



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

A37-WP/393

P/57

5/10/10

(Information paper)

English and Arabic Only

ASSEMBLY — 37TH SESSION

PLENARY

Agenda Item 2: Statements by delegations of Contracting States and of Observers

STATEMENT PRESENTED BY LEBANON

Mr. Chairman of the Assembly,
Mr. President of the Council,
Mr. Secretary General,
Your Excellencies the Ministers,
Honorable Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to be among you today to talk about Lebanon as a model of diversity and as a message in the Middle-East. As far as geography is concerned, Lebanon is a small country. Yet, through its history and its human, scientific and cultural wealth, Lebanon is a great country. It was the first country to know aviation in the Arab World in 1913. Later on, Lebanon remained a pioneer in this field, despite the challenges the Middle-East is faced with, as you all know. It continued to reap success and to represent a role model in development and in the implementation of the "Open Skies" policy.

Lebanon is a founding member of ICAO. It represented one of the most delicate regions of the world at its Council (i.e. the Eastern Mediterranean part of the Middle-East). Its modest experience has become a truly inspiring success story. In fact, Lebanon has the first and most prestigious center for civil aviation training in the Middle-East that was founded in the early 1960s. It also has one of the most important cargo air carriers in the world that was created in the 1970s. Lebanon has taken the initiative to adopt the "Open Skies" policy unilaterally. It succeeded in making its airport and airlines profitable, and they are evolving continuously in a way that exceeded all expectations. Lebanon is endeavoring to reinforce cooperation with its neighbors and with the civil aviation community all over the world. It is also taking part in the efforts made by several States to promote aviation safety and security, protect the environment and modernize systems, structures and management.

Thus, Lebanon hopes to continue representing its region and similar neighboring countries thanks to your support. Lebanon will continue to support ICAO's new orientations and constructive plans. It will always draw the attention to the necessity of further activating ICAO's role wherever quick and effective steps are needed to promote aviation safety and security, protect the environment, sanction error and support justice.

Lebanon has presented to the current Assembly session a paper (WP/278) announcing its candidature for election of Part III Member States which presence at the Council is aimed to ensure balanced geographical representation of the main geographical regions of the world, in accordance with the representation principles established by the Chicago Convention. In fact, Lebanon's presence on the ICAO Council will ensure appropriate representation of several States located in a large geographical area in the Middle-East which is currently not represented on the Council. This representation will be ensured through a rotation system whereby Lebanon will present its candidature with a representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan who will be designated as an Alternate Member. As you all know, this rotation system was applied in the successive elections of the Part III; nine of the thirteen of the Council States pertaining to the third Part of the Council are actually elected on the basis of rotation agreements established by Groups of States belonging to diverse geographical regions of the world. This proves the importance of these rotation systems and their effective contribution in promoting the equitable geographical representation on the Council of ICAO in conformity with the Chicago Convention and with the principle of justice and equality among states by allowing many of them the opportunity to be Members of the ICAO Council through the rotation system. I would also like to mention that the candidature of Lebanon through this rotation system was approved by the Council of the League of Arab States (resolution 7115, dated 9/9/2009).

The world has witnessed this year more incidents than in past years most of which were due to human and management reasons related to imbalance in the relationship between the State oversight body and the airlines management as well as to imbalance in the objectives and implementation. We all face challenges in the world of civil aviation and we should always be alert and strive to cooperate to put the air transport sector at the heart of the edification, revival, and development of nations and make it a tool for world peace as mentioned in the Chicago Convention Preamble.

Lebanon hopes to be able to count on your support for its candidature for election as a Member State of the Council in Part III. We would like to congratulate the Chairman of the Assembly and to thank the President of the ICAO Council and the Secretary General of ICAO for their tremendous efforts. We would also like to congratulate the states which were elected today as Member States of the Council wishing them and the Assembly full success.

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