

Ref.: E 2/2.6

19 September 2008

Ms. Navanethem Pillay
High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

Dear Ms. Pillay,

I wish to refer to your predecessor's letter dated 16 June 2008, reference LA/IW/MK/UH/is, requesting information for the preparation of an analytical study on the relationship between climate change and human rights.

I am pleased to provide herewith ICAO's contribution which may be posted on your website.

Yours sincerely,

Taïeb Chérif

Enclosure

INTERLINKAGES BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

INPUT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO)

The interlinkages between climate change and human rights are deep and complex. Aviation was the first sector to request the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to prepare a full assessment of the impact of its activities. The Special Report on Aviation and the Global Atmosphere was published in 1999 and is the most comprehensive assessment of aviation's impact on the atmosphere. IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report also highlighted that the most dramatic impacts of climate change are expected to occur, and are already being experienced, in the world's poorest countries, where the protection of human rights is an important issue.

Three environmental goals have been adopted by the ICAO Assembly, amongst them to "limit or reduce the impact of aviation greenhouse gas emissions on the global climate". In September 2007, the 36th Session of the ICAO Assembly adopted Assembly Resolution A36-22: *Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies and practices related to environmental protection*, which requested, *inter alia*, the Council of ICAO to form the Group on International Aviation and Climate Change (GIACC). The Group was tasked with developing and recommending to the Council an aggressive Programme of Action on International Aviation and Climate Change to be considered by the Organization under a timeline that takes into account the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen, at the end of 2009. This underscored ICAO's continuing cooperation with other United Nations bodies, in particular, with the UNFCCC process, in order to achieve effective solutions for addressing aviation greenhouse gas emissions from aircraft engines on the global climate.

Aviation provides the only rapid worldwide transportation network, which makes it essential for global business and tourism. It plays a vital role in facilitating economic growth, particularly in developing countries. Air transport contributes to sustainable development. It generates economic growth, provides jobs, improves living standards, alleviates poverty, and fosters the conservation of protected areas. Clearly, aviation is an important component of the means to achieve the UN millennium development goals which are primary to international human rights and ICAO will continue to work towards finding solutions to mitigate the effects of climate change on the global climate.