**AVIATION SECURITY: THE WORLD IN A POST-9/11 ENVIRONMENT**

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**Aviation Security**

**The World in a Post-9/11 Environment**

The well-coordinated terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 presented the world with a new aviation security threat, the capture of aircraft in flight to be used as human-guided missiles. The previous threats like hijacking an aircraft for ransom and putting a bomb aboard an aircraft, had led to varying degrees of screening of baggage and passengers in developed as well as developing countries, plus some use of on-board security personnel on selected flights in some countries. Despite heightened security measures, airliners remain an attractive target for terrorists. In order to counter the persistent and ever-changing threat of terrorism, experts say officials need to do more to ensure the safety of air travel.

Aviation is essential to sustain the economic viability of the world commerce, the movement of passengers and cargo, and the flow of information and knowledge throughout society. Therefore, it is essential that those responsible for protecting the aviation industry are proactive in developing and implementing strategic and tactical systems that are effective in helping to mitigate criminal and terrorist activity.

Sustained criminal or terrorist activity on aviation could cause a shift in passenger demand from airline travel to alternate forms of interaction or travel, such as videoconferencing or privately owned or chartered aircraft. These types of changes in demand for transporting passengers, cargo or information could present airlines with serious economic challenges.

Defending target-rich free societies against terrorism is inherently difficult. On a macro level, it seems unlikely that terrorism can be eliminated in a permanent sense. The inherent asymmetries will likely make such societies attractive targets for one or another terrorist group indefinitely. Also, terrorists learn from experience and can change tactics and targets in response to defensive measures. Therefore, defensive measures must be dynamic and flexible, rather than static and predictable.

The paper discusses the importance of the security of the most effective and efficient mode of transportation, causes of its being a soft target of criminals or terrorists and finally, the paper provides suggestions for making better aviation security policies and to apply appropriate and practical security measures in the interest of orderly, safe and secure aviation.