



Keynote address

Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,

First ICAO Global Air Cargo Summit

(Antalya, Türkiye, 9-11 April 2025)

1. I am delighted to join you here in Antalya, Türkiye and honoured to address this first-ever ICAO Global Air Cargo Summit. I would like to thank our sponsor MNG Airlines and the Turkish Directorate General of Civil Aviation for hosting us in the beautiful City of Antalya.
2. I will like to begin by sharing with you that I started my career in aviation working for an all-cargo carrier. That experience gave me a deep understanding of what makes air cargo unique and of the many different ways it benefits States and society. It is therefore with much personal interest that I encourage everyone here to share your experiences, ideas, and expertise during this important summit.
3. Since our last air cargo event held in China in 2018, we have faced - and overcome - a global pandemic. We learned important lessons and used this time to make our supply chains stronger and more efficient.
4. We made these improvements through better technology, smarter cost management, and new business models that fit today's dynamics of the sector. However, some challenges remain unresolved and new challenges have emerged.
5. This brings us to this unique meeting here today.
6. We have brought together experts from every part of the air cargo industry, with leaders from industry, regulators, and other authorities who know our industry best. Together, we will share ideas and find solutions to our common challenges.

7. This Summit comes at exactly the right time. What we have learned from the pandemic can help us, in part, to address the increasing geopolitical uncertainties affecting our global supply chains.
8. It was during the pandemic, when we dramatically lost air connectivity, that aviation vividly proved its worth as the world's fastest transport network. Even in those extremely difficult circumstances, aviation continued to deliver essential protective equipment, vaccines, and critical supplies.
9. Today, air cargo remains the top choice for the transport of high-value goods. While only half a percent of international trade moves by air in volume, this represents over one-third of the total value of all shipped goods. Companies choose air transport when they need speed and reliability for their products.
10. We expect this trend to continue, with ICAO forecasts showing that air freight volumes could grow by 3.2% each year from 2024 to 2050.
11. Meeting this growth will require updating our economic regulatory framework. We need to remove barriers that limit air cargo operators and restrict global trade. That is why I am pleased to see more countries signing liberalization agreements, providing greater opportunity for growth of air cargo services.
12. However, cargo operators still face many challenges. These include limited market access or traffic rights under a complex web of hundreds of traditional air services agreements. E-commerce in particular, as it keeps growing, needs better policy solutions and more flexibility than current rules allow.
13. We also need to focus on building and modernizing aviation infrastructure, in accordance with ICAO's global aviation safety, security, and air navigation plans. We need more capacity, better technology, and financial resources for aviation development, as this infrastructure is becoming more digital, matching today's e-commerce economy.
14. Using technology to share data between authorities, businesses, and airports is now essential. Outdated systems are often causing delays, especially with imports. By aligning automated processes with ICAO Annex 9 standards, we can significantly reduce lead times and better support secure, seamless, and efficient international trade.

15. Delivering this will require much closer collaboration among governments, industry stakeholders, ICAO, and other international partners. We have an exceptional opportunity here to explore strategies to enhance cargo release and clearance procedures, promote the adoption of electronic documentation, and enhance risk management.
16. We must also address the implementation of systems for electronic payment systems, better warehouse control, and faster customs clearance.
17. Annex 9 underscores the importance of these procedures not only in terms of facilitating the smooth entry and exit of goods but also enhancing regulatory oversight and compliance.
18. As we move forward, unwavering commitment to the highest levels of safety will of course remain key.
19. I know everyone here shares this priority, and so on that topic, I'd like to focus on dangerous goods for a moment.
20. The transport of these goods is governed by Annex 18 and ICAO's Technical Instructions manual. ICAO recognizes that it is becoming harder to follow those rules. This reflects the fact that we have more cargo, new types of dangerous goods, and more complex supply chains.
21. When Annex 18 was first adopted in the early 1980s, dangerous goods were only a small percentage of cargo. They were often pure chemicals shipped by people with knowledge of hazards they presented.
22. Today however, dangerous goods can make up 80 percent of cargo on some flights, with many being lithium batteries.
23. As you are likely aware, faulty or damaged lithium batteries can cause fires that aircraft safety systems can't control. Two fatal freighter aircraft accidents have been caused by fires where lithium batteries were involved. Similarly, fires on passenger aircraft involving lithium batteries have occurred.
24. This points to the need to promote a safety culture throughout the supply chain: a culture that ensures everyone is taking measures to proactively manage safety risks associated with dangerous cargo.

25. Our focus on safety must also extend to the rapidly developing operation of drones and advanced air mobility technologies.
26. That is why ICAO is building a robust and fit-for-purpose regulatory framework for them. Drawing on the active input and support from States and industry worldwide, the framework encompasses critical areas of aircraft airworthiness certification, operational approval and oversight, ground and airspace infrastructure development, and airspace management.
27. Moving from safety to security now, ICAO acknowledges and regrets that air cargo faces increasingly sophisticated threats, including illicit trafficking, supply chain vulnerabilities, and emerging risks associated with new technologies.
28. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated, proactive response from all stakeholders, and innovative solutions.
29. Accordingly, ICAO is working with States, industry partners, and international organizations to strengthen air cargo security, including through:
 - the implementation of Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information or PLACI systems;
 - the enhancement of screening technologies; and
 - and the improvement of intelligence-sharing mechanisms.
30. This reflects the fact that good security is not about implementing evermore strict controls - it's about smart, efficient solutions that keep cargo moving.
31. Again, working together is essential. Security and customs authorities, airlines, freight forwarders, and postal operators must all cooperate through an integrated and harmonized approach. We need security measures that work across the entire supply chain.
32. Innovation, along with sustainability, is a key focus of this summit. Technologies like automation, artificial intelligence, and digital logistics are changing our industry, and ICAO is committed to working with stakeholders to encourage the development of these technologies and their implementation worldwide.
33. In addition to their safety, security, and efficiency applications, these technologies will be key to achieving our environmental sustainability goals.

34. Innovations in energy-efficient aircraft, sustainable aviation fuels, or SAF, and unmanned cargo operations are critical to achieving ICAO's Long-Term Goal of net zero carbon emissions, and the effective implementation of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) scheme. This is especially true as e-commerce and evolving logistics models drive rising demand.
35. On the subject of SAF, I would like to highlight that the ICAO Assistance, Capacity-building and Training for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ACT-SAF) programme and the Global Framework for Aviation Cleaner Energy are helping to scale up the deployment of sustainable aviation fuels, lower carbon fuels and other cleaner energy sources. ICAO is also facilitating access to financing for initiatives related to these fuels through the Finvest Hub for decarbonization.
36. This reflects the fact that once again, reaching our goals will require more than just innovation and technology. Fostering the sustainable and environmentally responsible growth of air cargo will require everyone in the industry to work together.
37. The caliber of our speakers at this event will lead us to far reaching conclusions and recommendations. These in turn will help shape the future of air cargo, including by informing State deliberations at the ICAO Assembly this Fall.
38. I am confident that all of you will take full advantage of this unique opportunity, and I wish you all productive and engaging discussions.
39. Thank you.