

## Gender Neutral Language

### BACKGROUND

In 2018 ICAO held its inaugural Global Aviation Summit<sup>1</sup> in South Africa. Over 500 leaders and experts from around the world met in Cape Town to hear from a series of speakers from air transport, civil society, and United Nations agencies about the need for concrete actions and commitments for gender equality in global aviation.

In her keynote opening address, Dr. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO, a specialized UN Agency) said, "Aviation already contributes greatly to peace, prosperity and sustainable development, all over the world, but it can do even more for our society, and especially for women." She recognised that "...the need for strong commitments and leadership, at the highest levels, must be consistently underscored."

The Summit is but the latest in a line of powerful UN resolutions and multilateral agreements underlining themes of "Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women," **UNGA Resolution A/RES/69/151, adopted on 18 December 2014**<sup>2</sup>.

Most recently, **ICAO Assembly Resolution A39-30**<sup>3</sup> urged:

"...States, regional and international aviation organizations and the international aviation industry to demonstrate strong, determined leadership and commitment to advance women's rights and to take the necessary measures to strengthen gender equality by supporting policies, as well as the establishment and improvement of programmes and projects, to further women's careers within ICAO's governing and technical bodies, the ICAO Secretariat and the global aviation sector..."

### POSITION

IFALPA recognises the role and importance of women as equal participants in international aviation. In line with the **ICAO 39th General Assembly Resolution A39-30**, IFALPA will update its policies, manuals, documents, and usage to comply with the UN approved drafting style in **UN Guidelines on Gender-inclusive language**<sup>4</sup>. IFALPA recommends that all Member Associations adopt the same guidelines. This action will reflect the dedication to gender equality of the global aviation community.

In addition to gender inclusiveness policies, this step forward acknowledges that there is a lack of appropriately gender-neutral language in some aviation documentation. This can have unintended adverse consequences, such as the potential identification of crew members in official air accident investigation reports by members of the public or media.

1 <https://www.icao.int/Meetings/AviationGenderSummit/Pages/default.aspx>

2 [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/151](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/151)

3 [https://www.icao.int/Meetings/a39/Documents/Resolutions/a39\\_res\\_prov\\_en.pdf](https://www.icao.int/Meetings/a39/Documents/Resolutions/a39_res_prov_en.pdf)

4 <http://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>