

ICAO Air Services Negotiation ICAN 2013

Durban International Convention Centre

Durban, South Africa, 9 December 2013

Opening Ceremony

Remarks by Márcio Favilla, Executive Director, UNWTO

- Mr. Zakhele Thwala, Deputy Director General of Civil Aviation, Department of Transport (DOT), South Africa, and Programme Director
- Councilor James Nxumalo, Ethekewini Municipality
- Mr. Boubacar Djibo, Director of Air Transport, ICAO, and Mr Meshesha, Regional Director for Africa, ICAO
- Mr. Mike Mabuyakhulu, MEC for Economic Development and Tourism
- Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga Deputy Minister of Transport, South Africa
- H. E. Minister of Civil Aviation of Chad
- H. E. Minister of Transport of Trinidad and Tobago
- Ms. Dipuo Peters, Minister of Transport, South Africa

Excellencies, Dear delegates and participants of ICAN 2013, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I wish to convey the most sincere condolences from the Secretary-General of UNWTO, Mr. Taleb Rifai, and all our colleagues back in our headquarters in Madrid, to the government and the people of the Republic of South Africa for the passing on of President Nelson Mandela, a true Statesman, one of a kind, that did so much for his country and for the world.

I also want to thank Mr. Raymond Benjamin, the Secretary-General of ICAO, for inviting the World Tourism Organization to join his team, the South African and foreign authorities at this opening ceremony and address this distinguished audience at the outset of such an important event and also to participate in the Forum on Sustainable Development of Air Transport later today.

ICAN 2013 starts only two days after the International Civil Aviation Day, the theme of which is, this year, ***“Evolving to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century Air Transport”***. This theme supports the primary rationale underlying the fact that ICAO and UNWTO, the two United Nations specialized agencies and global intergovernmental bodies responsible respectively for aviation and tourism, have recently moved towards building more cooperative ties with each other.

This is a result of the growing recognition of the intrinsic symbiosis between aviation and tourism as well as of the need to think beyond sectoral “silos”.

UNWTO and ICAO have worked together for many years now but last March, at ICAO’s Worldwide Air Transport Conference and as a concrete symbol of increased cooperation, the Secretary-Generals of both Organizations signed a Joint Statement committing themselves and their Organizations to eight key areas of common interest, namely:

1. optimizing the benefits of aviation and tourism by ***maximizing our synergies***;
2. promoting the ***modernization of the air transport regulatory framework***;
3. ***enhancing air transport connectivity***;
4. promoting ***facilitation in the area of visa and other travel document formalities and issuance***, including the simplification of visa processing and the development of multi-State regional visas and e-visas;
5. ensuring the ***protection of passengers, tourists and tourism service providers***;

6. ***reducing greenhouse emissions***;
7. addressing ***air transport for tourism development*** in long-haul destinations and landlocked or island countries; and
8. ***assessing the economic impact of taxes, charges and other levies*** on aviation and tourism.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Coming from only 25 million international arrivals in 1950, last year, in 2012, over one billion international tourists travelled the world for the first time in a single year. More precisely, one billion and thirty-five million tourists travelled and stayed abroad for at least one night and less than a year, whether for business purposes, leisure or visiting friends and relatives; that is about one seventh of the world population.

Over half of these tourists arrived at their destinations by air, with a higher proportion in long-haul destinations, particularly landlocked and island developing countries.

Additionally, many more people around the globe traveled within their countries, a growing market that is increasingly being serviced by air transport.

The extraordinary progression of domestic and international tourism over the last decades is as much due to advances in air transport as to the rise of the middle class, the growing prosperity in advanced, emerging and developing economies, and the emergence and wide spread of information and communication technologies.

By the same token, the growth of air transport is intrinsically connected with the expansion of tourism, an expansion well set to continue in the coming decades. UNWTO long-term forecasts indicate that international tourism arrivals will reach 1.8 billion by the year 2030; at least 52% of these tourists will arrive at their destinations by air and almost 60% of these 1.8 billion arrivals will take place in emerging and developing economies.

It is very clear that the catalyst of this phenomenal growth of both aviation and tourism is the tremendous synergy between them.

Furthermore, both tourism and aviation have a substantial multiplier effect on the economy and in the creation of much needed jobs.

We have all reasons to meet, join hands, cooperate and implement the common agenda as defined and announced by the heads of the two Organizations last March.

Dear Friends,

As the ICAO Air Services Negotiation Event comes to Africa for the first time, allow me to tell you that UNWTO and ICAO are working together to foster air connectivity and tourism in this continent so that UNWTO's estimates for international tourism growth in Africa in the next twenty years (5% per annum), which are the highest among all regions and much above world average (3.3% per annum), can be met and even surpassed.

ICAO will participate in UNWTO's Regional Commission Meeting for Africa to take place in Luanda next April, where we will address the most important issues that challenge tourism and air connectivity and hinder their expansion in the African continent.

This will be in preparation for the first ever joint Summit of African Ministers of Air Transport and Tourism to follow in October for which the two Organizations are working together, with the host country Seychelles, so that our two sectors can jointly contribute, with a common approach, to overcome the barriers to unlock and reap the enormous development potentials of this continent through aviation and tourism.

I am looking forward to participating in your discussions and I wish you all a very productive week.

Thank you very much.