ASSEMBLY — 35TH SESSION

ECONOMIC COMMISSION

Agenda Item 29:   **Facilitation**

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN PROTECTING THE SECURITY AND INTEGRITY OF PASSPORTS AND OTHER TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

SUMMARY

This paper reports on the progress made since the 33rd Session of the Assembly regarding the work being undertaken by the Council in assisting States to maintain the integrity and security of their passports and other travel documents.

Action by the Assembly is in paragraph 4.

REFERENCES

Doc 9798, A33-EC
Doc 9790, *Assembly Resolutions in Force*
Doc 9303, *Machine Readable Travel Documents*

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   At the 33rd Session of the Assembly in 2001, the Council reported on the progress made by ICAO since the previous Assembly Session in enhancing the effectiveness of measures against passport fraud as called for in Resolution A32-18.

1.2   The Assembly noted that ICAO's principal activities in support of the Resolution were related to its work on specifications for Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs), including the development of minimum security measures in the production of such documents and emerging specifications for incorporating biometric technology in MRTDs to permit machine-assisted identity confirmation. It was also noted that certain amendments to the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) of Annex 9 — *Facilitation,* had been recommended by the Facilitation Panel, aimed at strengthening cooperation among member States in combatting passport fraud.

1.3   The Assembly agreed that the text of Resolution A32-18 be incorporated into Resolution A33-19: *Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies in the air transport field, (Appendix D, Section III),* requesting that the Council and Contracting States continue their work to combat passport fraud.

2.   **REPORT OF ACTION FOLLOWING THE 33RD SESSION**

2.1   Considerable progress has been made since the 33rd Session of the Assembly. Accomplishments to date are described below.

2.2   **New MRTD specifications**

2.2.1   In February 2002, ICAO published the 2nd edition of Doc 9303, *Machine Readable Travel Documents*, Part 3 — *Size 1 and Size 2 Official Travel Documents*. The many new specifications include the addition of other data storage technologies, such as bar codes or integrated circuits (ICs), in order to supplement, but not replace, the mandatory machine readable zone of data presented in an Optical Character Recognition type font, and accommodate encoded biometric images for identity confirmation as well as authentication functions to enhance the security of travel documents in card format.

2.2.2   In February 2003, the 5th edition of Doc 9303, Part 1 — *Machine Readable Passports*, was published. This edition contains a new "informative annex" on minimum security standards, advising issuing States and organizations on the security features which can be incorporated into an MRTD to provide reasonable protection against the threats of counterfeit, fraudulent alteration, fraudulent copying, or fraudulent document issue. Another new annex outlines the use of contactless ICs in machine readable passports for the purpose of accommodating biometric images.

2.2.3   The 3rd edition of Doc 9303, Part 2, *Machine Readable Visas* (MRVs) is expected to be published in 2004. As was done in the revisions of Parts 1 and 3, the new edition of Part 2 will make provision for identity confirmation with an MRV and specify structural features to enhance the security of the document. In addition, two policy changes will be reflected in the new specifications: a provision that only one person be identified on each visa, and a mandatory space in the MRV format for the visa holder's portrait or other identification feature. These changes are intended to deter the misuse of a visa by someone other than the rightful holder.

2.3   **Identity confirmation with biometrics**

2.3.1   In May 2003 the Air Transport Committee adopted a four-part recommendation of the TAG/MRTD for a "global, harmonized blueprint" for integrating biometric identification into machine readable passports and other MRTDs. The blueprint includes the selection of face as the primary biometric and fingerprint and iris as secondary biometrics, the use of the contactless IC as the medium for storing the biometric image(s), a logical data structure for programming the IC, and a modified public key infrastructure (PKI) for securing data in the IC against unauthorized alteration.

2.3.2   This initiative of ICAO provides member States the specifications and guidance they need, to implement a worldwide, interoperable system of identity confirmation with MRTDs, in particular with machine readable passports. Technical details of the blueprint are presented in four technical reports, and are being processed into specifications for future incorporation into Doc 9303.

2.4   **Guidance on passport issuance**

2.4.1   To provide an additional layer of security and further enhance the integrity of passports, the Lyon/Roma Group of the G8, which includes experts from the TAG/MRTD, has developed recommended practices to enhance the security of the handling and issuance processes for machine readable and other passports, in order to deter fraudulent issuance and counterfeiting. On the recommendation of the TAG/MRTD, ICAO will publish these as guidance material and promote their implementation.

2.5   **Standards and Recommended Practices for Annex 9**

2.5.1   Amendments to Annex 9 SARPs emphasizing standardization of travel documents, and a new standard requiring that a separate passport be issued to each person, were adopted by the Council and published in the Eleventh Edition of the Annex in July 2002.

2.5.2   The 12th Session of the Facilitation Division (FAL/12) (Cairo, 22 March to 1 April 2004) made recommendations for new and upgraded provisions to enhance the security of travel documents, including:

   a) a new Standard, that Contracting States begin issuing machine readable passports (MRPs) no later than 1 April 2010 (currently, 101 Contracting States have reported that they issue MRPs);

   b) a requirement that Contracting States regularly update security features in new versions of their travel documents, to guard against their misuse and to facilitate detection of cases where such documents have been unlawfully altered, replicated or issued;

   c) an obligation of States to establish controls on the lawful creation and issuance of travel documents in order to safeguard against the theft of their stocks and the misappropriation of newly issued travel documents; and

   d) a recommendation that States incorporate biometric data in machine readable passports, visas and other official travel documents.

Action on these recommendations will be taken by the Council at its 174th Session in 2005.

2.6   **Support from other international organizations**

2.6.1   ICAO leadership in this field has been acknowledged and supported by recent actions and decisions of other organizations, particularly the following:

   a) United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) obliges all States to prevent the movement of terrorists by effective border controls and controls on the issuance of travel documents, and through measures for preventing counterfeiting, forgery or fraudulent use of travel documents. The UN's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) monitors the implementation of, and assesses States' compliance with, this resolution;

   b) the work plan of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) of the Organization of American States (OAS) calls for action by member States on the quality of identity and travel documents;

   c) in June 2002, the European Commission (EC) amended its 1995 regulation laying down a uniform format for visas, adopting specifications to integrate a photograph and the name of the holder in order to upgrade the security of the European Union visa and harmonize it with the ICAO format set forth in Doc 9303, Part 2;

   d) in June 2003, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted a standard format for the Seafarers' Identity Document, based on ICAO Doc 9303;

e) in September 2003, the EC adopted a legal framework for integration of biometrics into its uniform formats for visas and for residence permits for third-country nationals. The EC approach follows very closely the ICAO blueprint;

f) in November 2003, the Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) decided that all OSCE participating States should implement ICAO's MRTD specifications and travel document security measures, as well as the recommended practices for handling and issuance of passports mentioned in paragraph 2.4.1 above; and

g) the appropriate working group of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) continued throughout the triennium to assist the TAG/MRTD in the development of ICAO technical specifications and in processing these for endorsement as ISO standards.

3. **FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION[1]**

3.1   The existing staff resources available under Programme 3.8, Facilitation, of the draft Programme Budget 2005-2007 do not provide for continuation of work on development and implementation of machine-readable travel documents to the extent needed. There is a shortfall of up to one full-time Professional post. Consequently, continuation of this work will in part depend on voluntary contributions to the AVSEC Mechanism.

4. **ACTION BY THE ASSEMBLY**

4.1   The Assembly is invited to:

a) note the progress made since the 33rd Session of the Assembly regarding the work being undertaken by the Council in assisting States to maintain the integrity and security of their passports and other travel documents; and

b) agree that the Council and member States should continue their work in this field as a matter of high priority.

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[1] This information is presented only to indicate the estimated financial impact of the proposed action. The funds allocated to this proposed action will depend upon the final form of the Programme Budget of the Organization for 2005-2006-2007 approved by the Assembly.