



ASSEMBLY — 40TH SESSION

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

Agenda Item 51: Status of ICAO Workforce and Human Resources Management

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES IN EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AVIATION

(Presented by the United Arab Emirates)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper aims at emphasizing the role of the UAE in supporting the International Civil Aviation Organization in meeting its strategic objectives that seek to empower women in the civil aviation sector through the adoption of the 5th goal the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and in implementing ICAO “Gender Equality” program.

This paper addresses the UAE's initiative to establish the Women in Aviation Association (**Shehana**)¹ which is a public-benefit association launched in August 2019 dealing with issues women are facing in civil aviation. The aim of this voluntary association is to attract and empower women and enhance their status in the civil aviation sector, as well as to cooperate with strategic partners to provide an attractive work environment. The association will work on a range of programs and initiatives that in turn seek to serve Emirati women in the first place, and women in all ICAO Member States in the future, through the exchange of experiences and the provision of programs enabling them to be at the forefront of leadership, in the spirit of the UAE's eagerness to adopt ICAO's strategic objectives and initiatives, including The United Nations and ICAO's NCLB “no country left behind ”

Action: The General Assembly is invited to:

- a) Request ICAO Secretariat to take into account the UAE's empowerment and leadership project for Women in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- b) Call on ICAO to work with Shehana in the development of future plans and programs to ensure the achievement of the 5th goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of ICAO Gender Equality Program, by examining the programs presented in para 2, and to develop a comprehensive action plan for sharing experiences and knowledge transfer in all aviation fields.
- c) Encourage Member States to take similar measures at the local and regional levels.

¹ Arabic and English versions provided by the United Arab Emirates.

² The Women in Aviation Association was named “Shehana” after the female falcon, specifically the most beautiful and fastest species of falcons, Al-Shaheen, which represents the emblem of the United Arab Emirates, and is characterized by strength, courage and pride. The female falcon awakens in us the sense of strength, wisdom, and the pursuit of goals in a strategic and tactical way.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Strategic Objectives:</i> | This working paper relates to supporting implementation strategy - Gender Equality |
| <i>Financial implications:</i> | N/A |
| <i>References:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C-WP/14361 • A36-27 on “Gender Equality” • Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development listing all the SDGs (Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 1/70. • Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 2/55) • International Women's Day • 8 March theme for 2016: Pledge for parity by 2030” Planet 50-50 by 2030: “Step It Up for Gender Equality” • WP/31 Under agenda item 51 |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The United Arab Emirates launched its national strategy for women's empowerment and Entrepreneurship (2015-2021).The strategy provides a general framework that guides all governmental, private and civil society institutions in the preparation of their respective plans and programs, in order to empower women to become pioneers and take initiatives, by participating in all areas of sustainable development process, hence improving their quality of life.

1.2 Pursuing its efforts to enhance the role of women in all domains, UAE established a Council for gender equality. This led to increasing the representation of women in the Federal National Council to 50%, thus strengthening the legislative, legal and parliamentary role of women in national development. The Council also adopted the Gender Balance Index in the government agencies “to emphasize the value of this balance and its impact in strengthening the work environment by giving equal opportunities for men and women in public affairs.

1.3 From the perspective of enhancing the role of women in the UAE civil aviation sector, women achieved equal participation as men in terms of representation in national, regional and international fora, including, for example, the appointment of Captain Aysha Al Hamili in 2009 as the first and youngest woman in ICAO Council - as Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates. The Representation of a number of Emirati women in the UAE Important Committees in various fields was also enhanced, such as the appointment of Ms. Wafa Al Obaidli (Security Committees), Engineer Mariam Al Balushi (Committee on environmental protection in the civil aviation sector), among others.

1.4 The UAE General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) supports programs that aim to attract and empower women internationally under the umbrella of the international cooperation program (ICAO Ready) such as the UAE Women Empowerment Program in Aviation and the UAE Fellowship Program. The GCCA also supports gender balance through “Flight Buds “initiative aimed at encouraging school students to embrace technical disciplines.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The United Arab Emirates affirms its support for the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal No. 5, which focuses on gender equality and women empowerment. It also supports the ICAO Secretariat Program for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women launched in 2017, which highlights the importance of: 1- Capacity-building and awareness-raising for gender equality; 2- Enhancing women representation; 3- Raising awareness and increasing accountability; 4- More engagement with external partners.

2.2 In line with achieving ICAO objectives and programs, and consistent with the UAE governmental directions on gender balance and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Women in Aviation Association called “Shehana” was established in August 2019, as a volunteer association to attract and empower women in the civil aviation sector, while cooperating with partners to provide an attractive working environment for women through conducting in-depth studies to understand the reasons for the scarcity of women in this sector.

2.3 The Women in Aviation Association (Shehana) will pursue a set of strategic objectives that will serve women in the aviation sector locally, regionally and internationally. These objectives are the following: 1- Creating legislations and policies in favour of women in the aviation sector in line with international best practices; 2- Developing joint initiatives to attract and empower women in the aviation sector; 3- Enhancing the level of representation of women in the national, regional and international aviation fora; 4- Building strategic partnerships with relevant groups of common interests to achieve gender equality.

2.4 The Women in Aviation Association will collaborate with its strategic partners in the implementation of a range of initiatives. For instance, the initiatives to be implemented during 2020 include the following:

1. **Leadership and Empowerment Program:**

Launch the program in cooperation with strategic partners to qualify women to lead in civil aviation technical disciplines i.e.,” Aero-tech Women Leadership Program”. The program is open for women who are aspiring to advance in their field and provides them with equal opportunities in professional leadership positions. This program provides the opportunity to benefit from a free participation supported by sponsorship programs granted by strategic partners.

2. **Promotion and Advocacy Program:**

Establishing an electronic platform in cooperation with the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Education and the academia to attract and orient school students towards technical disciplines in civil aviation, while highlighting the inspiring success stories of women in this sector. Scholarships will also be provided for those intending to engage in this sector

3. ACTION BY THE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly is invited to:

a) direct ICAO Secretariat to take into account the UAE's empowerment and leadership project for Women in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

b) call on ICAO to work with Shehana to develop future plans and programs to ensure the achievement of the 5th goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of ICAO Gender Equality Program, by examining the programs presented in para 2 and to develop a detailed action plan for the exchange of experiences and knowledge transfer in all aviation fields.

c) encourage Member States to take similar measures at the local and regional levels.

— END —