Resolution 939 (1990)[1]

Growing congestion of Europe's airports and skies

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Concerned about the growing congestid other operational expenditure, and fearful that the situation will be further aggravated as a result of continuing rapid increases in demand and current efforts in Euron of Europe's airports and airspace, and the considerable costs and inconvenience it causes passengers and airlines in the form of delays, waste of energy anope to liberalise competition in the air transport sector ;

2. Aware that the above situation is caused not only by unforeseen recent growth in air travel, but above all by insufficient European co-operation and integration of air traffic control, and inadequate expansion of airport capacity ;

3. Recognising, more particularly, the obstacles to progress posed by the fragmented nature of Europe's air traffic control system, with its forty-two often mutually incompatible, and independently operating, control centres ;

4. Believing that the situation is particularly unsatisfactory considering Europe's small territory and large population, as well as the sizeable air space set aside for military use ;

5. Noting that Europe also suffers from a lack of timely and reliable continent-wide demand forecasts, a shortage of ATS (air traffic system) ground facilities, unreliable or outdated equipment and, often, poor management-employee relations, leading to strikes, ‘‘work-to-rule" or strike threats,

6. Calls on the member states of the Council of Europe and ECAC (European Civil Aviation Conference) :

   6.1. to step up their efforts, preferably within theEurocontrol framework, to establish a fully integratedair traffic control system encompassing all Europe ;

   6.2. to examine ways, in this era of reduced East-West tension, of making more military air space available for civilian use, especially at peak periods ;

   6.3. to pay great attention, when planning the handling capacity of airports, to environmental concerns such as noise, pollution and traffic congestion around airports, and to speed up the introduction of less noisy aircraft ;

   6.4. to ensure - through proper recruitment and training, adequate technical equipment and favourable general working conditions - that air traffic controllers are in a position to maintain the highest safety standards ;

   6.5. to encourage the establishment of more numerous, direct region-to-region links, avoiding major airports and densely used air space ;

   6.6. to adopt a global approach to transport encompassing air, roads, railways and water, given the interdependency of all these sectors, and in particular to encourage the building of internationally integrated high-speed train links between major European cities as an alternative to air transport ;

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1. Assembly debate on 1 February 1990 (28th Sitting) (see Doc. 6163, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, Rapporteur : Mr Flückiger). Text adopted by the Assembly on 1 February 1990 (28th Sitting).

6.7. more specifically, to engage in joint, Europe-wide, long-term demand and capacity planning for air traffic, considering the extremely long ‘‘lead times" involved, especially for new or expanded airports ;

7. Reiterates its wish that those member states of the Council of Europe which have not yet joined Eurocontrol do so at their earliest convenience, so as to be in a better position to realise the above-mentioned goals ;

8. Expresses its full support in favour of ECAC's proposals for Europe-wide action to master the congestion problem, and more specifically that which aims to establish a central air traffic flow management facility for Western Europe, in which Eurocontrol would play a major role ;

9. Invites the Council of Europe and ECAC member states concerned to co-operate as fully as possible in the realisation of ECAC's plan to integrate the major European control centres into a single system, and welcomes the constructive work undertaken for this purpose by IATA and the Association of European Airlines ;

10. Entrusts its Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities with the preparation of a report on the harmful effects on the environment caused in particular by aircraft, and by other means of transport in general.