



**Intervention by the Secretary General  
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
Dr. Fang Liu,  
to the UN Habitat III Special Session on Urban Infrastructure  
and Basic Services, including energy**

*(Quito, Ecuador – 17 October 2016)*

1. Good afternoon everyone.
2. The guiding topics for this special session include legal and regulatory frameworks and the policy reform priorities for infrastructure and basic services in the context of the New Urban Agenda.
3. These are subjects very top-of-mind in global aviation today, as worldwide aviation network has a tendency to double its flight and passenger volumes once every fifteen years, and it is projected to do so again by 2030.
4. As many of you are likely aware, a good many urban airfields are now evolving into an airport city unto themselves. These modern, large scale infrastructure including its air navigation and air traffic management systems, must be regulated on the basis of global Standards and Recommended Practices adopted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).
5. In terms of policy reforms, ICAO has been very hard at work in recent years raising awareness among top-level government and other stakeholders on the importance of integrating aviation development priorities into national and municipal development planning.
6. Our sector has only received some 4.2% of global Official Development Assistance in the past decade, and this is very much out of proportion with the critical role it plays in promoting socio-economic peace and prosperity.
7. Another guiding question for this session involves how we can jointly ensure the effective management of the institutions responsible for the regulation, planning, and management of urban infrastructure.

8. ICAO has been doing this for years now, in part by auditing States capacities to oversee aviation safety and security in their jurisdictions, which helps us to identify their gaps and risks.
9. And once these gaps have been identified, we then coordinate or provide targeted assistance and capacity-building under our No Country Left Behind initiative.
10. This speaks to how we have been transforming ICAO quite significantly in recent years, from a technical agency focused primarily on standards setting, to a more outward-looking UN body seeking new ways to help our Member States to effectively implement our guidance.
11. The importance of effective implementation of ICAO provisions cannot be over-stated, mainly as compliance with our global standards is the key prerequisite before cities and States can begin to realize aviation's substantial socio-economic benefits.
12. Most recent figures indicate the extent of these benefits globally to be equivalent to 62.7 million direct and indirect jobs and some 2.7 trillion dollars in worldwide GDP.
13. Aviation accomplishes these impacts by:
  - opening up markets and trade flows for local producers;
  - expanding tourism and its associated and varied revenue streams;
  - and ultimately by fostering a much more significant and resilient local tax base providing a foundation for future planning and investment.
14. It is on the basis of these benefits that international air transport provides a vital socio-economic lifeline to many countries and regions, most especially Land Locked and Small Island Developing States.
15. And this is also why air transport is so integral to fully 13 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals under Agenda 2030, and also so integral to the New Urban Agenda.
16. Indeed, ICAO and UN-Habitat have joined the Global Partnership forged by the 2030 Agenda. Our goal is to enhance the synergies between ICAO compliant aviation infrastructure and prosperous, sustainable urban centres.

17. I would like to close my intervention by re-stressing that sustainable and resilient socio-economic development can only be achieved when air transport is meaningfully integrated into national and municipal long term planning frameworks, including national development and national infrastructure plans.
18. Its timely integration will greatly contribute to the eradication of poverty and generally increased prosperity at the local, national and regional levels, consistent with this New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to which we all ascribe.

Thank you.