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RESOURCES, INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORT

Presented by the Representative
of the
INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

In the study of transport problems as they relate to the economic development of countries in West Africa, presented to this Session in Working Paper No. 63, the reference to air transport in Chapter 2 Part VI is of great interest to ICAO, whose past experience has clearly demonstrated civil aviation's potential contribution to economic development, particularly in countries whose resources are not yet fully developed.

One cannot fail to recognize the importance of the contribution made by civil air transport to the development of the great African continent during the past quarter of a century. The spectacular developments now taking place on this continent leave no doubt that in every African State, air transport must inevitably be exploited to a degree unforeseeable a few years ago. This process has already commenced and the time seems opportune to invite the attention of this Commission to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, drafted in 1944 when the world as a whole was faced with, and not well prepared for, an immediate and tremendous expansion of civil aviation activity. The Preamble to this Convention seems particularly applicable to the African continent at this time. This reads:

"WHEREAS the future development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world, yet its abuse can become a threat to general security; and

WHEREAS it is desirable to avoid friction and to promote that cooperation between nations and peoples upon which the peace of the world depends;

THEREFORE, the undersigned governments having agreed on certain principles and arrangements in order that international civil aviation may be developed in a safe and orderly manner and that international air transport services may be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and operated soundly and economically;

Have accordingly concluded this Convention to that end."

Fifty-two States sponsored the Convention on International Civil Aviation. All recognized that every State is rightly anxious to exploit its sovereign airspace and aviation activities to its own best advantage but they foresaw however that, since civil aviation is basically international in character, coordination and regulation were essential if chaos were to be avoided. Since 1944, during which time the number of ICAO's Member States has increased to eighty-three, the wisdom of those who envisaged the need for international agreement on civil aviation affairs has been confirmed.

In the past, ICAO has been consulted from time to time by one or other of the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions about the aviation aspects of such matters as locust control, communications, cartography and the technical training of personnel. It may be, however, that the time has come to consider replacing these ad hoc arrangements by a closer association between the Regional Economic Commissions and ICAO, and it should be noted that at the ECOSOC Meeting in Geneva last year, statements were made, and resolutions passed, which drew attention to the increasing responsibility of Regional Economic Commissions for coordinating the programmes of agencies, for the promotion of joint planning and similar matters.

In this connection it may be recalled that the Conference of Independent African States, at its meeting in Addis Ababa in June last year, recommended that the Council for African Economic Cooperation call a conference of civil aviation authorities. Terms of reference for this proposed conference were outlined and although these are phrased in general terms, there is no doubt that much of the work envisaged has already been dealt with by ICAO. For example, some of the subjects lis-

ted for attention are covered by ICAO International Standards and Recommended Practices which have been in force for some time - accepted by all Member States and by a number of States which have not yet become members of ICAO. Other subjects listed, while not yet covered by ICAO Standards, have long been studied and the conclusions drawn from these studies have been published. In the circumstances ICAO Member States concerned will no doubt undertake further studies or action on these matters only in collaboration with ICAO and States concerned which are not yet members of ICAO will no doubt wish to inform themselves on what has already been achieved by ICAO in these aeronautical fields. If the projected Conference of Civil Aviation Authorities is to be convened ICAO would be pleased to assist in the preparation of papers and would welcome an invitation to attend.

ICAO's charter is the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation of 1944 and under the terms of that Convention its work is related to almost every aspect of international civil aviation and consequently, to most of the problems of regional and domestic civil aviation. Major tasks with which ICAO has been charged relate to:

- General principles of sovereignty over airspace;
- Right of flight over other States;
- Right to demand specific agreement for certain types of flight;
- Nationality of aircraft;
- Facilitation of air transport and air navigation;
- Provision of air navigation services to aircraft i.e.
 - aerodromes, air traffic control, radio aids to navigation, communications, meteorology, etc.;
- Airworthiness of aircraft;
- Competency of flight crews;
- Standardization of technical specifications, procedures and requirements;
- Mutual recognition of national standards etc.

In its early days, ICAO made strenuous efforts to liberalize air transport by attempting to establish a multilateral Convention on Air Transport Rights. This attempt has not yet succeeded and so, for the

time being, International Air Transport is conducted on the basis of a large number of bilateral agreements by which the rights of individual States to take up and set down passengers and cargo in other States are established. ICAO continues to seek a solution to the problem and, in the meantime, has established certain principles to which Member States are expected to adhere in drawing up bilateral agreements, all of which they undertake to register with the Organization.

One of the most important functions of ICAO is related to the facilities and services for air navigation by which the safety, and the economic and efficient operation, of flights along the world's air routes is assured. By their nature these essential requirements must be agreed internationally. They relate primarily to specifications for aerodromes, aeronautical communications of all kinds, radio aids to navigation, aeronautical meteorological services and to the services for controlling the rapidly increasing traffic on the world air routes. Air traffic is not only increasing greatly in volume but is frequently operating at speeds double those of a few years ago. ICAO's International Standards, Recommended Practices procedures and specifications must therefore be continuously reviewed in order to keep pace with, or better still anticipate, essential aeronautical requirements.

The Standards and Recommended Practices, which govern these "Air navigation facilities and services" on a world-wide basis have been developed, and are kept up to date, by means of a continuing series of technical meetings at the ICAO Headquarters in Montreal at which aeronautical specialists from Member States, aided by experts from the ICAO Secretariat, work together. After approval by the ICAO Council and acceptance by Member States these Standards and Recommended Practices are published as Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. On occasion, and these have been relatively few, Member States may find it necessary to deviate from these Annexes in their national practices. This is acceptable provided that the differences are formally notified to ICAO. In such cases ICAO is required to promulgate the differences to all Member States in the form of a supplement to the relevant Annex.

Based on the International Standards and Recommended Practices, specific requirements for each of the eight "air navigation regions" into which ICAO subdivides the world, are agreed at Regional Air Navigation Meetings by States concerned - that is to say, by the States which are to provide the requirements and by States whose aircraft operate in the Region under consideration. After approval by the ICAO Council the consolidated requirements are known as the "Regional Plan".

ICAO's regional work commenced in 1946 and is primarily concerned with the actual provision of the recommended air navigation facilities and services which form the Regional Plans. Regional Offices are required to advise and assist States, chiefly in connection with their obligations under the terms of the regional plans. Much of this work is dealt with by correspondence but the small team of experts attached to each Regional Office is fully occupied in visiting States which have requested advice or assistance. Of the five ICAO regional offices those in Cairo and Paris are most concerned with civil aviation in the African Continent. The Paris office is responsible for liaison with many States in West Africa and the Cairo office for other African States. Implementation of ICAO's "Regional Plan" for Africa is monitored and coordinated by the Cairo Office.

As a matter of general interest it might be mentioned that the current ICAO Regional Plan for Africa includes:

- 117 Aerodromes (110)
- 139 Established air routes (21)
- 200 Radio circuits between stations on the ground specifically for aeronautical purposes (181)
- 328 Electronic Aids to air navigation (260)
- 127 Meteorological forecasting stations for aeronautical purposes (104).

Figures in parenthesis indicate the requirements of the Plan as determined at the previous Regional Air Navigation Meeting in 1953. Apart from the great increase in the number of African air routes, these

figures are not spectacular. However, they do not reveal that gross weights of aircraft on the routes have increased from 76,000 kilograms to 142,882 kilograms or that trunk route speeds have almost doubled and that in order to deal with this situation radio-teletype is everywhere superseding manually operated radio circuits and modern electronic radio aids are rapidly replacing aids that were adequate only a few years ago.

All this of course highlights the urgent need for well qualified technical personnel in the Region. Shortage of trained technical personnel, combined in many countries with lack of a properly organized civil aviation directorate, is today the most serious handicap to the development of air transport in Africa. ICAO, through its Technical Assistance programme is doing its utmost to alleviate this situation by assisting and advising Government departments concerned and by giving intensive technical training to nationals, both in their own countries and, by means of fellowships, in the more technically advanced countries overseas. This training process cannot be hurried. Furthermore, it is not always easy to recruit candidates with the educational background, and familiarity with relevant preparatory subjects, required of a technical trainee, particularly since these qualifications must be combined with an exceptionally high sense of personal responsibility. Another aspect of this problem is the fact that a proportion of trainees after graduation, or even during the course of their training, find that their newly acquired knowledge of mathematics and perhaps of the English language, make them outstanding among others of the same age group and basic educational background, with the result that they find more lucrative employment and are lost to civil aviation. An analysis made recently by ICAO indicates that in the less developed countries the gap between the number of technical posts to be filled and the number of qualified technicians available to fill them is actually widening. This problem is being studied as a matter of urgency but the solution appears to be largely a matter for the States concerned.

The work of the Regional Offices is closely associated with ICAO's participation in the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical

Assistance, whereby experts in the various aeronautical fields are recruited by ICAO and posted to States who have requested this form of technical aid. At the present time there are forty-three ICAO technical experts serving in six African States - Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Morocco, Tunisia and the United Arab Republic. The ICAO Technical Assistance Programme has always concentrated primarily on technical training and is, as a general rule, a long term project in the country assisted, the composition of TA Missions being changed, as trainees graduate in one specialised field, and training is concentrated in other fields.

ICAO has recently been nominated by the U.N. Special Fund as executing agency for a number of its projects. Among these projects are aviation technical training institutions, in Tunisia, Morocco and the United Arab Republic.

ICAO is anxious to establish and maintain close liaison with the Economic Commission for Africa in order to keep itself informed of the Commission's work and particularly its future plans so that the ICAO Council can be aware in good time of developments in which assistance might be offered to the States of Africa. The lack, or inadequacy, of surface transport in large areas of Africa leaves no doubt that air transport must play a special role in the development of the country and ICAO would be very willing to cooperate with the Economic Commission for Africa and other agencies, in any studies they may decide to undertake, particularly those relating to the coordination of the various forms of transport. ICAO's financial resources are strictly limited, but the Organization might be able to offer specialised assistance in projects such as surveys of transport and communications, or surveys of civil aviation development, which States consider might facilitate development of their resources. These are merely illustrations of one type of assistance that might be requested but there are of course, others. It is therefore suggested that in planning the great developments now envisaged in Africa, States might bear in mind the possibilities offered by the International Civil Aviation Organization.