



DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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CANADA AND UNITED STATES SIGN AVIATION SECURITY AGREEMENT

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark and the U.S. Secretary of State, George P. Shultz, today signed an Agreement providing for close cooperation between Canada and the United States in matters relating to aviation security.

The new Agreement, signed at a ceremony in Ottawa at the conclusion of the regular quarterly bilateral meeting between the Minister and his U.S. counterpart, is based on the premise that the assurance of safety for civil aircraft, their passengers and crew, is a fundamental pre-condition for the operation of international air services. It commits the Governments of Canada and the United States to provide information and all necessary mutual assistance to prevent unlawful acts which threaten aircraft, the safety of passengers and crew, as well as airports and air navigation facilities.

Both countries acting in conformity with aviation security standards shall require that operators of aircraft and airports act in accordance with these provisions, and agree that its operators may be required by the other Contracting Party to observe these standards. Both countries also agree to ensure that effective measures are taken within its territory to protect aircraft, inspect passengers and their carry-on items, and to carry out appropriate checks on crew, cargo (including baggage) and aircraft stores prior to and during boarding and loading.

The Agreement also includes provisions whereby both countries agree to give mutual assistance to terminate threats to aviation security, and to consult and resolve in an expedient manner any perceived departures from the provisions of the Agreement. Failure to resolve such matters may result in the curtailment of air operations.

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In signing the Agreement Canada and the United States are seeking to ensure the security of the world's most extensive and complex bilateral civil aviation relationship serving more than 13 million air travellers annually. At the same time, it is recognized that aviation security cannot be ensured, and terrorism effectively counteracted by individual states alone, but only on the basis of cooperation and united action by the international community.

The Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization, meeting in Montreal on October 1, 1986, unanimously adopted a Canadian proposal to develop a new international agreement on airport security. This resolution, co-sponsored by over 30 countries representing all geographic regions and social economic systems, reflects a growing realization throughout the international community that united action is needed to close a gap in the existing ICAO framework concerning aviation security. The Hague, Montreal and Tokyo conventions clearly govern security threats to aircraft in flight, but do not adequately cover all terrorist threats or attacks at airports.

The comprehensive bilateral aviation security Agreement signed today between Canada and the United States, not only serves to strengthen security measures between the two countries, but, hopefully may stand as a model for future bilateral agreements, and complement Canada's multilateral initiative to ensure international aviation security within ICAO.

Canada and the U.S. strongly support multilateral efforts by ICAO to improve aviation security. Both Governments will seek similar aviation security agreements with other countries.

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