

**STATEMENT OF ICAO AT THE UNITED NATIONS SECOND
BIENNIAL MEETING OF STATES TO CONSIDER THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO
PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

(UN Headquarters, New York, 11 to 15 July 2005)

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Observers:

On behalf of the International Civil Aviation Organization, I wish to express our thanks for the opportunity to attend the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. At the same time, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election as Chairman of the meeting.

As one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations, ICAO strongly supports the programme of action and appreciates the considerable efforts and resources devoted to its implementation. The illicit manufacture, transfer, circulation and use of small arms and light weapons pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the world. Of particular concern to ICAO is the illicit use of the man-portable air defence systems, commonly known as MANPADS, which has posed a specific threat to civil aviation. In the past three decades, they have been deployed against civil aircraft in over 40 incidents, more than half of which were successful. These attacks present a serious threat to aviation security. In addition to the tragic death toll, they also caused societal disruption, lead to grave economic consequences, and would potentially undermine the public confidence for air travel.

The safety and security of international civil aviation are overriding objectives of ICAO. ICAO has adopted under its auspices five international legal instruments on aviation security. One of the instruments, namely, the 1991 *Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection*, established the marking system for the explosives. ICAO has also developed international standards and recommended practices in the form of Annexes to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*. With regard to MANPADS, ICAO believes that concerted efforts and responsible policies on the part of all governments are required in order to control these

weapons and prevent their illicit use. On its part, ICAO has been taking certain actions, including development or amendment of the standards, recommended practices and procedures, which will incorporate preventive measures on the ground. A secure ICAO AVSEC website has been developed dealing with pragmatic and cost-effective ways and means of implementing counter-measures for the MANPADS threat as additional sensitive guidance material accessible to all States, and industry stakeholders, upon request. During its 35th Session held in September/October 2004, the ICAO Assembly adopted Resolution A35-11, which, among other things, urges all Contracting States of ICAO to take necessary measures to exercise strict and effective control on the import, export, transfer or retransfer, as well as storage of MANPADS. Further, it calls upon all Contracting States to take necessary measures to ensure the destruction of non-authorized MANPADS in their territory.

ICAO also participated in the work of the United Nations Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We are pleased to note that the draft international instrument recommended by the Working Group specifically covers portable anti-aircraft guns, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a calibre of less than 100 mm.

The draft international instrument does not cover ammunition. We believe that the ammunition for MANPADS, if not properly controlled, may also pose threat to civil aviation. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Working Group recommends that the issue of small arms and light weapons ammunition be addressed in a comprehensive manner as part of a separate process conducted within the framework of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman, civil aviation has been the primary target of terrorist acts. It is well-known that an extensive use of small arms and light weapons has been made for such acts. In order to combat terrorism effectively, international community must act to prevent the illicit acquisition of small arms and light weapons. In this respect, ICAO will continue to pledge its support for the full implementation of the programme of action of the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.