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ICAO's Secretary General, Dr. Fang Liu, with Senegal's Minister of Tourism and Air Transport, Ms. Maimouna Ndoye Seck.

African youth a key priority for ICAO's Secretary General

MONTREAL, 6 May 2016 – Senegal should promote careers in aviation and aviation-related fields through its tertiary education system, said ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu.

“Developing human resources for the civil aviation sector is a key priority for ICAO. In our capacity as the UN’s international civil aviation agency, we predict the global aviation system will face shortages of qualified professionals in the decades to come. The issue is particularly crucial for African countries, where the industry is developing rapidly and where demographic profile is particularly youthful,” she declared.

The Secretary General also highlighted ICAO’s commitment and availability to assist Senegal and other States in the region through its ‘No Country Left Behind’ initiative.

Her remarks came as she completed a mission to Dakar during which she conducted high-level bilateral meetings with Senegal’s Minister of Tourism and Air Transport and the leaders of intergovernmental

aviation organizations. The identification and consideration of mutual key priorities for aviation development and implementation were amongst the main objectives of the visit.

Dr. Liu endorsed the Minister's vision of transforming Dakar into a viable and sustainable hub, with air transport as an effective enabler in the drive towards modernization, economic emergence and development. "ICAO commends Senegal's efforts to develop and strengthen aviation infrastructure, services and management structures," stressed Secretary General Liu. "These are essential to ensure growth in air transport activities which can be sustainably managed through optimal compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices."

Dr. Liu expressed ICAO's deep appreciation for the support and cooperation of the Government of Senegal in hosting and providing facilities for the ICAO Regional Office for Western and Central Africa, in addition to its active participation in ICAO events and programmes. Minister Maimouna Ndoeye Seck thanked the Secretary General for the assistance Senegal has received from ICAO to date, particularly through its Regional Office.

Dr. Liu had an opportunity to visit and thank the staff of ICAO's Western and Central African Regional Office during her stay in Dakar. She highlighted the importance of achieving ICAO's cultural transformation through focussing management on clear corporate goals, strategies, KPIs and deliverables. "To enhance the effectiveness of the organization, we must coordinate efficiently and implement a new way of doing business. We need to strengthen Regional Offices and increase their effectiveness through adequate human resources and training," she stressed.

Discussions also took place with Ms. Iyabo Sosina, the Secretary General of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC). The Secretaries General reviewed the progress achieved and the challenges encountered since the conclusion of a Memorandum of Cooperation between ICAO and AFCAC in 2010, and identified opportunities to further improve its effective implementation. More specifically, Ms. Sosina and Dr. Liu agreed that there should be an acceleration of the implementation of AFCAC's AFI Cooperative Inspectorate Scheme (AFI CIS) for aviation safety oversight assistance delivery, the recently established Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL PLAN), and the Human Resources Development Fund for Africa (HRDF).

Dr. Liu acknowledged the leadership of the Agency for the Safety of Air Navigation in Africa and Madagascar (ASCENA) and its contribution to the attainment of regional air navigation performance indicators and targets during her visit with ASECNA's Director General, Mr. Amadou Ousmane Guitteye.

The Senegal mission concluded with a tour of the ICAO/ASECNA Aviation Security Training facilities (ERNAM), the ASECNA Regional Air Navigation Centre (CRA), and the nearly completed Aéroport International Blaise Diagne (AIBD) in Dakar.

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A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.

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