



Closing Remarks

by ICAO Secretary General

Juan Carlos Salazar,

to the ICAO Workshop for Aviation Universities

(Madrid, 11 April 2025)

1. Aviation offers remarkable careers that change lives.
2. Our discussions these past two days have focused on making the highly rewarding opportunities in air transport available to more people, while ensuring our industry has the talent required to ensure safe and sustainable growth.
3. We see where action is needed:
 - a) Parts of our industry already face talent shortages.
 - b) The quality of aviation education varies significantly between regions.
 - c) Career mobility is limited by fragmented recognition of qualifications.
 - d) And too often, academic programmes and industry needs don't align.
4. These challenges particularly affect those communities who need the benefits of air connectivity the most: communities in developing States, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States.
5. The discussions we have had about the Global Aviation Education Plan represent more than just a new initiative – they represent our collective commitment to securing aviation's future.

6. The challenges we face are clear: our industry is experiencing significant talent shortages that could affect its growth and sustainability. We see inconsistencies in aviation education quality worldwide, limited workforce mobility across regions, and gaps between academic programmes and industry needs.
7. There is a plan that can address these challenges directly.
8. It foresees mutually recognized standards for aviation education, and benchmarking to ensure aviation programmes deliver the skills our industry needs.
9. It will build on the dynamic connections between ICAO, academia, industry, and regulators.
10. I am particularly encouraged by your engagement in developing this plan.
11. You have shared remarkable insights on key priorities through your various presentations, covering:
 - governance through our multi-stakeholder Advisory Board,
 - benchmarking criteria,
 - the endorsement system,
 - capacity building,
 - and positioning aviation as a career of choice.
12. The Universidad Politécnica de Madrid has been an excellent host for these important discussions, and I thank you for your hospitality. Your institution exemplifies the kind of academic excellence and innovation that the education plan aims to promote globally.
13. Looking ahead, ICAO is committed to coordinating the endorsement process and supporting capacity-building efforts. As we do so, we will ensure transparency and inclusivity in all our activities.
14. The conversations and connections formed here must continue as we move forward with refining and implementing the plan over the next two years. Your ongoing engagement will be crucial to its success.

15. Before we conclude, I am inviting Mr. Angel Luis Arias Serrano, ICAO Council Representative for Spain, and Mr. Benito Núñez Quintanilla, Secretary General of Air and Maritime Transport, to share their final thoughts.
16. Following their remarks, please join us for our group photo session to commemorate this important milestone in aviation education.
17. Thank you all for your commitment to shaping the future of aviation education.