

# BILATERALISM IS VERY MUCH ALIVE

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# INTRODUCTION

The Chicago Convention of 1944 only recognized the obvious of post World War II geopolitics

Empires & Colonialism were on the verge of departing the geopolitical scene & nation states were replacing them

Hence, the foundation of the nascent aviation relations were based on States exercising their sovereignty over their airspace and on their land.

Bermuda one enshrined the bilateralism in a model agreement, which became the norm

# MAJOR VARIATIONS

Although the US was the first to carry internationally the open skies flag, bilateralism was still its model

The EU was the first to shake the foundation of bilateralism through its single aviation market completed in 1997

Since then, the EU signed many agreements with third countries stretching from the US to the Mediterranean and neighboring States

Moreover, the EU shook another foundation of the Chicago regime by providing the right of establishment in the EU and then obtaining consent of 3rd countries through horizontal agreements

# STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE ARAB WORLD

In spite of the Damascus convention, aviation is still strictly a bilateral issue

Even with the two countries acceding to the common aviation market of the EU, that accession is still bilateral between those two countries individually and the EU

Application of open skies policy either unilaterally or bilaterally

Critical mass markets need some ground work before free market access

Hub & spoke markets eager to expand market access & some of them need establishment of economic rules for a greater regional role

# WHY BILATERALISM IS ALIVE & WELL?

A decade ago, many were calling for scrapping Chicago in favor of a new multilateral convention

Those calls will continue to be sound bites without implementation .  
Why? ..

→ We are still living in the same geopolitical structure which emerged after World War II

→ In fact with every new economic crisis, national sentiments come back to be supreme

→ Even the EU needs to get a mandate from member states on assuming competency over aviation relations with any 3rd country

→ At the end of the analysis the duty of governments is to protect NATIONAL interest as up till now regional interests are only defined as a collection of common national interests

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# THE WAY FORWARD ??

Focus on global standards & enablers for better

Safety

Environment

Security

Competition but with a  
regulatory playing field

Infrastructure

Consumer Protection

... and lets leave the doing business issues to like-minded bilaterally consenting agreements

# THE WAY FORWARD ??

We need to push for sub-regional, regional and inter regional agreements

We need to look at the big picture but not forget the pieces of the puzzle.. Applying overarching policies that don't take into account the set of interests of the stakeholders, will not help in achieving the objectives of that policy

On the regional level, lacking the regional constitutional institutions would mean that critical mass markets need to develop as a nucleus for a regional single aviation market





# THANK YOU

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