



**DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION-MIDDLE EAST REGION
FIFTH MEETING (DGCA-MID/5)**

(Kuwait, 4-6 November 2019)

Agenda Item 7: Environmental Protection

AVIATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

(Presented by AACO)

SUMMARY

The aim of this working paper is to provide a summary of the recent developments in the area of addressing aviation environmental footprint, and sheds light on essential issues affecting Arab airlines while reemphasizing that the industry's adopted scheme (CORSIA) complements a broader package of measures including aircraft technologies, operational improvements and sustainable aviation fuels. Hence we call upon governments to assist the aviation industry in achieving its goals without adding any economic burden to its growth.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Air transport industry plays an essential role in driving economic and social development; thus international aviation provides a crucial network for global and timely transportation, which makes it essential for global trade and tourism. By facilitating tourism, air transport also helps generate economic growth and reduce poverty while providing employment opportunities.

1.2 In view of its vital role to the economy, emissions from international aviation are projected to increase as a result of the continued growth of air transport.

1.3 ICAO 40th Assembly confirmed through Resolution A40/17 that the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) is the only global Market-Based Measure applying to CO₂ emissions from international aviation, and specified that it is the case to avoid a patchwork of duplicative national or regional MBMs.

1.4 In addition, ICAO 39th Assembly resolution stipulated, amongst other things, that market-based measures (MBMs) should not be duplicative and that international aviation carbon emissions should be accounted for only once.

1.5 However, and in spite of the aviation industry's action against climate change to reduce its environmental footprint and cap its net emissions at 2020 levels, we still witness the application of national and regional frameworks on top of the global scheme, that is translated in the attempt of some governments to use international aviation as a potential source for the mobilization of revenue to their treasuries

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 In Europe, the European Union Emission Trading Scheme (EU ETS), which was originally imposed on international flights to and from the bloc and non-European states, has been put on hold until 2023 for flights to and from the EU (whereby this period is aligned with the end of the Pilot Phase of CORSIA). The scheme however is still applicable on international flights within the bloc, whereby 8 Arab airlines will be subject to the EU ETS as they operate international flights within the EU.

2.2 In addition, many European governments are either considering the application of aviation taxes (Austria, Germany, Italy, Sweden, and the United Kingdom), or have announced taxes and charges on aviation under the banner of the environment such as France and Switzerland.

2.3 The above practices in the EU will have an adverse effect on Arab airlines, mainly:

- a) Increased financial burden without any commitment to use the funds generated from taxes and charges to address emissions from aviation.
- b) Double counting of emissions falling within the applicability of both the EU ETS and CORSIA.

2.4 AACO has been supporting a global mechanism to address emissions from international civil aviation since its outset, and continues to do so through collaboration with ACAO, IATA, and ICAO to ensure that involved stakeholders are prepared to implement the global scheme.

2.5 This comes from Arab airlines' commitment to address their environmental footprint through the industry's goal of freezing CO₂ growth at 2020 levels.

2.6 On the same front, the mitigation plans of aviation's impact on the environment include a role for governments to play, i.e. the development and modernization of airspace capacity and infrastructure in order to optimize flights and reduce delays.

2.7 In that regards, and given the significant restrictions in some parts of our region with regards to air routes, airspace availability, and the airspace infrastructure in general, it is estimated that the reform of those will have an important positive impact on CO₂ emissions in the region.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) call on States to expedite and intensify efforts to enhance the airspace infrastructure in the region to support the sustainability of the air transport industry;
- b) call on States to support Arab airlines' efforts in their calls that any financial returns from environmental taxes and charges be invested back to mitigate the environmental footprint of the aviation sector; and
- c) call on States to support the development of low-carbon sustainable fuel and its commercial feasibility.

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