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PLENARY

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

STATEMENT PRESENTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Salutations Mr. President

On behalf of the International Labour Organization and like all the persons who addressed this Assembly before me, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your colleagues in the presidium with your election and I am sure that under your guidance the Assembly will attain its objectives.

The ILO acknowledges ICAO's vision of safe, secure and sustainable development of civil aviation through cooperation amongst its member States and the resulting strategic objectives for the period 2005 to 2010. The first objective, aviation safety, is of utmost importance. Accidents should be avoided wherever possible. It is in the interest of all of us: member States, operators, passengers and personnel. Together with the second objective, civil aviation security, there may be room for mutual cooperation between our organizations within the framework of the United Nations system. The cooperation between the ILO and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in field of maritime safety and security could be an example. Such cooperation could be envisaged under item B.7: 'assist States in the training of all categories of personnel involved in implementing aviation security measures and strategies and, where appropriate, the certification of such personnel'.

The primary goal of the ILO is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work is the converging focus of the ILO's four strategic objectives: the promotion of rights at work, employment, social protection, and social dialogue. Social dialogue requires participation and freedom of association. It is also a means of ensuring conflict resolution, social equity and effective policy implementation. It is the means by which rights are defended, employment promoted and work secured. It is a source of stability at all levels, from enterprise to society at large. The goal of decent work challenges all the constituents of the ILO alike. Governments, employers and workers have to accommodate their different interests in creative ways to respond to the demand for decent work.

The Worldwide Conference on the Liberalization of Air Transport (Montreal, 2003) reflected this spirit when it concluded that ‘liberalization may have various implications for labour, which should continue to participate as an important stakeholder for the development of the air transport industry. States should observe and respect the ILO *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, and take the necessary measures to promote social dialogue with the active participation of labour as a way to find innovative and socially responsible solutions.’

The Declaration adopted by that Conference stated that ICAO and its contracting States, together with the air transport industry and other stakeholders in civil aviation, will work to ensure that international air transport continues to develop in a way that: (item 1) ‘has due regard for the interests of all stakeholders, including air carriers and other operators, users, airports, communities, labour, and tourism and travel services providers.’

Mr. President, distinguished delegates, a vibrant civil aviation industry, the availability of and access to air transportation, is in the public interest. The interests of public safety and security dictate that governments play an active role in the protection and maintenance of a civil aviation structure. The restructuring of the civil aviation industry has consequences for managements and workers. It also has important implications for trade unions and industrial relations.

Liberalisation presents a number of challenges as well as opportunities for the development of stakeholder involvement. Through negotiations, workers and employers can jointly arrive at solutions for enhancing competitiveness, while simultaneously promoting and protecting decent employment.

In the trust that this spirit of social dialogue will prevail in this Assembly, I wish you, Mr. President, and all delegates a very successful Assembly.

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