Keynote remarks
by the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,
to the 2023 APAC DGCA Meeting

(15-19 October, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

1. As ICAO Secretary General, I would like to join the President of the ICAO Council in wholeheartedly congratulating the Government of Bangladesh, and more specifically the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation Authority, for hosting this 58th Conference of Directors General of Civil Aviation of the APAC region, here in the dynamic city of Dhaka.

2. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to all the delegates present here.

3. I am very grateful for this significant platform and the opportunity it provides for me to share ICAO's vision and priorities with you, and the ways that we are transforming ourselves to better serve you and the development aspirations of our sector.

4. I'd like to begin today with ICAO's Business Plan, which reflects the strategic direction on global priorities for international civil aviation, in accordance with the Resolutions and Decisions taken by the 41st Session of the ICAO Assembly.

5. The plan and all the initiatives it contains follow a results-based management or RBM approach.

6. This methodology will allow ICAO to better meet its mandate to States through a comprehensive results framework.

7. At the 41st Assembly, clear messages were received from States and aviation stakeholders emphasizing what ICAO needs to focus on.

8. The ICAO Council consequently agreed that the Secretariat would conduct an organization-wide prioritization exercise.

9. The Secretariat then identified 7 Priority Focus Areas, which were subsequently approved by the Council.

10. These Priority Focus Areas allow the organization to work more efficiently in the "one-ICAO" approach, in both developing and supporting implementation of Standards and Recommended Practices, plans, and other guidance materials.

11. The first Priority Focus Area is The Long Term Global Aspirational Goal for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, or LTAG. It features:

    a) LTAG implementation and Financing,
    b) The sustainable aviation fuel global framework and accounting methodology,
    c) Supporting new environmental technologies,
    d) and Air Navigation efficiency in support of the LTAG

12. This LTAG agreement is historic as it demonstrates the sector's strong commitment to support the temperature goal of the Paris Agreement. It is a clear signal that aviation is engaging on a trajectory towards carbon neutrality.

13. Support for the LTAG also comes from a wide range of industry stakeholders, ranging from airlines, airports, aircraft manufacturers, air navigation service providers, the fuels industry and many others.

14. Technology, operational improvement and fuels will all be key, but the largest reductions, i.e. more than half, will be coming in the form of sustainable aviation fuels, lower carbon aviation fuels, and other cleaner energies.

15. As for hydrogen, contributions may increase after 2050, as it reaches technological maturity and commercial viability.

16. In order to drive these developments, significant capacity building and implementation support will be needed, including in financing. We must also ensure that *No Country is Left Behind*.

17. Next month, ICAO will hold the Third Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels, or CAAF/3, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

18. CAAF/3 will support the reliability and predictability of investments and of certainty and market opportunities, supporting the development and deployment of aviation cleaner energy.

19. The anticipated adoption of a robust global framework at CAAF/3 will send a crucially important signal to the world.

20. I wish to extend my sincere invitation to all of you to join us in this momentous event.

21. The second priority focus area is Cybersecurity and Information System Resilience, which encompasses the Trust Framework and the Implementation Strategy for large system deployment.

22. As you are well aware, cyberattacks and cybercrime have been on the rise globally. ICAO has taken this risk very seriously.

23. Most recently, the ICAO Council approved a new governance structure for cybersecurity in ICAO.

24. It comprises a Technical Coordinating Committee of the Council on Cybersecurity, a Cybersecurity Panel reporting to the Aviation Security Committee, and the integration of the Trust Framework Study Group into the ANC Panel structure.

25. All regions, including Asia Pacific, should be heavily involved in ICAO's cybersecurity work.

26. The third focus area is the ICAO Crisis Response Mechanism and Framework.

27. Preparedness for serious, irregular, but reasonably predictable disasters is crucial to ensuring that the Organization is not exposed to failure at the greatest moment of need.

28. The 2021 High-level Conference on COVID-19 emphasized the need to strengthen crisis management capacity at the organizational level, leading to a better coordinated and integrated response, regardless of the nature of the crisis.

29. The Air Traffic Service (ATS) Contingency Coordination Team (CCT) system and our response to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate that ICAO has the start of a framework.

30. However, lessons have been learned, and improvements can be made. It is important to acknowledge that in the development of the crisis management framework, Versatility; Scalability; Responsiveness; and Effectiveness concepts play a crucial role.

31. It is also important to understand that while ICAO is developing a comprehensive crisis management framework, it is of utmost importance that States should be encouraged to develop national contingency plans to anticipate crises.

32. Advanced Air Mobility and New Entrants are the fourth priority focus area.

33. One of the key challenges that the aviation world will collectively face in the coming decade is the successful integration of advanced air mobility, or AAM, and new entrants.

34. Unmanned aircraft systems hold the potential of bringing considerable socio-economic benefits.

35. However, in order to fully reap the benefits of these applications, a robust and harmonized regulatory framework is necessary.

36. ICAO is developing the SARPs, Procedures for Air Navigation Services and guidance material for remotely piloted aircraft systems, or RPAS.

37. ICAO is also developing provisions and implementation tools for unmanned aircraft systems, or UAS.

38. In this context, a significant and growing number of entities are already using UAS to support their operations. Examples include the World Food Programme and UNICEF.

39. ICAO welcomes all stakeholders, in particular States in the region, as well UN sister entities, to share their best practices towards increased harmonization, for the benefit of operators, States and populations.

40. Additionally, ICAO is now addressing the larger AAM ecosystem, including by developing a holistic and detailed description of AAM, as well as early implementation guidance on eVTOL operations.
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41. Priority five is USOAP/USAP evolution and engagement.

42. The evolution of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Program and Universal Security Audit Programme, known as USOAP and USAP respectively, drives the improvement of ICAO's monitoring function.

43.   This in turn ensures that it remains fit for purpose.

44.   The engagement aspect of this priority refers to increasing Member States' interactions with the audit programmes.

45.   ICAO calls for your support in accepting USOAP/USAP activities as scheduled.

46.   States are also called to quickly implement sustainable Corrective Action Plans to address audit findings, and proper reporting to the programmes through the on-line framework.

47.   I encourage you to closely cooperate with your Regional Office that will be able to guide your efforts in increasing your participation with safety and security audits.

48.   Regional Office support to the audit programmes remains important in allowing for increased activities and for more precisely targeted activities. This in turn improves both the accuracy and relevance of data, which supports the work of all involved.

49.   In the near term, ICAO is exploring efficiencies from further integrating and streamlining the supporting processes and tools.

50.   In the mid to long-term, a study may be needed to consider a possible joint-management of USOAP and USAP, and the potential expansion to other Strategic Objectives, such as Environment and Facilitation, consistent with the One-ICAO approach.

51.   Implementation Support is the sixth priority focus area.

52.   For ICAO to fulfill its mission, the Organization has structured its work around three key interconnected pillars. The third pillar, implementation support, is undergoing a modernization process with the aim of becoming more effective and efficient.

53.   While ICAO has traditionally delivered implementation support mainly through projects, the Organization has made a concerted effort to establish an even stronger portfolio of products and services that meet States' needs.

54.   Furthermore, by enhancing our resource mobilization function, we are now able to better link States' priority needs to funding and then to implementation activities.

55.　ICAO is continuously aligning with the evolving needs of APAC Member States, and resource mobilization efforts in APAC will continue to be prioritized.

56.　Today I am pleased to see that several donor countries are supporting APAC activities, such as in the fields of Civil Aviation Master Planning and training for Government Inspectors.

57.　While ICAO has done a great amount of work in the APAC Region, we recognize that even more needs to be done.

58.　We will continue to expand our portfolio of products and services to better address the needs of the Region.

59.　In addition, the Implementation Support Group will further align its work and enhance coordination with the APAC Region's needs.

60.　Helping to underpin all of this is the new ICAO Transformational Objective.

61.　While the Secretariat is steadily and resolutely progressing on the work programme of the Organization, it is also engaged in achieving the Transformational Objective to make ICAO fit for the future.

62.　The Transformational Objective has developed into 3 Transformation Pillars of work to achieve the *Transformational Objective Vision and Outcomes* as laid out in the Strategy.

63.　The 3 Transformation Pillars are:

a) People and Culture Transformation: enabling an inclusive, ethical, coherent and sustainable workplace.

b) Digital Transformation: enabling efficient, transparent, simplified and connected digital tools and security

c) *and* Operational Transformation: enabling strengthened accountability, sustainability, operational excellence and a results-based culture

64.　Four transformational objective outcomes are to be achieved by the end of the triennium, in 2025.

65. This will result in the following benefits for Member States:

    a) a more motivated ICAO team, committed to our service-oriented mission.
    b) an Organization that is more responsive to your needs and expectations.
    c) a more participative and streamlined involvement in the ICAO processes.
    d) an Organization with exemplary governance that efficiently and effectively applies your contributions for the benefit of the aviation sector.

66. In 2026 and 2027, the ICAO Business Plan is likely to include some remaining transformation work in order to fully realize our vision.

67. Work is ongoing on the following Key Transformation Projects:

    a) ICAO's People First Strategy
    b) Planning and preparation for new Enterprise Resource planning & Project Portfolio Management, or ERP/PPM.
    c) Scoping for a Documentation management system, or DMS, project
    d) Implementation of the Information Security Roadmap
    e) Implementation of the Results-based Management/Results-based Budgeting Approach, with long-term strategic planning

68. While we are still in the beginning stages, we see strong early results and signs of overall progress.

69. The Assembly approved a Regular Budget to cover approximately half of the current estimated total cost of the Transformational Objective.

70. Additional voluntary contributions will assist the Organization to implement the full scope to reach all planned outcomes.

71. A new Transformational Fund has been established to manage these voluntary contributions.

72. States and Organizations are encouraged to continue contributing to the Transformational Fund and propose secondment candidates.

73. Projects which have been planned and approved are awaiting funds and personnel to commence implementation.

74. I invite you to visit the ICAO Transformational Objective website and contact the Secretariat for further information.

75. I would also like to highlight that a unified global legal framework is key to the orderly and safe development of international civil aviation.

76. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to call upon Member States in the Asia Pacific Region that have not yet ratified international air law treaties to which they are party, to do so.

77. It is encouraging that the subject of "ratification of international air law treaties" will be addressed in a working paper to be considered under Agenda Item 9 A .

78. In line with the overarching theme of this DGCA conference, and leading into the following discussions of the high-level Panel, I also wish to reiterate the words of the ICAO Council President and to stress the importance of gender equality and the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals.

79. Gender equality is an essential component of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the ICAO Assembly has sent a strong message with the adoption of the Resolution A41-26, which calls for going beyond "business as usual" and demonstrating stronger commitment at all levels.

80. As we heard loud and clear during the Global Aviation Gender Summit 2023 in Madrid this July, we are standing at a turning point with a responsibility to promote change.

81. For a transformation to happen in our industry, we need to tackle the gender equality issue through a multi-faceted and collaborative approach. We need clear, consistent, policies and strategies around gender equality with well-defined targets, guided by strong data and analysis.

82. Such policies encompass a wide range of areas, from encouraging more girls and young women to pursue STEM education fields, to unbiased and inclusive hiring and promotion practices, more equitable employment terms, enabling working environments, career development strategies and mentorship programmes, enhancing gender representation in executive and management roles through capacity building and setting targets, and of course active and continuous promotion of gender equality in aviation.

83. This is tightly linked with our Next Generation of Aviation professionals, or NGAP, priorities, which are in turn informed by the forecasted severe and global human resources shortage.

84. Young people will shape the aviation landscape of tomorrow, and we must invest in their development, empowering them with the skills and knowledge they need.

85. For this reason, ICAO's NGAP programme, adopted by Assembly resolution A39-29, aims to attract, educate, and retain the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals.

86. By prioritizing NGAP objectives into our aviation strategies and policies, and fostering international collaboration, we can shape a thriving aviation industry that offers equal opportunities, inspires the next generation, and continues to connect nations while fostering sustainable development.

87. On this note, let us strengthen international cooperation and partnerships to leverage resources and learn from one another, which will accelerate progress and avoid the duplication of effort.

88. The future of aviation depends on our ability to address the impending workforce shortage and embrace gender equality. We have the power and responsibility to lead the way, drive positive change and shape the future of our industry.

89. I invite you all to actively engage in the discussions during the High-Level Panel Discussion. This platform provides an excellent opportunity for us to listen, learn, and draw inspiration from one another.

90. In concluding now, I invite you to reflect on the global priorities and regional perspectives I have presented, throughout your highly significant meeting. You have an extremely precious opportunity to realize significant progress, and I therefore wish you all fruitful and constructive discussions.

91. Thank you.