



**Address by the  
Secretary General of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization  
Dr. Fang Liu  
to the to the 2018 ICAO  
Asia and Pacific (APAC) Ministerial Conference**

*(Beijing, China – 31 January 2018)*

1. I am deeply honoured to join you here in Beijing today for this important and very timely ICAO Asia and Pacific (APAC) Ministerial Conference.
2. Please let me reiterate ICAO's very deep appreciation for China's support for this event, as well as for ICAO's mission and priorities more generally.
3. China's assistance and capacity-building efforts especially are greatly appreciated by ICAO, as well of course by the States which have benefitted from them.
4. This refers not only to what you are undertaking here in the APAC region, but also globally through the wider framework of South-South cooperation.
5. I also wish to express my personal gratitude for the commitments and actions which are demonstrated in China by China Civil Aviation Authorities and aviation industry operators.
6. China's commercial aviation market is presently projected to become the world's largest by 2022, but even as it has experienced such dramatic growth over the past decades, the safety and efficiency of air transport here have remained exemplary.
7. These contributions by China and other leading APAC States help us to understand why the Asia Pacific today is seen as a very promising region with great potential.
8. In terms of the overall regional picture for international air traffic in 2017, Asia and Pacific Revenue Passenger Kilometres (RPK) grew by a very healthy 9.6 per cent.

9. Your region also continues to manage the second largest market share of international traffic at 29 per cent.
10. With respect to the economic impacts of civil aviation in the Asia Pacific, your air transport sector today employs over 30 million people and contributes more than 630 billion dollars in Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
11. These results, while very positive and forecast to continue, also point to some serious challenges for many local governments.
12. For example, while there is rapid growth with respect to your Region's traffic, operators, and fleets, there is also quite low corresponding growth in many of your civil aviation authorities' resources and capabilities.
13. This brings to mind one of the key messages which I'm carrying around the world today regarding the direct links between the levels of ICAO compliance in States, and their ability to realize and benefit from the positive socio-economic impacts of air transport.
14. This point is very clearly underscored by the fact that States' attainment of no fewer than 15 of the 17 United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is greatly facilitated by the local availability of safe, secure efficient and ICAO compliant air operations.
15. Reinforcing some of the compliance points made by President Aliu, a key challenge is that several APAC Member States have not yet established effective aviation safety oversight systems.
16. Additionally, the current safety oversight effective implementation average for APAC States is 60 per cent, which is below the world average of 65 per cent.
17. We also have to bear in mind that 14 APAC States still have effective implementation scores below your 60 per cent regional average.
18. When I meet with world leaders and transport officials to encourage greater ICAO compliance, a key point in those discussions concerns the need for States to establish authoritative and well-resourced civil aviation authorities.

19. Since your Region's lowest effective implementation scores are in the area of 'qualified personnel, training and human resources development programmes should be initiated quickly with the goal of increasing the number of qualified inspectors and other aviation professionals in the Region.
20. Other challenging areas for APAC compliance concern your levels of civil and military cooperation, and the still low percentage of regional runways which can permit Performance-based navigation approaches.
21. There is also the matter of the transition to Aeronautical Information Management (AIM).
22. Many airport certifications here are also still outstanding, and regional progress in the implementation of State Safety Programmes (SSPs) is similarly less than optimal.
23. We should not, however, in the face of the challenges, lose sight of the fact that our global network is coming off its safest year on record.
24. And we should also remind ourselves that the Asia Pacific accident rate has been consistently trending downward in the last five years.
25. To augment these positive safety trends, and to keep pace with current growth, let me please outline some current targets and priorities.
26. In the first place APAC States should prioritize the implementation of Air Traffic Services and related infrastructure, as well as oceanic surveillance capabilities.
27. Additionally, there is a somewhat urgent need for new route structures to be established.
28. With respect to your needs to increase capacity, Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM) and airport capacity enhancement are two key areas which should be focused on.
29. In the case of ATFM, air traffic flows can only be managed transparently and cooperatively, but overall this solution holds tremendous promise as a means of accommodating future growth.
30. At present, only select APAC States are engaging in this cooperation.

31. In addition to newer airport mega-facilities, such as the one now being completed here in Beijing, land availability and environmental clearances pose many challenges with respect to smaller 10-20 million passenger regional airports.
32. ICAO has been greatly encouraged by China's innovative efforts to evolve the Jing-Ji-Jin Region into an international city cluster and multi-airport system.
33. Airport planners and operators either need to consider these types of multi-airport system solutions – or to radically change the way in which their airports are designed and operate.
34. Only in this manner will you overcome the inherent economies-of-scale which benefit the mega-hubs.
35. Another very important priority for aviation globally concerns the issue of cyber vulnerabilities, whether in the aviation Security or Safety domains.
36. With our sector's rapidly increasing adoption of digital technologies, the issue of cyber threats is becoming very critical.
37. We must all work together to elevate our awareness and improve our preparedness to deal with cyber-attacks.
38. A last point I would like to raise with you concerns the fact that ICAO's Regional Office in Bangkok is now a better-resourced and more assistance-focused partner for Asia and Pacific States.
39. The organizational adjustments which have facilitated this transition were key priorities of mine when I was appointed Secretary General of ICAO 3 years ago.
40. President Aliu spoke earlier of the Combined Action Team and Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs) progress that has helped us to achieve, but additionally I would also highlight:
  - The recent development by Regional Director Mishra and his team of the new APAC Development and Assistance Tool;
  - The regional assistance and capacity building activities and initiatives it coordinated with donor States and partner Organizations;

- The new Safety enhancement Initiatives it has produced to mitigate accident risks due to Loss of control Inflight (LOCI);
  - And the new programme the Regional Office recently embarked on for improving airport certification, in conjunction with States and Airports Council International (ACI).
41. These are just a few of our Bangkok Office's many 2017 achievements on behalf of your Region's States and operators, and we hope to reinforce them through this Conference and its Declaration.
42. We can do so here:
- By ensuring highest-level political awareness and support for APAC aviation safety and sustainability priorities.
  - By affirming that APAC Civil Aviation Authorities must be better resourced and more autonomous.
  - By sending a clear signal to the travelling public, industry partners, and potential investors, on the high-level commitment of APAC States to aviation safety and air navigation capacity and efficiency.
  - And by realizing an unprecedented new platform for high-level interaction in the areas of APAC technical cooperation and assistance, whether on a bilateral or multilateral basis.
43. In closing now, ladies and gentlemen, please let me remind you that this October ICAO will be convening its 13th Air Navigation Conference (AN-Conf/13).
44. A number of pressing APAC challenges I have raised here today are closely related to your Region's air navigation capacity and efficiency.
45. This highlights why your participation at this air navigation conference, which occurs only once or twice each decade, will be so important this October.
46. I must also re-emphasize the importance of your attendance at our NGAP Global Summit later this year.

47. This NGAP Summit is very timely as APAC States are expected to become more proactive in ensuring that opportunities for technical skills and education are available equally, for both young women and men, which will surely help APAC to effectively address the challenges now being reflected in our long-range personnel forecasts.
48. We have much to work toward together as APAC continues to grow and to prosper, and on that note please may I wish you all a very productive and engaging conference.
49. Thank you.