

Italy's Statement

High-level Ministerial Segment

2025 ICAO Facilitation Conference (FALC 2025)

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, President of the ICAO Council, Secretary General, Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honor for me to speak at this prestigious conference, which represents an important opportunity for dialogue and collaboration between states and the main stakeholders in the civil aviation sector. First of all, I would like to thank the Government of Qatar for the warm hospitality and ICAO for the excellent organization of this event.

In 2024, we celebrated the "Year of Facilitation," the 75th anniversary of Annex 9 — Facilitation, and the 80th anniversary of ICAO. These milestones have reminded us of the crucial work done over the years to improve facilitation procedures and ensure a smoother travel experience for passengers and sector operators.

Air transport is not just a means of connecting destinations, but an experience that must place the passenger at the center. The passenger is not just a traveler, but a customer who benefits from a service. As in any quality-oriented sector, customer satisfaction must be a top priority. Offering a seamless, comfortable, and stress-free travel experience is essential for air transport to remain competitive and attractive.

In an era where alternative modes of transportation are increasingly numerous, the aviation sector must distinguish itself by the quality of the service it provides.

It is important to highlight three key concepts: Digitalization, Inclusivity and Sustainability.

Diversity and inclusion are fundamental principles for social, economic, and cultural progress, especially in an increasingly interconnected global context. The air transport sector, facing ever-new challenges, must commit to ensuring the right to mobility for all, without exclusions. It is our duty to develop innovative policies that, thanks to technology, promote inclusivity, creating an environment where people with disabilities can fully participate and contribute to the success of the sector.

Through ENAC, Italy has for years implemented concrete initiatives to protect the rights of passengers with disabilities, promoting projects such as "Autism – Traveling through the airport," which facilitates the journey of people with autism spectrum disorders, and "One click away," which simplifies the booking of assistance for passengers with reduced mobility. The latter project, resulting from a collaboration with IATA, ITA Airways, Air Dolomiti, and Neos, has garnered

widespread international appreciation, as demonstrated by its success at the 13th ICAO FAL Panel Meeting.

Additionally, ENAC established the Permanent Technical Table in 2022 for the protection of the rights of passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility, a forum for dialogue between associations, operators, and institutions, aimed at improving regulatory and operational policies. However, our commitment does not stop here. The air transport sector is continuously evolving, and we must respond to the new needs of the population, such as the elderly, who are increasingly choosing air travel. Our goal is to move from a concept of “assistance” to one of “autonomy,” allowing individuals with difficulties to move independently in airports. This is where the “Towards an inclusive airport” project, created by ENAC in collaboration with the airports of Milan and Venice, fits in. It will be implemented during the Milan-Cortina 2026 Paralympic Games.

Looking to the future, the aviation community has the responsibility to build an inclusive, safe, and sustainable model. New technologies and Facilitation will be central to this transformation.

The Ministerial Declaration represents a crucial step toward global governance based on sustainability, safety, and inclusivity. By working together, we can build a future in which air transport is a driver of equitable growth and responsible development.