

Eleventh ICAO Symposium and Exhibition  
on Machine Readable Travel Documents  
Closing Remarks by Boubacar Djibo, D/ATB  
October 16, 2015

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear Colleagues,

In her opening remarks, ICAO's Secretary General welcomed your participation, and wished you all an informative and productive Eleventh ICAO Symposium and Exhibition on Machine Readable Travel Documents. I know that this wish came true as the Symposium programme progressed over three days, and I am very pleased to be with you at the conclusion to provide the closing remarks.

The emphasis on sound and comprehensive identity management as the foundation for travel documents has once again been confirmed as a global priority. This assures us that the key elements of ICAO's Traveller Identification Programme Strategy remain on the right track.

In addition, the need to take full advantage of the technological tools at the time of inspection of ePassports is now a critical must-do for Member States. In looking back over this and previous Symposia we see an overwhelming focus on the mechanics of deploying a passport programme and the fundamentals of doing so.

Last year, the tenth Symposium and the completion of a full decade of Symposia, we began to see the way to pass through the crossroads between travel document management and identity management and, most important, to choose the right direction for the future which is to move from an MRTD-centered outlook to the more holistic ICAO TRIP Strategy.

This year's Symposium has as its heart the clearer and more comprehensive vision that TRIP entails and demands. Stated simply, TRIP is a strategy to bring all of the pieces of the travel document continuum into harmony enabling enhancement of the passenger travel experience for the next decade and beyond.

As a framework for the management and administration of traveller identification, TRIP seeks to tie all of the elements together as complementary companions, not unrelated disparate activities. That whole in its entirety looks out over all of the

elements associated with travel document security and facilitation, the developing and expanding nature of machine readable travel documents and, of special focus in this Symposium, the foundational integrity and the proper inspection of those documents in the broadest sense of border control and management. And it is here, in the trust and confidence that Member States seek and rely upon, that the ICAO TRIP provides international, regional and State-level policy, programme and implementation direction.

This year's Symposium has given us a new takeaway message. The concentration on TRIP, the complex and practical challenges facing traveller identification, and the numerous interdependencies involved have driven the Symposium to be future oriented. While the information shared in this Eleventh Symposium has many layers and contours, I offer the following points to very briefly characterize and summarize the discussions.

1. Achievements in all matters to do with travel documents are enabled by the spirit of international cooperation that has brought you all here. Regardless of where we come from, ICAO Doc 9303 – the MRTD specifications – enables us all to speak a single, unifying language. Speaking of

- cooperation, the Symposium has again highlighted the special public sector – private sector partnership that enables solutions in the MRTD field to be realized.
2. Risk management, emphasizing reliable information assessment and analysis, is essential for strategic and operational decision making.
  3. The expanded use of technology and the benefits innovation brings are fundamental to success in managing border integrity effectively and efficiently. Nowhere is this more apparent than in aviation, where traffic levels are expected to double in the next 15 years.
  4. The core principles of identity management must at all times guide our work.
  5. The realities of identity management in our fast-evolving world, including the expectations of the public as travel document customers, call upon the travel document community to anticipate change, and to be responsive and adaptive.
  6. With the growing recognition that robust machine readable travel documents are fundamental to globalization, initiatives such as UN Security Council resolution 2178, and others that may follow, look toward MRTDs as a necessity.

7. Aspirations are important but full implementation is essential. In saying this, ICAO welcomes your acknowledgement of the benefits offered by ePassports, the need for comprehensive examination of travel documents at borders using automated methods, the benefits of membership in the ICAO PKD and the priority that must be given to making full use of the ICAO PKD in implementing border controls. This is the call for action you have made.
8. In stressing implementation, we cannot overlook the urgent need for capacity building and technical assistance for States in need. Mobilizing such assistance is the key proposition of ICAO's "No Country Left Behind" Campaign.
9. Finally, and to return our attention to the theme of this year's Symposium, building trust in travel document security is the matter of overriding importance.

Last but very far from least, allow me to express our special thanks:

- to the presenters and moderators whose rich contributions have captured our attention;
- to our industry partners for their excellent exhibits;
- to the ICAO Facilitation Section;

- to the ICAO Secretariat Symposium and Exhibition organizing team;
- to the interpreters who have done a superb job in assisting us over the past three days; and
- to you for your attentive participation in the Symposium and Exhibition;

ICAO looks forward to welcoming you at the MRTD Regional Seminar, from 10 to 12 November 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya and at the World Aviation Forum, from 23 to 25 November 2015 here at ICAO headquarters in Montreal.

Best wishes to you all for safe travels of as we officially close the Eleventh ICAO MRTD Symposium and Exhibition.