

FALC 2025 REVISED DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

Doha, Qatar, 17 April 2025

DOHA DECLARATION ON FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT

We, the Ministers, and Heads of Delegation, meeting at the Ministerial Segment of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Facilitation Conference (FALC2025) held in Doha, Qatar, on 17 April 2025, in the presence of senior representatives of the aviation industry:

Recalling ICAO Assembly Resolutions A41-17: *Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies, related to facilitation*, A41-16: *Development and implementation of facilitation provisions — combatting human trafficking*, A41-15: *Accessibility in International Civil Aviation*, A41-14: *Assistance to victims of aviation accidents and their families*, A41-12: *Maintaining health and sustaining safe international air transport during public health emergencies affecting air travel*; and A41-11: *Declaration on air transport facilitation affirming global commitment to enable the safe and efficient recovery of aviation from the COVID-19 pandemic, and to make aviation more resilient in the future*, that enshrine the global commitment of Member States and ICAO to enhance air transport facilitation;

Affirming the critical role of air transport facilitation in ensuring the efficient and seamless movement of passengers, crew, cargo, and aircraft across borders, and noting the continuing importance of Annex 9 — *Facilitation to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, 1944* (Annex 9) in this regard;

Recognizing the impact of recent global challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, on the aviation industry and the necessity to incorporate lessons learned and assure a more harmonized global approach to enhance the resilience and future-proofing of international air transport;

Acknowledging the ongoing work of ICAO in leading global efforts to standardize and improve air transport facilitation measures through the development of Annex 9, the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme (TRIP) Strategy, and the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) programmes, as well as through the establishment of technical specifications, policies, guidance material, capacity building and assistance, and collaboration with relevant international organizations;

Acknowledging that air transport has an essential role in connecting people, facilitating trade, improving sustainable social, and economic, development and consequently the quality of life, while ensuring that international civil aviation continues to contribute to the achievement of the relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

Emphasizing the need for Member States to support actively ICAO's efforts to improve air transport facilitation through voluntary contributions, including the secondment of staff, and to promote closer collaboration with national and international agencies, including immigration, border control, customs, and public health entities; and

Acknowledging that humanitarian response in major crisis relies heavily on swift transportation of aid and relief by air.

THEREFORE, URGE STATES, ICAO, INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, INDUSTRY AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS TO:

Global Facilitation Governance

- a) Emphasize the importance of air transport facilitation to ensuring a safe, secure and sustainable civil aviation sector, and promote the implementation of Facilitation Standards and Recommended Practices to achieve global alignment and harmonization of passenger, crew, aircraft, and cargo processing;
- b) Engage actively in international frameworks and decision-making fora, including the ICAO Facilitation Panel, in order to streamline and continually improve facilitation and traveller identification;
- c) Strengthen mechanisms for establishing robust partnerships with immigration and border control agencies, customs, public health authorities and all stakeholders involved in the management of border crossing in order to foster a unified and comprehensive approach to air transport facilitation;
- d) Develop a strategic, prioritized, forward-looking vision that addresses emerging trends, technological advancements, and global imperatives such as seamless movement of people and goods, inclusivity and sustainability;
- e) Commit to actively engage in the development of relevant international legal and administrative frameworks that support the evolving needs of international civil aviation and facilitation, particularly in the areas of civil registration, digital identity, biometric recognition, advance passenger information, passenger name record data, and seamless passenger and crew processing;
- f) Consider sustainable funding mechanisms that ensure the long-term viability of facilitation programmes and the continuous improvement of air transport;
- g) Actively engage in activities and take measures that support the achievement of the relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- h) Work closely to support the value and importance of ICAO's 'No Country Left Behind' strategic goal that aims to help States and provide expertise and resources through the provision of targeted and effective air transport facilitation assistance and capacity-building to States in need;
- i) Give humanitarian missions the maximum access to airspace and airports and work with ICAO to review and enhance the ICAO provisions to facilitate the operations of humanitarian flights;

Facilitating the Passenger Journey and Protecting Rights

- j) Prioritize the inclusion and accessibility of air transport services to persons with visible and non-visible disabilities and reduced mobility by ensuring their involvement in decision-making processes, fostering data collection and sharing, and advancing personnel training, among other efforts in order to achieve a disability-inclusive air transport system;
- k) Commit to issuing machine readable travel documents for refugees and stateless persons (Convention Travel Documents (CTDs) in compliance with relevant Annex 9 provisions;
- l) Establish legislation, regulations and/or policies to support victims of civil aviation accidents and their family members and advance the ongoing implementation and evolution of ICAO's work programme and priorities related to assistance to aircraft accident victims and their families, and support ICAO's leadership role in this regard;
- m) Advocate for States to ratify the *Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International*

carriage by Air (Montréal Convention 1999), which provides a comprehensive and unified framework for the equitable, fair and convenient compensation of claims by passengers and shippers on international flights;

n) Advocate for States to ratify and implement the Montréal Protocol 2014 and consider the recommendations in the ICAO *Manual on the legal Aspects of Unruly and Disruptive Passengers* (Doc 10117);

o) Take measures to ensure that procedures in place to combat trafficking in persons are based on a comprehensive policy and include reporting systems and relevant competent authorities' points of contact, and to recommend appropriate training of airport and aircraft operators' personnel in direct contact with the travelling public;

p) Improve passenger travel experience and cargo facilitation by enhancing efficiency of the movement of aircraft, passengers, crew and cargo;

q) Take measures and or actions to address air transport Facilitation issues related to inadmissible persons, refugees and stateless persons by partnering with national and international human rights institutions;

Data, Innovation and Skills

r) Take a strategic, proactive and collaborative approach to the implementation of innovative technologies that can improve all aspects of air transport facilitation, including border control, by ensuring that endorsed technologies are properly implemented, generalized and used across all aspects of Facilitation, to enhance processes related to passengers, crew, aircraft, cargo and mail, and by considering the adoption and integration of innovative technologies that address existing Facilitation challenges;

s) Strengthen ICAO's leadership role in the ongoing implementation and evolution of the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme (TRIP) Strategy, including the development of advanced technical specifications for travel documents and digital credentials ensuring data interoperability, and mechanisms for their efficient validation;

t) Acknowledge the various specialized skillsets needed for air transport facilitation and focus on recruitment and training efforts;

u) Work to attract the next generation of facilitation professionals while promoting policies and initiatives that enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion, including efforts to bridge the gender gap within the aviation industry;

v) Support ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) and its active use internationally, advocating for its use in both governmental and private sectors to provide the foundation for the verification of travel documents and related digital credentials globally;

w) Encourage robust partnerships with immigration and border control agencies, customs, public health authorities to optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of the flow of passengers and goods; and

Health

x) Work collaboratively with the public health sector and relevant stakeholders to develop a national aviation plan in preparation for the outbreak of a communicable disease posing a public health risk, ensuring that air transport can continue safely and efficiently in all circumstances; this plan should be developed in line with the World Health Organizations' International Health Regulations.