and Cape Verde.

2.4 The COLIBRI Project is articulated around three main components, the first of which capacity-building. It has been complemented by the provision of a new IT system and geoportal to enhance the monitoring of legal and illegal activities, and an operational component.

2.5 The first phase of the Project will close at the end of 2022, but a second phase will start immediately afterwards, and the geographical scope will be extended in collaboration with the European Union.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The Assembly is invited to take note of the value of the COLIBRI Project for the Contracting States, and to take note of the implementation of its activities, and to support the initiative through its resources, among its associated States, as well as with International Organizations, Institutions and partners.

3.2 The Technical Handbook and the capacity-building resources are available in four languages: English, Spanish, French and Portuguese.

3.3 Likewise, taking into account the fact that the Project promotes international and inter-institutional cooperation, the Assembly is invited to consider the actions presented for other capacity-building activities in partnership with the WCO.

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