



**Lecture Remarks by the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Dr. Fang Liu,
to the Uruguayan Civil Aviation Board**

(Montevideo, Uruguay – 4 April 2017)

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General Alberto Zanelli, Commander in Chief of the Uruguayan Air Force;
Brigadier General (Av.) Antonio Alarcón, Uruguay Director General of Civil Aviation,
Distinguished Officials of the Uruguay Civil Aviation Board,
Friends and colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

1. Please let me begin by extending my thanks to the Government of Uruguay and its Civil Aviation Board. ICAO is grateful for this opportunity to share with you our priorities for international civil aviation, now and for the future, and with specific focus on some issues of relevance to Uruguay and ICAO's South American (SAM) Region.
2. I would also wish to express ICAO's deep appreciation to the Delegation of Uruguay to the Council of ICAO, its Ambassador, **Mr. Martin Vidal**, its Alternate representative, **Mr. Daniel Amado**, and to **Ms. Maria Angelica Gonzalez** from your Ministry of Transport, for their tremendous efforts in making the arrangements for this visit.
3. As many of you are aware, the international aviation community has been very actively engaged on a number of important priorities of late, including among others:
 - Flight tracking procedures post MH-370;
 - The safe integration of remotely-piloted and suborbital operations;
 - Modernized infrastructure supporting much needed increases in airspace capacity and operational efficiency;
 - Cybersecurity preparedness and airport landside security;
 - Air cargo security and the safe carriage of lithium batteries;
 - And aviation's responsibilities in addressing the challenges of climate change.

4. With respect to the work we have undertaken post MH-370, a new revision to the concept of operations for ICAO's Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS) should be ready very shortly.
5. This will complement the new performance-based Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for rapid location finding of downed aircraft, and the prompt recovery of black box data, which the Council adopted last year.
6. At the 39th Assembly, the revised Fifth Edition of the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) was fully endorsed, as was our continuing work on Performance-based Navigation globally.
7. However, many of the air navigation objectives we'll be considering in support of both improved flight tracking, as well as improved capacity and efficiency more generally going forward, will be reviewed in detail at ICAO's 13th Air Navigation Conference in 2018.
8. As with the GANP, the Second Edition of the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) was also endorsed by the 39th Assembly.
9. The revised Second Edition's amendments will mainly result in greater prioritization on safety management system (SMS) implementation for operators. It also includes safety performance indicators for your State Safety Programmes (SSPs), as well as a more defined course for us to follow toward predictive risk management – once SMS implementation is more advanced.
10. You may also wish to recall that the first amendment to Annex 19, on Safety Management, became effective in July of last year, and that it becomes applicable in November 2019.
11. The tremendous success of the GASP and the GANP, as well as recent security incidents which highlighted the need for greater integration between local, national and international regulatory and enforcement agencies, led the Assembly to endorse calls for the development of a newly envisaged Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP), as was an extensive Resolution on cybersecurity preparedness.
12. These activities will accordingly be fast-tracked.
13. Landside security concerns were addressed at the Assembly through a number of points in the Consolidated statement on aviation security, perhaps the most salient of which stressed the need to avoid the creation of any areas of mass gathering either inside or next to airport terminals.

14. The 39th Assembly also called on ICAO to begin exploring the need for a new Global Air Transport Plan. Additionally endorsed in the Economic Development area was the need for:
 - Finalization of ICAO's international liberalization agreements.
 - Customization of global and regional forecasts for aviation personnel.
 - And lastly for ICAO to strengthen and expand its partnerships, with all applicable stakeholders, in aid of greater data sharing and analysis supporting increased investment for air transport development.
15. With respect to our shared objectives on aviation's environmental performance, I am pleased that we continue to make progress with regards to aircraft noise, local air quality, and on all elements in our basket of measures to reduce aviation emissions.
16. I am also pleased of the Assembly's recognition of our continuing work on:
 - A new supersonic noise Standard for future aircraft, and the possible certification of a new supersonic aircraft in the 2020-2025 timeframe.
 - Development of the first-ever global CO₂ emissions certification Standard for New Type and In-production aircraft.
 - And development of a new non-volatile Particulate Matter (nvPM) emissions Standard for all turbofan and turbojet aircraft.
17. Perhaps the most historic and widely-reported development we realized at the Assembly was the agreement on the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), the first of its kind for any major industry sector.
18. We are now hard at work on the follow-on items needed in support of full CORSIA implementation, and your active involvement in the work now required to make it operational from 2020 will be of critical importance.
19. With respect to local traffic growth, ICAO is presently forecasting that passenger flights to and from Central and South American States will grow over the next 30 years, at an annual average rate of 3.5 per cent, while freight traffic will grow at 2.8 per cent.
20. Here in Uruguay, your travel and tourism sector had experienced some understandable downturns since the loss of your primary regional carrier in 2012, but we have been encouraged to see those numbers improving more lately.
21. For instance you welcomed 2.8 million international tourists to Uruguay in 2015, with associated contributions of \$1.8 billion USD to your local economy. Long-term forecasts through 2025 point to steady 4.2% travel and tourism sector growth, but this figure would likely be much more robust if Uruguay could once again depend on a dedicated carrier to bring greater numbers of tourists to and from SAM Region States, as well as to code share with carriers from other continents.

22. Connectivity with other global destinations is another important indicator where greater attention and action could be focused. Uruguay only benefits from direct connections to 7 States at present, compared to Panama with 25, the and Dominican Republic with 14, and Costa Rica with 9.
23. On a more positive note, an International Monetary Fund report from 2016 has noted that Uruguay is exporting to some 150 countries around the world, with very robust growth having been recorded in the past decade – largely driven by animal and vegetable product exports.
24. Air transport is an essential global lifeline for perishable products and the tourism growth I referenced a moment ago, which brings to mind the importance of Uruguay’s civil aviation system being fully ICAO-compliant. Continued investments in modern airport and air traffic management infrastructure will help you to manage your projected traffic growth safely, securely, and efficiently, thereby further augmenting this already positive trend in Uruguayan exports.
25. As you are now aware, ICAO has made a firm commitment to assist States under our ‘No Country Left Behind’ initiative, and the ICAO Secretariat is now implementing tailored Technical Assistance and Cooperation Programmes in specific States as a result.
26. I have been striving in this regard to restructure the ICAO Secretariat in order to realize a strengthened ICAO regional presence. This will explain why 15 new Regional Office posts were created in 2016, focused mainly on safety and security assistance for Member States, and why I have also assigned a regional affairs coordination function to the Strategic Planning, Coordination and Partnerships Office which ICAO has newly established.
27. These efforts are already helping to optimize the synergies between our local Technical Assistance and a Technical Cooperation efforts, and Uruguay is seeing some direct benefits such as through the project being undertaken by our Technical Cooperation Bureau and DINACIA, as well as through a more recent Technical Assistance Project managed by our Lima Office and financed through the ICAO Safety Fund (SAFE).
28. This latter effort was focused on resolving two significant safety concerns reported during an ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) mission, and I was extremely happy to learn of Uruguay’s progress in overcoming these challenges.
29. Through the projects just noted and additional support realized through South America’s SRVSOP Regional Safety Oversight Organization (RSOO), Uruguay has now improved its ICAO USOAP rating by more than 30%, while resolving all significant concerns identified.
30. Several other South American States have also increased their USOAP scores by more than 15 per cent in just the last year, and I’m therefore pleased to report that the overall South American average now stands at over 76 percent – one of the highest in the world.

31. Moving forward with the implementation of State Safety Programmes in South America will drive further progress, as will more extensive and effective Safety Management System development. Both of these priorities have been recently enshrined in ICAO's latest GASP revisions.
32. There is also the matter of the Bogotá Declaration and its targets for SAM States, which I will come to shortly.
33. I would encourage Uruguay to remain cognizant of these related objectives, whether with respect to local performance or the assistance and capacity building by which your State can assist neighbouring countries, consistent with the principles of 'No Country Left Behind'.
34. We need to maintain the very positive momentum currently evident in ICAO's South American Region, and this emphasizes for us the continued importance of the Regional Safety Oversight Cooperation System (SRVSOP) coordination mechanism, and importantly the stable funding it requires to do its work.
35. ICAO has also been encouraged by your Region's progress subsequent to the establishment of the Accident Investigation Regional Cooperation Mechanism (ARCM) of South America, and we will look forward to the ARCM driving further benefits and cooperation among the 13 South American States it comprises.
36. It's important for me to stress in this context that Uruguay's recent progress would not have been possible without the strong commitment of its high-level officials. Myself and the Council President of ICAO work very hard in our senior capacities to generate this political will, and it's very much my honour to be able to congratulate Uruguay today for being so unified in your dedication, actions and effectiveness in responding to your latest safety challenges... *Bravo to all of you!*
37. In recent years, as the global economy has struggled and States have faced more pressing economic challenges than in past decades, we've been asking ourselves what more we can do at ICAO to help governments mitigate these downturns and optimize aviation's significant socio-economic benefits.
38. It is our Organization's strong conviction, in the era of 'Agenda 2030' and the visionary UN Sustainable Development Goals adopted under it (UN SDGs), that the presence in States of safe, efficient, secure, economically viable and environmentally sound international aircraft operations is more essential today than ever before.
39. ICAO-compliant air transport spurs enhanced tourism, expanded market and trade access for local businesses, increased consumer choice, more rapid humanitarian response in times of crisis, and many other benefits which arise due to increased local job creation and a more robust tax base.
40. These increases in connectivity subsequently spur additional aviation re-investment, creating a sustainable and very dynamic cycle of civil aviation and national development.

41. The 39th Assembly has now approved a Resolution which calls for States' participation in the SDGs, and I would like to read for you here two of its clauses which I consider pertinent for today's meeting.

42. In the first case, the Assembly:

Urged Member States to recognize the significant contributions of aviation to sustainable development, realized by stimulating employment, trade, tourism and other areas of economic development at the national, regional and global levels, as well as by facilitating humanitarian and disaster response to crises and public health emergencies;

43. And in the second case it:

Urged member States to enhance their air transport systems by effectively implementing ICAO SARPs and Policies, while at the same time elevating the priorities of the aviation sector into their national development plans, supported by robust air transport sector strategic plans and civil aviation master plans, thereby leading to the attainment of the SDGs.

44. Taking note of this, one of Uruguay's main air transport challenges today is related to the Bogotá Declaration, which establishes an 80% effective implementation target of ICAO SARPs for all SAM States.

45. As I said before, even though Uruguay showed significant improvement with its last audit, the actual result showed an effective implementation of 71%; with four areas under or very close to 60%: Organization; Air Navigation Services; Aerodromes and Accident Investigation.

46. In order to improve these results, consideration should be given to strengthening the Civil Aviation System in Uruguay, and to ensure sufficient autonomy and separation of functions in order to avoid conflicts of interest.

47. Honorable Minister of Transport, in this regard I am very encouraged that we are signing today a new Management Services Agreement (MSA) between ICAO and Uruguay, in the presence of your Civil Aviation Board.

48. This constitutes a clear example of your government's strong commitments to civil aviation, and of your openness to consider ICAO's services when exploring innovative and sustainable ways to improve the management and oversight of civil aviation activities here.

49. ICAO will therefore greatly look forward to Uruguay:
- Increasing its level of effective implementation of ICAO SARPs, especially respective of the Bogota Declaration's targets.
 - Addressing the planning and targets established under ICAO's Global Plans, with firm commitments on associated Regional Projects and mechanisms.
 - Strengthening the overall capacity of your Civil Aviation Sector following ICAO's recommended practices.
 - And submitting your State Action Plan for local CO₂ emissions.
50. We are committed to working with Uruguay on any and all matters related to its civil aviation system. In this regard, the Technical Cooperation Bureau and the SAM Regional Office are ready to assist you, and our esteemed Directors Mr. Galan and Mr. Hoyer have accompanied me on this mission to facilitate your further discussions.
51. Considering the UN SDGs, and related objectives for aviation development objectives to be more meaningfully aligned with national development priorities, ICAO would like to work more closely with Uruguay and build on the impressive results you have already achieved.
52. Your country is a leader in many social development indicators in Latin America, ranking among the top five in many aspects of Human Development, and nothing should stand in your way as you now seek to improve your ICAO compliance, optimize your aviation benefits, and ultimately deliver sustainable socio-economic prosperity for all Uruguayan citizens and businesses.
53. We are eager to continue on this journey with you, and I look forward to seeing the further progress which awaits us.

Thank you.