



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

A41-WP/407¹

P/12

29/8/22

(Information paper)

English and Spanish only

ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

PLENARY

Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States

STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA

(Presented by Cuba)

President of the Assembly
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano, President of the Council
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar, Secretary General
Your Excellencies Ministers of Transport and Civil Aviation
Heads of Delegation
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Cuba, I would like to convey to you the profound greetings of the Cuban Civil Aviation.

We are holding this Assembly in a complex international scenario, because in addition to the political, economic and social problems faced by International Civil Aviation, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are added.

In this scenario, adaptability and resilience are essential, and the Contracting States will continue to fully support the Organization in the exercise of its functions and its governing authority in international civil aviation.

The Republic of Cuba, ICAO's founding member state, respects and complies with the principles of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and the obligations derived therefrom, the strategic objectives of ICAO, working in coordination with the North American, Central American, Caribbean and South American Regional Offices, as well as the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission.

In line with all of the above, Cuba fully supports the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Program and its Continuous Supervision approach, where it achieves an effective implementation of critical elements of over 92%.

In relation to the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Program, in March 2019 we were audited in a second cycle. The corrective action plan submitted to ICAO is already at 90% compliance.

¹ English and Spanish versions provided by Cuba.

On the other hand, Cuba recognizes and promotes ICAO's leading work on issues related to the impact of aviation on the environment and how to mitigate it. However, as expressed in the report of the UN Panel of Experts on Climate Change, this is not about the future, it is about the present. Today, more than three billion people are highly vulnerable.

Mr. President, in the current context, in which viable solutions are being jointly sought for the development of international civil aviation, Cuba regrets being forced once again to denounce before this Assembly that the United States of America, a signatory country to the Civil Aviation Convention, continues to apply the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba. This has been for many years the central axis of the policy of the government of that country towards our country, but in an opportunistic manner it has been intensified in the context of the pandemic.

At each ICAO Assembly in recent years, Cuba has been denouncing that these actions hinder the sustainable economic development of international air transportation and, in particular, have a great impact on developing countries. The unjust and discriminatory U.S. blockade hinders Cuba's development in all areas, including civil aviation. This is materialized in the impossibility of accessing aircraft, either through purchase or lease, as well as their components, limiting and limits, in addition, access to certain digital communication platforms.

Likewise, any investment or modernization process in any of our airports is hindered, preventing banking transactions and withholding payments. To give you an idea, the damages caused in the last two years amount to more than 174 million dollars. This is in clear violation of the provisions of the preamble of the Chicago Convention and its Articles 44, 77 and 79.

The aforementioned contradicts the professional and respectful relations shown by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) of the United States towards our country.

Ladies and Gentleman,

As representative of the Cuban State, I reiterate our denunciation before this Assembly, and I once again request the support of the international aviation community to demand that the government of the United States of America cease this unjust blockade.

I also urge the ICAO Council, as the representative of all member states, to adopt concrete measures that would contribute to the elimination of these unilateral and extraterritorial actions. This would be beneficial to the development of international air transport and would be in line with the No Country Left Behind strategy.

For our part, we ratify our commitment to the ICAO in compliance with its principles, never remaining silent in the face of injustice.

Thank you.

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