Air transport safety, civil aviation: Community improvement strategy

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There is a strong aspiration from European citizens for more safety in aviation at a time when the steady development of the activity, combined with the standstill of the accident rate, fuels a public perception of a decreasing level of safety. There is therefore an urgent need to improve global aviation safety, in particular, in certain regions of the world. The Community and its Member States have a leading role to play to achieve this objective and to assist third countries in applying the international safety standards. The Commission intends to take the following initiatives: - the conclusion of a Memorandum of co-operation with the ICAO: such a Memorandum will have for objective both to assist ICAO in implementing and enlarging its Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme, and to provide ICAO's assistance to the Commission in order to secure consistent and coherent Community intervention for recovery projects supported by current financial instruments. Such agreement which will be only about funding and exchange of information is fully within the remits of Commission's powers as specified by article (302) of the Treaty. - the conclusion of similar arrangements with JAA and EUROCONTROL to assist future European Union members and some other third countries to conform to the Community's own requirements and ensure that JAA and EUROCONTROL standards are met in these States. - the allocation of increased resources from the existing co-operation programmes, in accordance with their own respective rules of procedure, to finance recovery actions as identified in co-operation with ICAO, JAA and EUROCONTROL; - the establishment of a co-ordination mechanism for recovery actions undertaken by the Community and its Member States through the creation of a committee composed of experts from the Commission, the Member States and European Industry, to be involved in the identification and financing of such actions. - the definition of a Community position regarding the creation of the ICAO International Financial Facility for Aviation Safety in order to ensure complementarity with European Community and Member States instruments. The Commission invites the Member States to complement Community action and take the following initiatives: - support ICAO in the implementation of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme by ensuring that ICAO is given the financial and legal means to conduct systematic and mandatory safety audits. - take initiative to make use and strengthen the enforcement provisions of the ICAO Convention so as to privilege multilateral, rather than unilateral action to convince states, when necessary, to fulfil their international obligations in aviation safety. - increase their own financial assistance for the implementation of recovery actions identified as a result of ICAO audit activities. - participate in the coordination structure set up by the Commission to ensure consistency and complementarily of recovery actions, as well as best use of available resources.