FACILITATION (FAL) DIVISION — TWELFTH SESSION

Cairo, Egypt, 22 March to 2 April 2004

Agenda Item 1:	**Developments since the Eleventh Session of the Division**
Agenda Item 2:	**Facilitation and security of travel documents and border control formalities**
Agenda Item 5:	**Modernizing airport facilities and service delivery systems**
5.2:	**National, regional and airport FAL programmes**

SYNERGY IN TOURISM AND AVIATION FACILITATION

(Presented by the World Tourism Organization)

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   Tourism is a major economic sector and one of the mainstays of international trade. Tourism has spread all over the world , with 703 million international arrivals and expenditures of 474 billion dollars in the year 2002. Overcoming wars, terrorism, natural disasters and epidemics, travel and leisure have become essential features of our time. Current forecasts are for international tourist arrivals to more than double to over 1 500 million by 2020. The large bulk of international tourists are presently carried by air (ICAO estimates carriage of 640 million international passengers in 2002, of which 545 million were on scheduled services).

1.2   The World Tourism Organization is the leading international organization in the field of tourism. With a membership of 143 States, six territories and some 350 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities, the Organization serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how and statistics. The World Tourism Organization has been an executing agency of the UNDP since 1976, a related agency within the UN system since 1977 and, on 23 December 2003, became a fully-fledged Specialized Agency of the UN, a sister agency to ICAO.

1.3   In recognition of the important symbiosis between aviation and tourism and in reflection of the enhanced responsibilities of the Organization, effective October 2003 the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization has appointed a Representative to ICAO, based in Montreal.

2.   **SECURITY, FACILITATION AND TOURISM**

2.1   One of the key issues for cooperation between the two agencies, foreseen as long ago as 1978 in the "*Working Arrangement between the International Civil Aviation Organization and the World Tourism Organization*", is facilitation. The World Tourism Organization takes a broad view of facilitation in the field of air transport, including promotion of reliable and reasonably-priced access to air services, and has welcomed the endorsement by ICAO's Worldwide Air Transport Conference in March 2003 of its

proposal for a study on the concept of essential tourism air services in a liberalized environment, on which it is currently working with the ICAO Secretariat. The expedited flow of passengers through airports is another key issue, especially as the treatment which tourists receive at the airport is usually the first and last memories they have of their visit to a country. Thus the World Tourism Organization is generally fully supportive of ICAO's Facilitation Programme.

2.2   At the same time, while supporting appropriate strengthening of security, the Organization is concerned at the negative effects that new or extended security measures following the events of 11 September 2001 are having on the cost of air transport, the flow of passengers and the public perception of the ease of travel. In this regard the WTO strongly endorses the Declaration emanating from ICAO's High Level Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security in February 2002, and in particular the following elements:

"   -   ensure that security measures are implemented in a most cost-effective way in order to avoid undue burden on civil aviation;

-    ensure to the extent possible that security measures do not disrupt or impede the flow of passengers, freight, mail or aircraft;

-    ensure that security measures are implemented in a manner which is objective and non-discriminatory on the base of gender, race, religion or nationality;

....

-    restore public confidence in air travel and revitalize the air transport industry; "

2.3   In this regard, the present meeting of the Facilitation Division, with its theme of "*Managing Security Challenges to Facilitate Air Transport Operations*", is most timely.

2.3.1   In general terms, the World Tourism Organization would urge ICAO Member States to recognize the reality that increased security unless accompanied by the right systems and adequate manpower, will inevitably adversely impact longstanding facilitation actions. We consider that concomitant action must be taken to facilitate passenger flows as security systems are increased and intensified. We also believe that special support – capacity building and financial should be made available by the international community.

2.3.2   The World Tourism Organization has also submitted a working paper (FAL/12-WP/24) proposing a recommendation on the subject of Travel Advisories which, particularly with their proliferation since 11 September 2001, are having a significant impact on aviation and tourism flows and economics. The Organization would also like to draw the attention of the Division to a general need for closer cooperation between the tourism and aviation sectors in the field of air transport facilitation.

2.4   Like aviation, tourism has become prominently subject to acts of terrorism, with associated substantial negative economic impact as well as the devastating social implications. As a consequence, visits to many monuments and other institutions frequented by tourists are now subject to the same security checks as were once the province of civil aviation, include electronic screening for weapons, body checks, etc. and, in some instances, now incorporating biometric identification. However, such security checks are not always of the same standard as those for aviation and not necessarily interoperable with them.

2.5   In May 2003, ICAO's Air Transport Committee adopted a "blueprint" for the deployment of biometric technology in passports and other travel documents, for the purposes of machine-assisted inspection, which could be a significant step forward in achieving an appropriate balance between expedited passenger flow and current security needs. The "blueprint" was initially designed for application to nationals of the States in the United States visa waiver programme. The present meeting is being invited

(FAL/12-WP/4) to recommend adoption of new Standards and Recommended Practices which would in practice eventually extend the application to all 188 ICAO Member States.

2.6   The World Tourism Organization is supportive of this process and feels that some States may find value in having the related concept of interoperability in biometric technology extended to encompass tourist sites in their territories, to ease the burden on the administrator as well as simplify the visit by the tourist. In this regard, the paper by the ICAO Secretariat gives no indication of the practicability and cost of application of biometric technology in individual States, particularly developing States with low tourist flows and limited resources. The World Tourism Organization feels that, to assist widespread implementation and "ensure that security measures are implemented in a most cost-effective way", it would be most helpful for both tourism and aviation administrations if some indicative guidance and cost figures could be disseminated. With such information in hand, steps could be taken to provide resources and develop capacity in poorer States in tandem with upgrading the presently proposed Recommended Practice on incorporation of biometric data to a Standard, thereby promoting the concept of a minimum level of security worldwide.

2.7   The discussion above will hopefully have illustrated the need for not just continued, but enhanced, coordination between aviation and tourism administrations on facilitation matters. One way of promoting such coordination would be to have tourism representatives on the national air transport facilitation programmes which are established in pursuance of the Standards in Chapter 8 of Annex 9. At present, the associated guidelines for the establishment of these programmes in Appendix 11 of Annex 9 only encompass tourism in the membership in an ancillary way ("other government agencies concerned with facilitation (such as postal services, tourism and trade departments")). In this regard the World Tourism Organization welcomes the revised guidance material on a "Model National Facilitation Programme" presented to the Division by the ICAO Secretariat (in FAL/12-WP/7) and the separate identification of the need for active participation from the tourism sector. While this will not in itself improve coordination between aviation and tourism representatives, it at least codifies the need for such an enhancement.

2.8   At the global level, the need for closer cooperation has already been acted upon through the "*Working Arrangement between the International Civil Aviation Organization and the World Tourism Organization*" and the recent designation by the World Tourism Organization of a Representative to ICAO.

3.   **ACTION BY THE DIVISION**

3.1   The Division is invited to endorse the concept of extended commonality and interoperability of security and facilitation measures between aviation and tourism and the need for enhanced cooperation on security and facilitation matters between aviation and tourism administrations.

— END —