



FACILITATION (FAL) DIVISION — TWELFTH SESSION

Cairo, Egypt, 22 March to 2 April 2004

- Agenda Item 2: Facilitation and security of travel documents and border control formalities**
2.1: Machine readable travel documents (MRTDs)

A STANDARD TO REQUIRE THE ISSUANCE OF MACHINE READABLE PASSPORTS

(Presented by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC))²

SUMMARY

This working paper recommends the adoption of a new standard regarding the issuance of machine readable passports not later than 1 April 2014.

Action by the Division is in paragraph 2.1.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Machine Readable Passport (MRP) is recognized today as a reference as regards the issuance of travel documents, border control operations as well as the detection of lost or stolen documents.

1.2 African States are of the opinion that the issuance of machine readable passports should ultimately become a universal requirement given the many benefits stemming from the MRP, i.e. standardization, security and interoperability.

1.3 For this reason, African States do support the ICAO proposal in FAL/12-WP/14 advocating that the machine readable passport issuance be made a standard.

1.4 On the other hand, African States have strong reservations with respect to the entry into force of such a standard on 1 April 2006. Indeed, the date for the adoption of this standard by the Divisional Meeting and its entry into force as advocated by ICAO will leave only two (2) years to States which do not issue as yet machine readable passports – this is valid for most African States – to comply with

¹ French version provided by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC).

² Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cap Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

the new standard. African States, the presenters of the present paper, believe that this transitional period is too short for them to employ with the said standard.

1.5 African States would rather favour a transitional period of 10 years bearing in mind economic, administrative and qualified staff requirements. They could thus have a reasonable deadline and prepare themselves for this « technological adjustment ». In this connexion, as indicated in para. 2.3 of FAL/12-WP/14, ICAO and any Contracting States having the means, should provide necessary assistance to States in need.

2. ACTION BY THE DIVISION

2.1 The Division is invited to:

a) recommend that the following new standard be adopted:

“3.10 Contracting States should start issuing machine readable passports, in compliance with the provisions of Doc 9303, Part 1 ! *Machine Readable Passports* not later than 1 April 2014”;

b) request ICAO to urge States having the means to implement as soon as possible this new standard; and

c) request ICAO and States having the means to provide necessary assistance to States which may need such assistance in order to implement this new standard within the deadline.

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