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**PROGRESS OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE E-PASSPORT IN CHINA**

(Presented by the People's Republic of China)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document describes the progress China has made since the last Assembly in actively advancing Research and Development work and implementation of electronic passports in order to introduce machine-readable passports in China in accordance with Standards and Recommended Practices set out in Annex 9.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective B – Security, <i>Enhance global civil aviation security</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	No financial implications
<i>References:</i>	No references

¹ Chinese translation was provided by the People's Republic of China

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Paragraph 3.10 of Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention requires that Contracting States shall begin issuing Machine Readable Passports only in accordance with the specifications of Doc 9303, Part 1, no later than 1 April 2010. Accordingly, China began issuing Machine Readable General Passports, Machine Readable Diplomatic Passports and Machine Readable Service Passports in accordance with the specifications of Doc 9303, in 1996, 2002 and 2005 respectively. Currently, all types of passports issued by China are machine-readable.

1.2 Paragraph 3.9 of Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention recommends Contracting States should incorporate digitized photographic image, fingerprint image(s) and/or iris image(s), using one or more optional data storage technologies, in the machine-readable zone of the travel documents in a contactless integrated circuit chip, in order to enhance the authenticity and security of the travel documents.

1.3 To ensure more effective prevention of illegal immigration, enforcement of border control, prevention of transnational crimes and terrorism, and facilitation of its nationals travelling abroad, the Chinese government is continuously working to improve passport security features. China officially launched the e-passport Research and Development (R&D) project in the end of 2007, a smart chip was embedded into the traditional machine-readable passports. Thanks to the cryptography technology, the passport is capable of bearing a digital signature in order to protect its integrity.

2. PROGRESS OF R&D AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE E-PASSPORT IN CHINA

2.1 To ensure the security and international interoperability of e-passport, the Chinese Government has from outset followed closely the international technical standards contained in Annex 9 of Chicago Convention and Doc 9303 with respect to e-passport.

2.2 In order to strengthen international cooperation and promote successful implementation of China's e-passport in the international arena, the Chinese Government joined the Public Key Directory (PKD) project of ICAO in November 2008, and became a member of PKD Board. China actively participated in all regular meetings of PKD and its associated activities, and made its due contributions to the development of PKD and the implementation of e-passport.

2.3 The e-passports developed by China use the most advanced mainstream chip currently available in the world, with its operating system developed by China independently. The e-passport will use an independent data page structure, with component layer (Inlay) embedded in the dissection of passport cover page. Comparing with the existing machine-readable passports, the new e-passport will incorporate passport holder's facial image identification data. In addition, the design of the new passport also contains the themes of pattern around China, such as Great Wall of China, the world's cultural heritages and other patterns with strong local representation. Consequently, the quality, security features and other aspects such as cultural context of the new e-passport will all witness the enhancement and breakthrough comparing with the existing machine-readable passport.

2.4 Presently, China has almost completed its R&D work of e-passport, connection between e-passport system with PKD for the purpose of testing was also in final its stage, and was able to interact with PKD for certificate data exchange. China is now actively preparing for the production and issuance of new e-passport, with a pilot project of issuing new e-passport planned in the fourth quarter of 2010. China will introduce the electronic passport nationwide in 2011.