



**Brief by the Secretary General of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
to the United Nations Security Council on  
*Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorists acts: Aviation security*  
United Nations Headquarters, New York, 27 September 2017**

1. On behalf of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), I am pleased to provide this briefing today, along with his Excellency Ambassador Aboulatta, the Counter Terrorism Committee Chair.
2. Since its establishment in 1944, ICAO has fulfilled its central role in strengthening aviation as mandated by the Convention on International Civil Aviation, commonly referred to as the Chicago Convention. ICAO provides leadership and support to our Member States and industry groups as they work with us to develop the international civil aviation Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and related policies.
3. We have gratefully fulfilled this role for more than 70 years now, realizing important progress in all aspects of international air transport.
4. The United Nations Security Council resolution 2309 (2016) is the first of its kind focusing on civil aviation security, highlighting ICAO's role. Since then extensive progress has been made in enhancing aviation security under ICAO's guidance and leadership. Notably in this regard:  
The ICAO Global Risk Context Statement has been updated based on the latest threat information.
5. Sector-wide emphasis on landside security, explosives detection, and cybersecurity has been increased through the adoption of Amendment 15 to Annex 17 – *Security* of the Chicago Convention, and will be further increased through draft Amendment 16;

6. Material for a Risk-Management Workshop has been developed, which will help States produce their own distinct risk assessments;
7. Guidance material has been revised to reflect latest best practices; and
8. Capacity development projects have taken place in locations designated through our *No Country Left Behind* initiative, with the help of voluntary funding from States.
9. In addition to these developments, this year's adoption of the Advance Passenger Information (API) Standard, which becomes effective on 23 October, 2017, will make it harder for Foreign Terrorist Fighters to move between States. Our collaboration with the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), with additional participation from the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) entities, ensures this important programme is at the forefront of States' priorities.
10. A natural outcome arising from our leadership role in aviation security has been the development of the new ICAO Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP). This pivotal document, which focuses extensively on the threat of terrorism to civil aviation, has benefitted from extensive inputs on behalf of both governments and Industry. It is currently expected to be approved by the ICAO Council at its next Session this November.
11. Member State enthusiasm and support for the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) was clearly demonstrated during the recent Regional Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security in Africa and the Middle East Regions, held in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt. By the conclusion of this three-day meeting, participants had developed a regionally-focused roadmap that is fully aligned with the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) objectives, and which includes monitoring objectives to ensure this progress remains consistent and accountable.
12. The Plan's core objective is to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of global provisions, and the sustainable implementation of preventative measures. To help accomplish this, it sets forth five key priorities aimed at:
  - Enhancing risk awareness and response.
  - Establishing a better-defined security culture.
  - Improving technological resources and fostering innovation.
  - Improving oversight and quality assurance.

- And lastly, increasing cooperation and support.
13. The objectives of the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) reflect those of resolution 2309 (2016). Once finalized, the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) will be the primary tool by which the aviation security community fulfils its roles as defined in the resolution. The ICAO Secretariat will carefully analyze indicators and monitor progress in achieving these milestones, but of course the ultimate results will be largely dependent on the dedication and actions of States and industry operators.
  14. It will only be by virtue of sustained political will, especially at the highest levels of governments and industry, that the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) will succeed. I shall come back to this challenge in a few minutes.
  15. Many other challenges lie ahead. To meet the security targets identified in the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) and regional roadmaps, capacity development and technology assistance programmes must expand significantly.
  16. States must also be willing to accept help in strengthening their counter-terrorism postures, and in resolving vulnerabilities.
  17. And once help is received, States must be dedicated in following through with what they have learned and what they have received, whether it is equipment and technology, or training and mentoring.
  18. The Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) establishes a mechanism to enable Member States to confidentially request assistance as a result of an audit, or through their own self-generated risk assessment. ICAO will be proactive in comparing all such requests with other States' competencies, and then recommending partnerships where appropriate.
  19. Another challenge which persists for us regards the sharing of key information. For instance, many actionable details regarding recent aviation security events are still unavailable to ICAO and Member States. We must find a way to identify and judiciously share essential elements of information necessary to implement appropriate measures at the proper level.

20. Resolution 2309 (2016) reinforces this point, and States have acknowledged it, and it is our hope that through the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP), ICAO, States, and Industry can improve sharing of information.
21. Looking now to the attack methods discussed in the Special Meeting of the Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC), held this past July, although some of them are not new, terrorists have made progress in exploiting vulnerabilities and circumventing the counter measures in place. Landside security gaps, for example, have been exploited to some extent for decades now. But with recent Amendments to Annex 17 – *Security* of the Chicago Convention, we are now capturing the attention and participation of all Stakeholders involved in effectively mitigating these risks. Amendment 15 to Annex 17 – *Security* of the Chicago Convention, which became applicable this August, emphasizes the identification of landside areas, the development of security measures aligned with a risk assessment, and coordination among the relevant actors. This new emphasis is now helping to bring together law enforcement agencies, security forces, airport authorities, and even vendors.
22. Similarly, the threat from Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Portable Electronic Devices is not a new one in air transport, having first emerged when such a device was concealed in an unaccompanied suitcase and brought down Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. Effective and affordable countermeasures for increasingly sophisticated concealment methods have been discussed in numerous ICAO working groups, task forces, and conferences, and new and more detailed screening requirements specific to IEDs have been incorporated into the draft Amendment 16 to Annex 17 – *Security* of the Chicago Convention.
23. Of the threats we discussed in July, aviation’s rapid cyber-connectivity growth is certainly the newest. The more we rely on computers and information technology, the more susceptible we are to cyber threats. Again, ICAO has recognized this challenge and is already cooperating with Member States and Industry to determine the extent of vulnerabilities and the most effective countermeasures. This topic will definitely remain high on our list of concerns.
24. Similarly, the use of projectiles against aircraft, such as Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS) has proven to be an increasing concern, especially in conflict zones. Effective MANPADS countermeasure procedures are available to industry and Member States through the ICAO Secure Portal.

25. Each of these threats potentially generates a new layer of technology requirements, which becomes costly not only in terms of equipment purchase but also in building renovations, training and maintenance requirements, slowdowns in security procedures, and other effects on operations and facilitation. Technology innovation was extensively discussed during the recent ICAO Global Aviation Security Symposium, AVSEC2017, which we organized earlier this month in collaboration with Airports Council International (ACI) with active participation of CTED and some other UN CT actors. Participants recognized, and explored in detail, the need for innovation and synergies throughout the security system. This, too, is a priority action in the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP).
26. As we look together now at the way forward, I would like to offer some insights on the current aviation security outlook.
27. Terrorist groups continue to view civil aviation as an attractive target, with the aim of causing substantial loss of life, economic damage and disruption to connectivity between States, and the risk of terrorist attacks against civil aviation may affect all regions and Member States.
28. Therefore, the key element of the implementation of resolution 2309 (2016) and Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) is States' commitment to ensure the implementation of effective and risk-based measures that reflect the ever-evolving threat picture and ensure that such measures are in accordance with ICAO standards and recommended practices.
29. Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) provides the foundation for enhancing aviation security worldwide, consistent with the objectives of resolution 2309 (2016). In that context, States and ICAO should continue to work and cooperate together, along with the civil aviation industry and other relevant stakeholders, to effectively address threats to civil aviation.
30. Therefore all States are encouraged to strengthen their support to ICAO's work on aviation security, ensure the implementation of Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) as a matter of high priority, and cooperate on a global, regional, and national levels to raise the level of effective implementation of global aviation security.

31. This is an area in which the Security Council, along with relevant United Nations entities can assist ICAO. Security experts and aviation authorities understand the importance of the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP), and its implementing actions, but they need determined support – including legislative and operational authority, financial backing, appropriate resources, and statements of commitment – to fulfil their responsibilities. Through key mechanisms such as resolution 2309 (2016) and its supplemental undertakings, we must therefore continue to work together to encourage decision-makers to support these endeavours.
32. Obtaining financial support in particular is another major area where UN entities can assist ICAO. Capable Member States must be willing to participate in ICAO initiatives to bolster security worldwide, whether through the loan or donation of technology, the provision of training in basic procedures or best practices, the provision of mentors, or via direct financial support for ICAO’s capacity-building and assistance programmes. Increased contributions from Member States, would enable a much earlier implementation of the robust assistance regime envisaged in the Global Aviation Security Plan Roadmap (“GASeP Roadmap”). ICAO, Member States, and other stakeholders will then pursue further opportunities to enhance counter terrorism capabilities in the locations that need them most. This will include enhanced risk awareness and response, wider understanding of the threats and risks facing civil aviation, monitoring new and emerging threats to civil aviation, maintaining an updated ICAO Global Risk Context Statement and reviewing the measures set out in Annex 17 - *Security* of the Chicago Convention and related ICAO guidance material.
33. The use of API data, along with Passenger Name Record information, will greatly assist us in identifying air travellers who may pose a threat to aviation. We must also remain vigilant, however, to keep an appropriate balance between the necessary level of security and the passenger experience and the facilitation objectives.
34. The importance of an accurate Risk Assessment, based on an equally accurate Threat Assessment, cannot be over-emphasized. All facets of national and local activities should be focused on understanding applicable risks. Although the terms “security risk assessment” and “threat assessment” have been in Annex 17 – *Security* of the Chicago Convention for many years, there remains varied levels of understanding, development and implementation of viable Risk Assessments among States. ICAO’s continued attention to the Global Risk Context Statement, along with our new Risk Management Workshop, intends to address this concern.

35. AVSEC2017 highlighted the strong commitments by all members of the air transport community to the principles and goals of resolution 2309. I remain confident that through our continued collaboration we will persevere successfully in reducing the likelihood that an act of unlawful interference will be committed against aviation. The recently-established United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism will be an important ally that I look forward to working with.
36. In particular, I would like to highlight the cooperation between ICAO and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) on the delivery of technical assistance and capacity building in the field of aviation security. ICAO personnel are extensively trained and experienced in understanding the myriad ways compliance can be achieved in the aviation regime, and our participation in these evaluations also contributes to our own understanding of best practices.
37. We are presently exploring an arrangement with CTED in order to enhance our cooperation. Other United Nations agencies can also be valuable partners.
38. UN Security Council may wish to consider to allocate a portion of the counter terrorism funds and to encourage Member States to increase their contributions to aviation security projects, in particular for capacity building and training to enhance the effective implementation of ICAO Standards by all Member States .
39. The Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) is a major milestone for civil aviation security contributing to the UN global counter terrorism strategy. Consequently, I call for the Security Council to support and promote Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) to facilitate its implementation by all Member States.
40. In summary, I believe resolution 2309 (2016) and Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) will provide a globally-accepted foundation upon which stronger aviation security postures can be achieved.
41. As you are aware, aviation, which represents 50% of international tourism and 35% of international trade by value, contributes significantly to the sustainable development of all UN Member States, and also to the implementation of the UN SDGs. This recognition of aviation's importance to the threats posed by terrorism enables ICAO, and the other entities charged with mitigating terrorist acts, to press ahead with the necessary improvements in all areas of our strategy and operations.

42. I wish to thank the distinguished members of the Security Council for this opportunity to brief you on these latest updates in aviation security, and I remain at your disposal for any future updates on this or any matter relating to international civil aviation.
  
43. Thank you.