



**Pre-Recorded Remarks by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the CAPA Airline Leader Summit
3 April 2025**

1. Thank you for inviting me to address the CAPA Airline Leader Summit Americas 2025. While I cannot be with you in person today, I appreciate the opportunity to share the International Civil Aviation Organization's perspective with industry leaders at this crucial time.
2. This is an important opportunity for me to commend the airline industry for maintaining the highest levels of safety and security while pursuing environmentally responsible growth. This is perfectly aligned with the efforts governments are leading to create a zero fatality and net zero emissions in the international air transport sector.
3. ICAO enables and encourages cooperation between governments and with industry towards the development and implementation of strategies for the safe, secure, and sustainable development of international air transport.
4. The implementation of these strategies is supported by the internationally recognized Standards and Recommended Practices we develop. These are annexes to the 1944 Chicago Convention, becoming State obligations.
5. We engage with stakeholders worldwide to secure the political and financial support needed to ensure States can meet their obligations and implement these strategies and standards effectively.

6. Enshrined in the 1944 Convention, ICAO's mission remains clear and perhaps more relevant than ever. We leverage aviation to "create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world " and ensure that air transport contributes to prosperity worldwide.
7. For 80 years, ICAO and airlines have worked together towards this goal. It is this partnership that has created a stable, predictable environment that continues to enable global aviation to flourish.

The ICAO Long-term strategic plan

8. This September, we will convene our 193 Member States for the ICAO Assembly and encourage them to strengthen our common path forward.
9. Among other priorities, we will be seeking support for ICAO's Long-term Strategic Plan for 2026-2050. This plan sets out our vision for aviation's future: the zero fatalities in international aviation and net-zero carbon emissions I mentioned earlier, while fostering thriving accessible, inclusive, and affordable air services for all. This plan will help safeguard and expand aviation's role while ensuring *No Country is Left Behind*.
10. This vision will be realized through the achievement of the plan's six strategic goals.
11. Firstly, ensuring every flight is safe and secure. As aviation evolves to embrace new technologies and airspace users, we will work with industry to develop standards and recommended practices that foster innovation while guaranteeing our continued progress toward this goal.
12. Our second strategic goal assures environmental sustainability.
13. Success here will be achieved through the unique global agreements reached by governments at ICAO. Crucially, these environmental agreements recognize and protect aviation's essential economic role.
14. Through the harmonization of policy and continued investment in new technologies by both the public and private sectors, we will accelerate progress toward the aspirational goal of net-zero carbon emissions for international aviation by 2050, while mitigating aircraft noise and non-CO2 emissions to the lowest possible levels.

15. This will also require us to adapt our aviation operations and infrastructure.
16. The third strategic goal promises seamless, accessible, and reliable mobility for all.
17. ICAO and industry will create regulations and procedures that facilitate smooth air navigation and travel through airports and borders, which could contribute to reducing operational complexity and costs for airlines.
18. We are looking at how to enable highly efficient and reliable flight operations. This includes advancing airspace management at a time of dynamic technological and geopolitical change while enhancing aviation resiliency and crisis preparedness.
19. Our fourth strategic goal promotes the economic development of air transport as a means to deliver prosperity and societal well-being for all.
20. Together, we will foster a sound, economically viable, and affordable civil aviation system that brings measurable benefits to all people, supporting every Member State and expanding commercial opportunities for operators and manufacturers.
21. The fifth strategic goal ensures our legal and regulatory frameworks remain robust and relevant.
22. ICAO will continuously adapt international aviation law to address current and emerging challenges. This is key to providing the certainty business needs for long-term planning and to address many of the challenges international operators are facing.
23. Our sixth strategic goal embodies our commitment that No Country is Left Behind.
24. Through collaboration, cooperation and partnerships, we will provide implementation support to States in need.
25. Working together, we can help overcome resource limitations in developing countries, ensuring the benefits of aviation reach every corner of the globe.

Regional relevance

26. Let me take a moment now to highlight how ICAO's work can benefit the Americas specifically.
27. Across the Americas, and perhaps here in the Caribbean especially, aviation is the primary mode of regional integration. It is a critical factor in socio-economic growth.
28. But efforts to enhance connectivity face multiple challenges, including high operating costs and airfares, regulatory barriers and market fragmentation, and limited fleet and route options.
29. These challenges can be addressed through stronger regional implementation of ICAO guidance.
30. Together, we can encourage bold, collective action to strengthen air connectivity through regional cooperation, policy alignment, public-private partnerships, investment in aviation, technology and digital transformation, and environmental sustainability initiatives.
31. This will call upon a collective effort from States, industry, and regional organizations.
32. I would like to highlight that the importance of achieving this is far more than economic. The Caribbean and other regions' vulnerability to hurricanes and climate-related events also requires a strong aviation network for emergency response and disaster recovery.
33. In other words, enhanced connectivity will mobilize aid faster, support resilience-building, and save lives.
34. This is why ICAO is working closely with regional entities including CARICOM, the Association of Caribbean States, the Organization of American States, LACAC, and industry partners IATA, ALTA, and ACI. This includes assisting States helping create the conducive and consistent operating environment airlines need.

Enabling

35. Of course, this is just a small part of the work we need to be doing to deliver our vision in the regional and at the global level.
36. ICAO has identified the critical enablers of our 2050 plan.

37. Firstly, we ourselves need to continue improving as an organization. We have already implemented several new digital platforms to make us more efficient, and we are modernizing internal process to make us more effective. ICAO must continue these efforts.
38. Secondly, ICAO recognizes the global talent shortage affecting aviation worldwide. That is why we are actively working with our industry partners to attract new talent to aviation, including by encouraging more women to participate in the aviation workforce. Globally, only 5% of the aviation workforce are female, and addressing the unique challenges that women face in our industry will help grow the overall aviation workforce.
39. Thirdly, ICAO must build strong partnerships while ensuring sustainable resource mobilization and financial stability.
40. This third point is of critical importance. Achieving our strategic goals will depend on sustained commitment to ICAO's framework.
41. Today, I am asking for your help to ensure that all ICAO Member State governments continue to support ICAO's mission.
42. I would also like to share that ICAO is seeking innovative funding solutions to meet the aviation industry's needs.
43. Let me give you a terrific example.
44. ICAO is developing a global platform connecting aviation sustainability projects with investors worldwide.
45. Known as the ICAO Finvest Hub, the platform will facilitate funding for sustainable aviation fuel production, clean energy infrastructure, and aviation decarbonization initiatives. This will boost industry efforts, including by scaling up Sustainable Aviation Fuel production and providing airlines with more energy choices in the future.

46. We are launching the Hub in recognition of the fact that the success of aviation's sustainability efforts – both those established by industry and those decided by States – will depend on strong partnerships and accessible funding, particularly for developing States.
47. I would like to conclude now by stressing that our industry partners are essential partners in everything I have presented today.
48. In particular, I am confident in the efficacy of your outreach, and I look forward to pursuing our collaboration with you to this end.
49. Ensuring your governments' commitment to ICAO's frameworks will be nothing less than key to realizing your international ambitions.
50. On that, I would like to thank you once again for this opportunity, and wish you all now a very productive meeting.
51. Thank you.