



International Civil Aviation Organization

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French only<sup>1</sup>

**ASSEMBLY — 36TH SESSION**

**PLENARY**

**Agenda Item 10: Election of Contracting States to be represented on the Council**

**CANDIDATURE OF TUNISIA**

(Presented by Tunisia)

1. The Republic of Tunisia is pleased to extend its best wishes and honoured to inform you that the Republic of Tunisia intends to present once again its candidature for a second mandate for the membership of the International Civil Aviation Organization Council during the elections whose proceedings take place on the occasion of the thirty-six session of the General Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization scheduled to be held on 18-28 September 2007 in Montreal.

The Republic of Tunisia has, since her election in 2004 to the membership of the International Civil Aviation Organization Council, been making strenuous efforts with all means available to her to honour her obligations as a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization Council in order to contribute in her turn to helping the Council achieve the Organization's goals in the manner to which the peoples of the Contracting States and particularly the developing ones among them aspire.

2. The Tunisian Republic has paid a particular attention to air transport sector as it constitutes one of the basic pillars of the country's economic activity.

This became clear in particular in the development of private investment and the implementation of projects in addition to the drawing up of a set of practical plans and mechanisms aimed at promoting this vital sector and conferring upon it the efficiency and profitability likely to support its consolidation on the international level in the context of the deep and accelerating pace of the transformations witnessed by air transport.

The sector of civil aviation accounts for 2% of the gross domestic product and employs around 12,000 agents.

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<sup>1</sup> Arabic, French and English versions provided by Tunisia

In addition, the overall size of investments in the civil aviation sector (airports and air navigation) is expected to rise in the period 2007-2011 to about TD 273 million (US\$ 240 million), around 55 million of which (US\$ 45 million) in the field of air navigation.

Regarding air transport companies, the period 2007-2011 will see the acquisition of 14 new planes worth a total investment of TD 1000 million (US\$ 900 million).

3. The civil aviation sector has witnessed a remarkable development following the initiative taken to liberalize the air transport sector through the gradual introduction of competition and the encouragement of private initiatives by authorizing new national carriers to work alongside the national carrier, in particular with respect to charter transport. Air traffic of passengers through Tunisian airports has increased at an annual rate of 5.8% and the number of passengers went up from 6.5 million in 1993 to 10.5 million in 2006.

In keeping with world orientations and developments in the area of gradual economic liberalization of air transport, and pursuant to the resolutions of the Council of the League of Arab States at the summit level and the Arab Civil Aviation Commission (ACAC) to implement a timetable to liberalize air transport between the Arab States through a bilateral arrangement that fits in with those orientations and developments, the Republic of Tunisia has undertaken the activation of the programme on a bilateral basis with a number of Arab States.

To keep pace with the development of air traffic a number of acquisitions have been made to suit the fleet to the nature of the network of lines in operation and achieve the required consistency. Thus the number of aircraft has been increased to 56, operated by 6 commercial air transport companies.

Efforts have also been made to set up partnerships with international companies specialized in civil aviation through the determination of preferential rules and privileges for investors. This has led to the creation of an Aviation Training Centre in Tunis, which confers the type rating qualification for A319 and A320 with the contribution of Airbus and the French Thales company, in addition to the launching of two aircraft maintenance organizations in association with the most important European companies: SOGERMA-EADS and LUFTHANSA TECHNICS.

4. Civil aviation authorities in the Republic of Tunisia operate seven international airports with a total capacity of 13.55 million passengers annually.

Tunisia has also adopted new strategies for commercial airport management and for increasing the participation of the private sector in airport financing and running operations. This will improve the services and the performance of the airports and facilitate the growth of passenger and cargo traffic. The preparation of a new airport in the centre east of the country substantiates this orientation since the project has been put before the private sector at the national and international levels on BOT basis and is expected to become operational some time in 2009 with an initial annual capacity of 5 million passengers.

5. The Republic of Tunisia has taken care to make a distinction between service and commercial activities and activities that relate to oversight and control of safety and security. Since 1970 a financially-independent structure called the Civil Aviation and Airport Office has been created to provide air traffic services and international airports management. And in order to keep pace with the developments on the international level, particularly the liberalization and opening up policies adopted at the organizational and employment levels, and the new economic orientations in the field of civil

aviation, the Republic of Tunisia undertook in 1998 to restructure the specialized departments in the Ministry of Transport (the Civil Aviation Authority – CAA) by foregoing some of the technical missions and prerogatives with an administrative cast in favor of the Civil Aviation Office and airports such as for instance the issuing and renewal of licenses to pilots and of the documents pertaining to the airworthiness of aircraft, while retaining the duties of supervision and control.

The Republic of Tunisia is committed to attaching the highest importance to the ratification of international agreements in the field of civil aviation, which have been granted a special position in national concerns, in particular the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its Annexes since efforts are constantly being made to incorporate in national laws and regulations its provisions as well as the principles of implementation governing civil aviation activities. In 1999 a new Civil Aviation basic law regulating all civil aviation activities has been published, in addition to many operational regulations which take into account the provisions of the Annexes to the Chicago Convention.

6. The Republic of Tunisia has taken care, since 1987, to keep pace with all the developments taking place in the area of air traffic management, particularly in the European region. This can be explained by the size of the air traffic exchanged with the European region, which accounts for 95% of the total air traffic, in addition to the distinctive location in North Africa and the shores of the Mediterranean which made the Tunisian airspace one of the airspaces linking the European region and Africa.

Within this framework, the Republic of Tunisia sought to offer the best services, and to equip air traffic control units with the best and most advanced equipments. Redundancy radar service covering most of Tunisian airspace was introduced in 1998, and funds amounting to US\$ 20 million have been earmarked for the expansion of this coverage in 2009 to include the whole Tunisian airspace.

The Republic of Tunisia operates a navigation system that meets all the requirements of air navigation and that is consistent with the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization Global Air Navigation plan, thanks to the most recent navigation and communication equipment, and in accordance with the international standards and procedures in force. In view of the distinct relations between the Tunisian Republic and the various European structures operating in the field of civil aviation, the European Space Agency has established a Remote Integrity Monitoring (RIM) Station in the southeast of Tunis (Jerba-Zarzis Airport), which is one of the first stations to be established in the African continent and which falls under the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS).

7. The initial ICAO Safety Oversight audit carried out in Tunis in 2002 within the framework of the International Civil Aviation Organization Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme recorded divergences with respect to safety-related provisions (critical elements) which were estimated at 15 %. During the USOAP follow up audit mission in 2004 the differences recorded did not exceed 3% bearing in mind that the civil aviation authorities have made great efforts to improve the level of safety oversight in the field of aircraft operations through an upgrading of the human resources and of the means used to perform tasks, in addition to the introduction of follow up and analysis software. A practical set up enabled the units entrusted with these activities to obtain the ISO9001-2000 certification in March 2007.

During the Directors General of Civil Aviation Conference on a Global Strategy for Aviation Safety (2006) the Tunisian delegation conveyed to the Secretariat of the International Civil Aviation Organization the Republic of Tunisia's consent to release the safety oversight audit reports on the worldwide web pursuant to the recommendation made by the conference calling for increased transparency and sharing of information about the level of civil aviation safety in the Contracting States.

Regarding civil aviation security, the Republic of Tunisia has drawn up a national civil aviation security programme and security programmes for all Tunisian air transport operators and international airports in accordance with the requirements of Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention and the related guidance material.

Within the context of its concern to apply and implement the recommendation of the International Civil Aviation Organization following the audit mission on civil aviation security carried out for the Republic of Tunisia during the period 05-14 April 2004 under the Universal Security Aviation Program, a corrective action plan was drawn up including in particular a review of sections of the national civil aviation security programme, the completion of the national civil aviation security quality control programme, and a review of the national civil aviation security training programme .

8. Tunisia takes care to keep pace with civil aviation regulations on the international level and supports all initiatives aimed at consolidating international civil aviation safety and security, with due regard to the available means with respect to developing States. The contribution of Tunisia to the International Financial Facility for Aviation Safety (IFFAS) substantiates this orientation.

Tunisia will seek to work towards coordination and direct participation in identifying solutions capable of assisting developing States, particularly African, to achieve the goals pursued to reduce the level of accidents in each region to half the level recorded on the international scale by early 2010.

Tunisia's stances regarding the outstanding issues related to safety, security, the environment, air navigation and the economics of air transport at the Organization agree with the vision and orientations of most contracting States at the Organization where a call is made for the need to include a step-by-step approach in implementation activities and to take into account the specificities of the developing States, affirming the need for striking a balance among the various positions and aspirations in the field of civil aviation.

In view of the above, the Republic of Tunisia looks forward to her re-nomination to the membership of the Council of the Civil Aviation Organization within the third category of States represented on the Council in order to ensure a balanced representation of the various geographical zones in the world, in accordance with the rules of representation in force at the Civil Aviation Organization (Article 50 – para. b) 3) of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, considering that the presence of Tunisia on the Council of the Organization ensures the representation of the North African sub-region, in accordance with the agreement which has been established among the constituent States of the sub-region to alternate on this position for the period of two successive terms.

Tunisia's candidature enjoys the support of the Arab Civil Aviation Commission (ACAC) and the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC).

Tunisia looks forward to pursuing its efforts with the Council's members to promote the industry of civil aviation in order to serve the international community for the benefit and prosperity of all contracting states, particularly the developing States among them

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