



## **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AIR LAW**

(Montréal, 26 March to 4 April 2014)

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**CONSOLIDATED TEXT OF THE CONVENTION  
ON OFFENCES AND CERTAIN OTHER ACTS COMMITTED ON BOARD AIRCRAFT  
(TOKYO, 1963)  
AND THE PROTOCOL TO AMEND THE CONVENTION  
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(MONTREAL, 2014)**

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THE CONTRACTING STATES,

NOTING that States have expressed their concern about the escalation of the severity and frequency of unruly behaviour on board aircraft that may jeopardize the safety of the aircraft or of persons or property therein or jeopardize good order and discipline on board;

RECOGNIZING the desire of many States to assist each other in curbing unruly behaviour and restoring good order and discipline on board aircraft; and

BELIEVING that in order to address these concerns, it is necessary to adopt provisions to amend those of the *Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft* signed at Tokyo on 14 September 1963;

HAVE AGREED as follows:

**Chapter I — Scope of the Convention**

**Article 1**

1. This Convention shall apply in respect of:

- a) offences against penal law;
- b) acts which, whether or not they are offences, may or do jeopardize the safety of the aircraft or of persons or property therein or which jeopardize good order and discipline on board.

2. Except as provided in Chapter III, this Convention shall apply in respect of offences committed or acts done by a person on board any aircraft registered in a Contracting State, while that aircraft is in flight or on the surface of the high seas or of any other area outside the territory of any State.

3. For the purposes of this Convention:

- a) an aircraft is considered to be in flight at any time from the moment when all its external doors are closed following embarkation until the moment when any such door is opened for disembarkation; in the case of a forced landing, the flight shall be deemed to continue until the competent authorities take over the responsibility for the aircraft and for persons and property on board; and

b) when the State of the operator is not the same as the State of registration, the term "the State of registration", as used in Articles 4, 5 and 13 of this Convention shall be deemed to be the State of the operator.

4. This Convention shall not apply to aircraft used in military, customs or police services.

## **Article 2**

Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 4 and except when the safety of the aircraft or of persons or property on board so requires, no provision of this Convention shall be interpreted as authorizing or requiring any action in respect of offences against penal laws of a political nature or those based on discrimination on any ground such as race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political opinion or gender.

## **Chapter II — Jurisdiction**

### **Article 3**

1. The State of registration of the aircraft is competent to exercise jurisdiction over offences and acts committed on board.

*1 bis.* A State is also competent to exercise jurisdiction over offences and acts committed on board:

- a) as the State of landing, when the aircraft on board which the offence or act is committed lands in its territory with the alleged offender still on board; and
- b) as the State of the operator, when the offence or act is committed on board an aircraft leased without crew to a lessee whose principal place of business or, if the lessee has no such place of business, whose permanent residence, is in that State.

2. Each Contracting State shall take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction as the State of registration over offences committed on board aircraft registered in such State.

*2 bis* Each Contracting State shall also take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over offences committed on board aircraft in the following cases:

- a) as the State of landing, when:
  - (i) the aircraft on board which the offence is committed has its last point of departure or next point of intended landing within its territory, and the aircraft subsequently lands in its territory with the alleged offender still on board;
  - (ii) the safety of the aircraft or of persons or property therein, or good order and discipline on board, is jeopardised;
- b) as the State of the operator, when the offence is committed on board an aircraft leased without crew to a lessee whose principal place of business or, if the lessee has no such place of business, whose permanent residence, is in that State.

*2 ter* In exercising its jurisdiction as State of landing, a State shall consider whether the offence or act in question is an offence in the State of the operator.

3. This Convention does not exclude any criminal jurisdiction exercised in accordance with national law.

### **Article 3 bis**

If a Contracting State, exercising its jurisdiction under Article 3, has been notified or has otherwise learned that one or more other Contracting States are conducting an investigation, prosecution or judicial proceeding in respect of the same offences or acts, that Contracting State shall, as appropriate, consult those other Contracting States with a view to coordinating their actions. The obligations in this Article are without prejudice to the obligations of a Contracting State under Article 13.

### **Article 4**

A Contracting State which is not the State of registration may not interfere with an aircraft in flight in order to exercise its criminal jurisdiction over an offence committed on board except in the following cases:

- a) the offence has effect on the territory of such State;
- b) the offence has been committed by or against a national or permanent resident of such State;
- c) the offence is against the security of such State;
- d) the offence consists of a breach of any rules or regulations relating to the flight or manoeuvre of aircraft in force in such State;
- e) the exercise of jurisdiction is necessary to ensure the observance of any obligation of such State under a multilateral international agreement.

## **Chapter III — Powers of the aircraft commander**

### **Article 5**

The provisions of this Chapter shall not apply to offences and acts committed or about to be committed by a person on board an aircraft in flight in the airspace of the State of registration or over the high seas of any other area outside the territory of any State unless the last point of take-off or the next point of intended landing is situated in a State other than that of registration, or the aircraft subsequently flies in the airspace of a State other than that of registration with such person still on board.

## **Article 6**

1. The aircraft commander may, when he has reasonable grounds to believe that a person has committed, or is about to commit, on board the aircraft, an offence or act contemplated in Article 1, paragraph 1, impose upon such person reasonable measures including restraint which are necessary:

- a) to protect the safety of the aircraft, or of persons or property therein; or
- b) to maintain good order and discipline on board; or
- c) to enable him to deliver such person to competent authorities or to disembark him in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter.

2. The aircraft commander may require or authorize the assistance of other crew members and may request or authorize, but not require, the assistance of in-flight security officers or passengers to restrain any person whom he is entitled to restrain. Any crew member or passenger may also take reasonable preventive measures without such authorization when he has reasonable grounds to believe that such action is immediately necessary to protect the safety of the aircraft, or of persons or property therein.

3. An in-flight security officer deployed pursuant to a bilateral or multilateral agreement or arrangement between the relevant Contracting States may take reasonable preventive measures without such authorization when he has reasonable grounds to believe that such action is immediately necessary to protect the safety of the aircraft or persons therein from an act of unlawful interference, and, if the agreement or arrangement so allows, from the commission of serious offences.

4. Nothing in this Convention shall be deemed to create an obligation for a Contracting State to establish an in-flight security officer programme or to agree to a bilateral or multilateral agreement or arrangement authorizing foreign in-flight security officers to operate in its territory.

## **Article 7**

1. Measures of restraint imposed upon a person in accordance with Article 6 shall not be continued beyond any point at which the aircraft lands unless:

- a) such point is in the territory of a non-Contracting State and its authorities refuse to permit disembarkation of that person or those measures have been imposed in accordance with Article 6, paragraph 1 c) in order to enable his delivery to competent authorities;
- b) the aircraft makes a forced landing and the aircraft commander is unable to deliver that person to competent authorities; or
- c) that person agrees to onward carriage under restraint.

2. The aircraft commander shall as soon as practicable, and if possible before landing in the territory of a State with a person on board who has been placed under restraint in accordance with the provisions of Article 6, notify the authorities of such State of the fact that a person on board is under restraint and of the reasons for such restraint.

### **Article 8**

1. The aircraft commander may, in so far as it is necessary for the purpose of subparagraph a) or b) of paragraph 1 of Article 6, disembark in the territory of any State in which the aircraft lands any person who he has reasonable grounds to believe has committed, or is about to commit, on board the aircraft an act contemplated in Article 1, paragraph 1 b).
2. The aircraft commander shall report to the authorities of the State in which he disembarks any person pursuant to this Article, the fact of, and the reasons for, such disembarkation.

### **Article 9**

1. The aircraft commander may deliver to the competent authorities of any Contracting State in the territory of which the aircraft lands any person who he has reasonable grounds to believe has committed on board the aircraft an act which, in his opinion, is a serious offence.
2. The aircraft commander shall as soon as practicable and if possible before landing in the territory of a Contracting State with a person on board whom the aircraft commander intends to deliver in accordance with the preceding paragraph, notify the authorities of such State of his intention to deliver such person and the reasons therefor.
3. The aircraft commander shall furnish the authorities to whom any suspected offender is delivered in accordance with the provisions of this Article with evidence and information which are lawfully in his possession.

### **Article 10**

For actions taken in accordance with this Convention, neither the aircraft commander, any other member of the crew, any passenger, any in-flight security officer, the owner or operator of the aircraft, nor the person on whose behalf the flight was performed shall be held responsible in any proceeding on account of the treatment undergone by the person against whom the actions were taken.

## **Chapter IV — Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft**

### **Article 11**

1. When a person on board has unlawfully committed by force or threat thereof an act of interference, seizure, or other wrongful exercise of control of an aircraft in flight or when such an act is about to be committed, Contracting States shall take all appropriate measures to restore control of the aircraft to its lawful commander or to preserve his control of the aircraft.
2. In the cases contemplated in the preceding paragraph, the Contracting State in which the aircraft lands shall permit its passengers and crew to continue their journey as soon as practicable, and shall return the aircraft and its cargo to the persons lawfully entitled to possession.

## **Chapter V — Powers and Duties of States**

### **Article 12**

Any Contracting State shall allow the commander of an aircraft registered in another Contracting State to disembark any person pursuant to Article 8, paragraph 1.

### **Article 13**

1. Any Contracting State shall take delivery of any person whom the aircraft commander delivers pursuant to Article 9, paragraph 1.
2. Upon being satisfied that the circumstances so warrant, any Contracting State shall take custody or other measures to ensure the presence of any person suspected of an act contemplated in Article 11, paragraph 1 and of any person of whom it has taken delivery. The custody and other measures shall be as provided in the law of that State but may only be continued for such time as is reasonably necessary to enable any criminal or extradition proceedings to be instituted.
3. Any person in custody pursuant to the previous paragraph shall be assisted in communicating immediately with the nearest appropriate representative of the State of which he is a national.
4. Any Contracting State, to which a person is delivered pursuant to Article 9, paragraph 1, or in whose territory an aircraft lands following the commission of an act contemplated in Article 11, paragraph 1, shall immediately make a preliminary enquiry into the facts.
5. When a State, pursuant to this Article, has taken a person into custody, it shall immediately notify the State of registration of the aircraft and the State of nationality of the detained person and, if it considers it advisable, any other interested State of the fact that such person is in custody and of the circumstances which warrant his detention. The State which makes the preliminary enquiry contemplated in paragraph 4 of this Article shall promptly report its findings to the said States and shall indicate whether it intends to exercise jurisdiction.

### **Article 14**

1. When any person has been disembarked in accordance with Article 8, paragraph 1, or delivered in accordance with Article 9, paragraph 1, or has disembarked after committing an act contemplated in Article 11, paragraph 1, and when such person cannot or does not desire to continue his journey and the State of landing refuses to admit him, that State may, if the person in question is not a national or permanent resident of that State, return him to the territory of the State of which he is a national or permanent resident or to the territory of the State in which he began his journey by air.
2. Neither disembarkation, nor delivery, nor the taking of custody or other measures contemplated in Article 13, paragraph 2, nor return of the person concerned, shall be considered as admission to the territory of the Contracting State concerned for the purpose of its law relating to entry or admission of persons and nothing in this Convention shall affect the law of a Contracting State relating to the expulsion of persons from its territory.

### **Article 15**

1. Without prejudice to Article 14, any person who has been disembarked in accordance with Article 8, paragraph 1, or delivered in accordance with Article 9, paragraph 1, or has disembarked after committing an act contemplated in Article 11, paragraph 1, and who desires to continue his journey shall be at liberty as soon as practicable to proceed to any destination of his choice unless his presence is required by the law of the State of landing for the purpose of extradition or criminal proceedings.
2. Without prejudice to its law as to entry and admission to, and extradition and expulsion from its territory, a Contracting State in whose territory a person has been disembarked in accordance with Article 8, paragraph 1, or delivered in accordance with Article 9, paragraph 1 or has disembarked and is suspected of having committed an act contemplated in Article 11, paragraph 1, shall accord to such person treatment which is no less favourable for his protection and security than that accorded to nationals of such Contracting State in like circumstances.

### **Article 15 *bis***

1. Each Contracting State is encouraged to take such measures as may be necessary to initiate appropriate criminal, administrative or any other forms of legal proceedings against any person who commits on board an aircraft an offence or act referred to in Article 1, paragraph 1, in particular:
  - a) physical assault or a threat to commit such assault against a crew member; or
  - b) refusal to follow a lawful instruction given by or on behalf of the aircraft commander for the purpose of protecting the safety of the aircraft or of persons or property therein.
2. Nothing in this Convention shall affect the right of each Contracting State to introduce or maintain in its national legislation appropriate measures in order to punish unruly and disruptive acts committed on board.

## **Chapter VI — Other Provisions**

### **Article 16**

1. Offences committed on board aircraft shall be treated, for the purpose of extradition between the Contracting States, as if they had been committed not only in the place in which they occurred but also in the territories of the Contracting States required to establish their jurisdiction in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 2 *bis* of Article 3.
2. Without prejudice to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, nothing in this Convention shall be deemed to create an obligation to grant extradition.

### **Article 17**

1. In taking any measures for investigation or arrest or otherwise exercising jurisdiction in connection with any offence committed on board an aircraft the Contracting States shall pay due regard to the safety and other interests of air navigation and shall so act as to avoid unnecessary delay of the aircraft, passengers, crew or cargo.
2. Each Contracting State, when fulfilling its obligations, or exercising a permitted discretion, under this Convention, shall act in accordance with the obligations and responsibilities of States under international law. In this respect, each Contracting State shall have regard for the principles of due process and fair treatment.”

### **Article 18**

If Contracting States establish joint air transport operating organizations or international operating agencies, which operate aircraft not registered in any one State those States shall, according to the circumstances of the case, designate the State among them which, for the purposes of this Convention, shall be considered as the State of registration and shall give notice thereof to the International Civil Aviation Organization which shall communicate the notice to all States Parties to this Convention.

### **Article 18 bis**

Nothing in this Convention shall preclude any right to seek the recovery, under national law, of damages incurred, from a person disembarked or delivered pursuant to Article 8 or 9 respectively.

## **Chapter VII — Final Clauses**

### **Article 19**

(Languages of the Convention, see Article XIV of the Protocol)

### **Article 20**

(Interpretation of the Convention as amended by the Protocol, see Article XV of the Protocol)

### **Article 21**

(Signature, ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, see Articles 19, 20 and 22 of the Convention and Articles XVI and XVII of the Protocol)

### **Article 22**

(Entry into force, see Article 21 of the Convention and Article XVIII of the Protocol)

### **Article 23**

(Denunciations, see Article 23 of the Convention and Article XIX of the Protocol)

### **Article 24**

1. Any dispute between two or more Contracting States concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention which cannot be settled through negotiation, shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the Parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those Parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.
2. Each State may at the time of signature or ratification of this Convention or accession thereto, declare that it does not consider itself bound by the preceding paragraph. The other Contracting States shall not be bound by the preceding paragraph with respect to any Contracting State having made such a reservation.
3. Any Contracting State having made a reservation in accordance with the preceding paragraph may at any time withdraw this reservation by notification to the International Civil Aviation Organization.

### **Article 25**

Except as provided in Article 24 no reservation may be made to this Convention.

### **Article 26**

(Depositary and its functions, see Article 26 of the Convention and Articles XVII and XX of the Protocol)

## **FINAL PARAGRAPHS**

### **From the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (Tokyo, 1963)**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned Plenipotentiaries, having been duly authorized, have signed this Convention.

DONE at Tokyo on the fourteenth day of September One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty-three in three authentic texts drawn up in the English, French and Spanish languages.

This Convention shall be deposited with the International Civil Aviation Organization with which, in accordance with Article 19, it shall remain open for signature and the said Organization shall send certified copies thereof to all States Members of the United Nations or of any Specialized Agency.

**From the Protocol to Amend the Convention on Offences and  
Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (Montréal, 2014)**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned Plenipotentiaries, having been duly authorized, have signed this Protocol.

DONE at Montréal on the fourth day of April of the year Two Thousand and Fourteen in the English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish languages, all texts being equally authentic, such authenticity to take effect upon verification by the Secretariat of the Conference under the authority of the President of the Conference within ninety days hereof as to the conformity of the texts with one another. This Protocol shall be deposited with the International Civil Aviation Organization, and certified copies thereof shall be transmitted by the Depositary to all Contracting States to this Protocol.

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