

Africa and ME aviation security

A high-level Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, during week commencing 20 August endorsed a new Africa and Middle East Aviation Security Roadmap to align future programmes and targets with ICAO's new Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP). This was reported from ICSAO in Montreal at the week's end.

In his address to the 27 attending Ministers and 35 Directors General of Civil Aviation, representing some 45 African and Middle Eastern Member States, ICAO Council President Dr Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu stressed that ICAO's new Global Aviation Security Plan sets out key priorities where ICAO, States, and others should now focus their urgent attention, resources and efforts, as well as corresponding actions at the global, national and local levels.

The president reflected: *'ICAO recognized long ago that it is imperative that all States have optimized access to the significant socio-economic benefits of safe, secure and reliable global connectivity, and more effective compliance with our global standards, policies and plans is the very first and most fundamental step on that journey.'*

The main objective of the AFI and MID AVSEC Roadmap is to encourage and help guide the Africa and Middle East collaboration now needed. President Aliu therefore praised the commitments realized in Sharm El Sheikh as a critical first step which should be emulated worldwide as ICAO seeks similar commitments in aid of its coordinating efforts for global aviation security effectiveness and sustainability.

President Aliu added: *'The GASeP provides an ambitious framework while incorporating key themes from United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 2309, on Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts via aviation security, adopted in September 2016.'*

HE Sherif Fathi, the Minister of Civil Aviation for Egypt, declared the Ministerial conference open under the Patronage of President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, remarking: *'This Roadmap complements the important milestone we achieved in the region earlier this year through the Riyadh declaration. It also strongly supports the current AFI and MID SECFAL Plans and will be essential to improved regional cooperation and coordination to enhance aviation security in both Regions.'*

Minister Fathi thanked the ICAO President for the UN agency's leadership in aviation security, while commending the expanded role now being played by its Regional Offices in Africa and the Middle East.

Council President Aliu also took advantage of his mission to Egypt to award the State with an ICAO Council Presidential Certificate, in recognition of the State's recent commitments and actions to address aviation safety oversight priorities and improve the effective implementation (EI) of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

During his stay in Sharm El Sheikh, the President of the Council also held a number of bilateral meetings with senior government and aviation officials, including a meeting with Eng. Sherif Ismail, the Prime Minister of Egypt. Also in attendance during this meeting were Egyptian Minister Fathi and Mr. Mohamed Khalifa Rahma, ICAO's Regional Director for its Middle East Office in Cairo.

Picture caption

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