



International Civil Aviation Organization

## WORKING PAPER

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(Information paper)

### ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

#### PLENARY

#### Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States

#### STATEMENT BY OMAN

(Presented by Oman)

Your Excellency, President of the Assembly,

Your Excellency, President of ICAO Council,

Your Excellency, Secretary General of ICAO,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Sultanate of Oman, it is my pleasure to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of Canada for the facilitations it graciously offered to make this key event a success. We are also grateful to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and its Member States for their cooperation, warm welcome and hospitality.

Firstly, I am truly honoured to address the ICAO Forty-First Session of the Assembly in a warm and friendly atmosphere marked by mutual respect among ICAO Member States.

The International Civil Aviation Convention (Chicago Convention) laid down the fundamental principles of international air transport, which Oman abides by as it works in collaboration with ICAO.

Driven by our strong belief in the opening line of the Chicago Convention Preamble; “...**the future development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world.**” As Oman is an active member state in ICAO and shares with other States vibrant relations that are harnessed to serve international civil aviation, and given the importance of enhancing coordination and cooperation with ICAO, States and relevant organizations, Oman set up a permanent office at ICAO Headquarters in May 2021.

In light of Resolution A40-21, “Aviation’s contribution towards the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which acts as a comprehensive framework that steers implementation towards

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<sup>1</sup> Arabic version provided by Oman

achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda, Oman, guided by the Oman Vision 2040, set strategic objectives for civil aviation, that promote ICAO Strategic Objectives, which are closely related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. That, in total, shapes the strategic direction for Oman, which seeks to ensure the growth of its industry in accordance with the principles of safety, security, efficiency, respect for the environment, and garnering potential economic benefits from developing this vital industry.

Based on the above, and in line with the Strategic Objective of *enhancing global civil aviation safety, which primarily focuses on state regulatory oversight capacity*, Oman included in its 2021-2025 Strategy a strategic objective to promote civil aviation safety. Work to achieve this objective is currently underway through several activities, the most important of which is a corrective plan to improve the Effective Implementation of the eight Critical Elements of its aviation safety system and to improve Oman's results in the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programmes - Continuous Monitoring Approach (USOAP-CMA).

In a related context, Oman successfully developed and published its National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP) in March 2022. Implementation started soon afterwards. NASP also included a Roadmap for the implementation of the State Safety Programmes (SSP) as an effective tool to manage aviation safety hazards across the industry in Oman and to address the five High-Risk categories identified by ICAO in the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP 2020-2022).

In this context, Oman submitted a number of Working Papers (WPs) and Information Papers (IPs) to the A41 Assembly, including a WP on its experience in developing and implementing its SSP and the measures Oman has taken to manage the deployment of the 5G communication network while ensuring the safety of civil aviation, as well as an IP on the implementation of the Global Reporting Format (GRF) for reporting runway surface conditions.

**Regarding the ICAO Strategic Objective of *Enhancing Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency***, Oman is keenly implementing the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP 2016-2030). In doing so, it relies on the extensive development across the industry in terms of airport infrastructure, air navigation systems and state-of-the-art processes and procedures to stimulate and accommodate the air traffic growth predicted before the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Pandemic, however, triggered an unprecedented reduction in air traffic volume and generated socioeconomic impacts of varying magnitudes across the world, depending on the severity of the Pandemic and the characteristics of the civil aviation systems in different countries. For instance, air traffic in Oman recorded its lowest volume in April 2020, as in most other states, with a rate of nearly 87% decline compared to the pre-Pandemic air traffic averages.

To deal with these circumstances, Oman identified civil aviation recovery as a high priority, to which it allocated resources and efforts. Working to that end, we established, at an early stage of the outbreak, a platform which served as a standard umbrella bringing together the civil aviation sector, the health sector and other related industries to collectively draw up a plan for the safe and prompt recovery of civil aviation, under the supervision of the National Aviation Security and Facilitation Committee, and in coordination with ICAO. Those efforts bore fruit, as the community has started to recover from the pandemic. The industry, too, is recovering, reaching nearly 85% of the average air traffic volume before the pandemic hit and achieving an implementation rate of 100% of the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) recommendations, based on the ICAO Middle East index. Air traffic in Oman is also expected to grow in the coming period, capitalizing on its advanced air navigation systems, improved airspace and air routes and bilateral and multilateral open skies agreements.

**In line with the ICAO Strategic Objective of *Enhancing Global Civil Aviation Security and Facilitation***, Oman is consistently implementing the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) of

Annex 9 – *Facilitation* and Annex 17 – *Aviation Security* through measures designed to meet aviation security and facilitation requirements and address cross-border matters among states. This consistent approach by Oman was highlighted in 2016 when Oman achieved 90% in the Effective Implementation of SARPs associated with the eight aviation security Critical Elements, under the Universal Security Audit Programme - Continuous Monitoring Approach (USAP-CMA) results.

Oman was also among the first states to apply the Advance Passenger Information System (API) in 2014. Work is currently continuing to maximize API's benefits in coordination with other stakeholders.

Oman also established a cybersecurity governance system in the civil aviation sector, defining the roles and responsibilities involved in developing and implementing national legislation, licensing and overseeing service providers and other stakeholders engaged in civil aviation cybersecurity. In this regard, Oman is submitting a WP and an IP on its experience in cybersecurity under the relevant A41 Agenda Item.

**As for efforts made to *Foster a viable and economically sustainable civil aviation system***, Oman's 2021-2025 Civil Aviation Strategy provides for the economic development and sustainability of civil aviation as an objective under its ambitious *Afaq (Horizons)* Programme, launched in September 2021. The goal of the Programme is to achieve, directly and indirectly, economic sustainability in civil aviation by establishing a rigorous governance system, developing human resources and enhancing the capacity of the Civil Aviation Authority in the areas of airport economics, air navigation, digitization and innovation, as well as promoting investment in aviation through public-private partnerships.

Additionally, Oman took measures to stimulate the aviation sector and leverage available opportunities to reduce operational costs and improve the efficiency of air operators and aviation service providers.

In line with the deeply-entrenched principles of its policy, Oman upheld its reliable and active partnership with ICAO and other states to ensure sustainability, efficiency and regulated flow of air traffic in both normal and exceptional circumstances. Oman will continue to undertake this role in conformity with its policies and commitments to the Chicago Convention principles. Oman has submitted a WP on air transport's economic challenges and sustainability during pandemics and global crises.

**In connection with the Strategic Objective of *Environment Protection and minimizing the harmful effects of civil aviation on the environment***, Oman announced that it was voluntarily joining the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA). Since then several measures were taken, including adopting appropriate legislation to implement CORSIA, beginning with the Amendment of the 2019 Civil Aviation Act and the promulgation of the *Civil Aviation Regulation No. 39.3* in February 2019 to provide for the implementation of CORSIA and its related requirements. Oman further amended its civil aviation regulations to include an obligation to minimize aircraft engine emissions, limit operational noise and ensure that instrument flight procedure designs in Oman are environmentally acceptable.

During the pilot phase of CORSIA (2021-2023), Oman completed the requirements of developing, reviewing and approving inspection plans of air operator emissions in accordance with ICAO Doc 9501, Appendix 1 demonstrating compliance with CORSIA. Oman constantly provides ICAO with the required data through the Central CORSIA Registry (CCR).

A recently-formed committee has been mandated to review environment protection policies and programmes in the field of international aviation. The committee is presently developing the Oman Action Plan for CO2 Emissions Reduction.

With regard to the Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) for International Aviation CO2 Emission Reduction, Oman has renewed its commitment to work with ICAO and its Member States to attain the envisaged goal based on an international consensus. To that end, Oman is keenly employing several tools and technologies as well as various appropriate alternatives in line with its national plans. Oman is also investing in the production of green hydrogen to generate environment-friendly renewable energy.

On behalf of the Sultanate of Oman, we emphasize our commitment to supporting ICAO initiatives and its efforts to promote civil aviation.

To conclude, air transport has proved to be the fastest and safest means of transportation. We are convinced that the development of aviation increasingly depends on cooperation, communication and coordination among states, organizations and stakeholders within bilateral as well as multi-lateral frameworks and in conformity with ICAO policies, frameworks and activities. Such efforts bring together visions and aspirations, and present solutions that serve the interest of civil aviation. Furthermore, comprehensive and practical knowledge will ensure that ICAO SARPs are properly implemented.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address you and for your attention. I wish you and ICAO every success and prosperity, pledging to continue to work with you in pursuit of a thriving future for this promising and vital sector.

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