

**ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF ICAO  
DR. FANG LIU  
TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL  
COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE**

**(New York, 23 June 2016)**

*Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Members of the Committee,  
ladies and gentlemen,*

1. On behalf of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), it is a great pleasure for me to be with you today. On earlier occasions, this Committee has invited ICAO to provide information on matters related to international travel documents as well as Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Records in connection with actions to support the implementation of Security Council resolutions.
2. On this occasion, I shall be focusing on strategic issues and priorities in the field of international civil aviation security, as well as opportunities for intensified cooperation between ICAO and UN counter-terrorism bodies.
3. I wish to thank the Chairman for inviting ICAO to today's meeting, and I also wish to acknowledge the excellent collaboration ICAO enjoys with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Counter-Terrorism Centre, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and its members and observers.
4. As some of you may be aware, ICAO is a United Nations specialized agency, which was created in 1944 upon the signing of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*, known also as the Chicago Convention.
5. ICAO works with its now 191 Member States, as well as the aviation industry and international aviation organizations, to develop the global framework of Standards, Recommended Practices and policies for the international air transport sector. These Standards are conditionally binding and, together with our Recommended Practices, are adopted by ICAO's 36 State governing Council.
6. There are currently over 12,000 Standards and Recommended Practices contained in the 19 Annexes to the Chicago Convention, and it is through these provisions – as well as ICAO's policy, auditing, technical assistance and capacity-building efforts – that the global aviation system today is able to operate over 100,000 daily commercial flights, safely, securely and efficiently. .

7. It should also be recognized that effectively resourced and administered civil aviation systems in States are essential to establishing air transport's global connectivity, which in turn serves as a key catalyst for sustainable economic and social development.
8. Safe and secure civil aviation operations provide access for citizens and businesses to global markets and trade flows, enhance tourism, and ensure more resilient local tax bases to permit more sustainable planning and investment.
9. Taken together, these benefits serve to establish how aviation's current global economic impact is estimated at 2.7 trillion dollars, or roughly 3.5 per cent of world GDP, and how it supports some 63.5 million jobs worldwide. In 2015 alone, our sector carried over 3.5 billion passengers on some 34 million flights, as well as more than 50 million tonnes of air cargo representing roughly one third of the value of all international trade.
10. Besides these significant macro-economic impacts, aviation is also critical to local search and rescue coordination, emergency aid delivery, peacekeeping, air ambulance provision, and many other under-appreciated benefits to local societies.
11. In spite of being such a positive socio-economic force, recent events have again demonstrated that civil aviation remains a target for terrorism and other security threats, and that it can be exploited as a conduit for illegal activities.
12. It is in these areas where ICAO's mandate for aviation security intersects with the mandates of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, and where our institutional cooperation becomes clearly apparent as both necessary, and productive.
13. This cooperation is, today more than ever, critical to the prevention of terrorism affecting aviation, and to how quickly we can return airports, airlines and airspace affected by security threats back to normal operations.
14. The attacks at Brussels Airport on 22 March 2016, and the events which followed, were a tragic reminder of the enormous challenges faced in securing public areas; the inseparability of aviation security and national security; the economic and social consequences of terrorism; and the historic resilience of civil aviation.
15. The Committee will also recall the loss of EgyptAir flight MS 804 on 19 May 2016, and while there has been speculation that this accident was the result of unlawful interference, I wish to stress that ICAO has not been informed of the probable cause of the accident, and nor has it been officially reported as an act of unlawful interference.

16. We await with interest the outcome of the investigation being conducted by Egypt's aviation accident investigation authority, in accordance with the international guidelines and requirements for same under ICAO's Annex 13.
17. Let us now turn to a more in-depth look at ICAO's Aviation Security Programme.
18. It is worth recalling that Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) was adopted unanimously on 28 September 2001 in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, and that it established this Committee. In the Resolution, the Security Council decided that States shall take all necessary steps to prevent terrorist acts, including the provision of early warning to other States by exchange of information.
- 19.. For ICAO, security refers to the prevention of unlawful interference with civil aviation, while facilitation refers to the clearance of aircraft, people and goods across international borders.
20. In the field of civil aviation security, the majority of those "necessary steps" are set out as Standards and Recommended Practices in ICAO's Annex 17 – *Security*. Annex 17 covers a comprehensive range of measures, from national organizational arrangements and allocation of responsibilities, threat and risk assessment, baggage and cargo security, physical security at airports, action to be taken when an incident is underway and international cooperation among other matters.
21. I wish to stress that while these Standards and Recommended Practices are comprehensive, they are not exhaustive. We know that entities and persons intent on causing unlawful interference with civil aviation seek out vulnerabilities in the system by conducting hostile reconnaissance and testing activities.
22. In line with States' responsibility to keep the level of threat to civil aviation under constant review, and to adjust the relevant provisions of their National Civil Aviation Security Programmes accordingly, ICAO is also constantly assessing threat and risk, and adjusting Annex 17 to address new and emerging threats.
23. The ICAO threat and risk assessment mechanism is a collaboration of State experts who have been appointed to the ICAO Aviation Security Panel. They meet regularly to consider intelligence and investigative information, and produce the ICAO Global Risk Context Statement, which is updated at least annually.
24. The Global Risk Context provides a global picture of the security threats faced by international civil aviation, as well as the tools to carry out such threat and risk assessment. It is essential to ICAO's Aviation Security decision making, and to how and where we assist States.

25. It is worth noting that it focuses on the technical assessment of threat and risk by considering potential and known methods of, and motivations for, disrupting civil aviation. It specifically does not seek to identify geographical areas of threat and risk, thus neutralizing sovereignty and associated political concerns which might otherwise hinder our continued progress with this important work.
26. Threats and risks currently under active consideration include: person-delivered improvised explosive devices; Man Portable Air Defence Systems; improvised explosive devices in cargo and in aircraft services; landside threats; vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices; airborne threats; remotely piloted aircraft systems; cyber threats; as well as chemical, biological and radiological threats.
27. Amendments to Annex 17 Standards and Recommended Practices, which take into account the ever-changing threat and risk context, and the evolving needs of States and civil aviation, have been approved by ICAO's Council in recent weeks for further consultation with States and aviation stakeholders. The proposals include measures to enhance the assessment of risks in airspace and to enhance landside security, which form part of ICAO's response to the findings and recommendations of the Dutch Safety Board concerning Malaysian Airlines flight MH17, and to the more recent Brussels airport attacks.
28. In stressing the importance of the international regulatory framework, I wish to underline also the need to achieve uniform and consistent effective implementation. ICAO's auditing of States' oversight responsibilities continues to reveal that implementation requires constant attention, that significant deficiencies in aviation security persist and, on occasion, that deficiencies observed by ICAO represent an immediate risk to international aviation security.
29. Where such serious deficiencies have been identified under relevant Security Oversight Audits, ICAO can declare a Significant Security Concern. This triggers a means to inform other States about the vulnerability, thereby increasing the incentive to resolve the deficiency.
30. While this mechanism has proven to be very effective in promoting regulatory compliance and excellence, there are also instances where necessary corrective action has not been taken and where vulnerabilities continue to persist.
31. ICAO's aviation security partnerships and technical assistance activities include globally-accessible professional training in a number of subject areas, donor-funded assistance projects, intensive Aviation Security Improvement Plan projects, as well as regional Cooperative Aviation Security Projects.

32. In summary, ICAO establishes and, as necessary, modifies the global aviation security performance baseline. We audit all Member States to verify the effective implementation of their aviation security oversight systems, and assist Member States to resolve deficiencies.
33. While international regulation to promote standardization, harmonization and excellence is at the heart of ICAO's mission, other means of supporting safe and secure international civil aviation operations are also essential to the ICAO framework.
34. For instance, in the immediate aftermath of the loss of MH17 in July 2014, ICAO established the Task Force on Risks to Civil Aviation arising from Conflict Zones (TF RCZ). It eventually proposed that ICAO should develop a centralized system for the sharing of information on risks to civil aviation arising from conflict zones.
35. In March of 2015, our Council agreed to this proposal, and requested that ICAO establish and host a simple, centralized, web-based conflict zone risk information repository.
36. The conflict zone information repository began operations for an initial one-year period, starting on 2 April 2015.  
Upon its assessment of the first one-year evaluation, the ICAO Council agreed last week that ICAO should continue operation of the Conflict Zone Information Repository while making some important modifications to the information reporting process.
37. Similarly, with respect to MH17, ICAO has also published detailed guidance on the threats posed to civil aviation by surface to air missile systems.
38. In addition to the pressing issues of security threat and risk, international civil aviation is also challenged by the need to assure the efficiency of air transport and provide a satisfying customer experience.
39. This is by no means a minor task as air traffic volumes continues to grow, or in the context of mounting budget pressures and increasingly complex security threats.
40. To address these joint Security and Facilitation matters directly, an important ICAO initiative has been our Traveller Identification Programme strategy, or ICAO TRIP for short.
41. This Programme links five key elements into a coherent framework, so that travellers may be identified by their passport, visa or national identity cards with the highest possible degree of certainty, security and efficiency. The five elements are:
  - Evidence of identification;
  - Document issuance and control;
  - Machine-readability;

- Inspection systems and tools;
  - And interoperable applications.
42. ICAO has also long recognized the facilitation benefits of Advance Passenger Information (API) as a tool for effective and efficient border control, consistent with the scope and intent of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014).
  43. Together with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA), we have published related guidelines to help ensure harmonized global implementation, and in April of this year our Facilitation Panel recommended that API systems should be mandated in ICAO's Annex 9.
  44. This recommendation will be considered by the ICAO Council in early 2017, and otherwise we are also participating at present in the CTC-led API workshops being conducted in various world regions.
  45. Another concern with respect to the customer experience is the management of public expectations.
  46. For example, inconsistencies in how aviation security measures are carried out in different airports frequently attracts the criticism of travelers. But in fact, such inconsistencies also have the benefit of frustrating efforts by terrorists to anticipate aviation security weak points, and
  47. ICAO Recommended Practices encourage States to incorporate a level of unpredictability into their aviation security systems to increase their deterrent effect.
  48. Turning now to regional developments, I am very pleased to inform you that the new Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa, which was developed under ICAO's auspices, is now gaining important momentum.
  49. A recent Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa, jointly organized by African Union Commission (AUC), the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), ICAO, and the Government of Namibia, took place in Windhoek, Namibia, from 4 to 7 April 2016 and adopted there the Windhoek Declaration on aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa, together with an ambitious set of 15 targets.
  50. These targets stressed the need for compliance and effective implementation of the African Civil Aviation Policy and ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), as well as the enhancement of related oversight systems. The Windhoek Declaration and targets will now be submitted to the upcoming AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government on 1 July 2016, for its endorsement, and will serve as a working document to guide the implementation of the related AU Decision.

51. Among the proposals to be considered by the 39th Session of the ICAO Triennial Assembly, which will take place this 27 September to 7 October 2016 at our Headquarters in Montréal, is the establishment of the first-ever Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP).
52. This Plan will serve as a strategic tool and blueprint for the further enhancement of international civil aviation security, addressing the needs of States and regions while guiding all States' aviation security enhancement efforts, and those of other stakeholders, through a set of internationally agreed goals and targets.
53. The intention is for the Plan to be developed through systematic and comprehensive consultations with Member States and industry, in order to reach consensus on all aspects of its content, including the appropriate goals and targets to accurately reflect the needs of States and regions.
54. Importantly, this new ICAO Global Plan will advocate a more holistic and cross-functional approach to aviation security, in recognition of the many aviation and other fields of technical expertise that must be engaged in to ensure effective aviation security risk management.
55. In looking forward to improved aviation security in the coming years and, more generally, to strengthening global counter-terrorism efforts, we must also ask ourselves how ICAO and UN Security Council counter-terrorism bodies can build even further on our established cooperation and collaboration.
56. One area I would propose we explore further together are CTC/CTED country visits.
57. Effective aviation security requires strong political commitment at the State level to decide policies, adequately fund programmes, set targets, and achieve results. This is a message that ICAO reinforces to the ICAO Assembly and Council, and in all high-level meetings. It is especially important that this message reaches Ministers who have direct responsibility for aviation security.
58. CTC/CTED country visits are very useful opportunities to underscore the need for these political commitments, and I would welcome a dialogue with CTED on taking better advantage of them. This will be an especially important priority as ICAO now embarks on leading development of the Global Aviation Security Plan, and on seeking States' commitments to implement the Plan.
59. As previously mentioned, there is also the issue that some States do not take swift and sufficient action to resolve Significant Security Concerns identified through ICAO aviation security audits.
60. The compliance tools available to ICAO, while generally effective, have limited impact in those situations when resistance to complying with international Standards is more intense. I would therefore welcome more dialogue and cooperation with CTED on how UN mechanisms may

possibly be employed to help accelerate the correction of aviation security deficiencies under these circumstances.

61. While some donor States and regional organizations regularly and generously provide ICAO with voluntary contributions and technical experts to support assistance activities, there remain significant shortfalls in the availability of necessary financial and in-kind resources.
62. Advocacy for increasing the level and sources of assistance support is yet another example of how UN counter-terrorism bodies can aid the enhancement of civil aviation security.
63. And speaking of assistance to States, ICAO is now working with CTED on updating the *CTC Technical Guide on Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1373* (2001). I very much look forward to this useful tool becoming the 'go-to' resource for States.
64. Finally, the emerging Global Aviation Security Plan will be ICAO's future centrepiece for global aviation security enhancement. I look forward to an opportunity to share information with the Committee on its progress at a future opportunity, and in the meantime ICAO would welcome the support of the Committee in developing the Plan so that it might serve as a major addition to counter-terrorism efforts, and one which suitably complements related initiatives across all other sectors.
65. In closing now distinguished colleagues, let me pleased stress that ICAO considers aviation security to be among the highest priorities of the Organization.
66. Continued success and progress call on us to further strengthen international collaboration at all levels, including toward policy development, the global regulatory framework for aviation, joint projects to assist States in carrying out their responsibilities, and the practical tools needed to accelerate action.
67. I look forward to ICAO's work with the Committee and all other counter-terrorism bodies, to effectively address our shared challenges.
68. Thank you.