



**Opening remarks,
by the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Dr. Fang Liu,
to the International Council of Aircraft Owners
and Pilots Associations (IAOPA) 2018 World Assembly**

(Queenstown, New Zealand, 26 March 2018)

1. It is my great pleasure today to help extend ICAO's appreciation and recognition to the General Aviation community, and to our close and very important colleagues at the International Council of Aircraft Owners and Pilots Associations (IAOPA).
2. I would like to begin by extending my very warm thanks to IAOPA's President and CEO, Mr. Mark Baker, for extending the invitation to join you here in Queenstown and help set the stage for this 2018 World Assembly.
3. General aviation makes significant contributions to the overall advancement of civil aviation around the world, providing important transportation infrastructure in both developing and developed countries.
4. This helps it to play a key role in enabling many professionals and travellers to reach important commercial, logistical, and adventure destinations, locations which traditional commercial aircraft operators are unable to serve.
5. And we should also not forget that general aviation skills and experience still play a very important role in areas such as pilot training, search and rescue operations, and the delivery of humanitarian and emergency aid.
6. An important concern for all of aviation today is forecast aviation growth, and the challenges which it poses in terms of resources, capacity, and modernization.
7. With respect to aircraft and airspace design and procedures, the solutions being proposed include some very innovative technologies and capabilities, many of which will have impacts on both general aviation and commercial air transport.

8. For example ICAO today envisions that machine-based learning and other forms of artificial intelligence will play more extensive roles in future aviation safety, air navigation, and efficiency performance.
9. And with respect to new advances in aircraft surveillance capabilities, technologies such as space-based ADS-B could well eliminate all legacy airspace transitions in time.
10. Today's incredibly rapid rate of technological progress also means that we should soon expect to see more and more aircraft entering service, both manned and unmanned, which will fly higher, lower, faster, and much slower than those we know today.
11. At one end of this operational spectrum we'll see drones navigating residential and urban environments to deliver goods, and at the other new sub-orbital aircraft will be moving at super- or hyper-sonic speeds, and at altitudes well beyond what we presently understand as 'controlled airspace'.
12. This is just a brief glimpse into the many changes now impacting international aviation, and let us be clear that they will be impacting the general and commercial sectors alike.
13. This is why ICAO considers it so important that we're fully prepared to anticipate, enable, and guide this evolution in aviation to the greatest benefit for all aircraft operators.
14. And at the same time of course we remain committed to safeguarding the fundamental global interoperability of civil aviation, a key aspect of why aircraft operations have become such an incredible force for peace and economic prosperity in the world.
15. These priorities help to explain why ICAO has been working in recent years to more meaningfully integrate general aviation into the consultative forums we organize.
16. When civil aviation authorities fail to take into account the differences between commercial air transport and general aviation, the results can too-often be the over-regulation of the general aviation sector. This significantly constrains its ability to grow, and to thrive.

17. We are well-aware, for example, of IAOPA's consistent position that regulations designed for larger commercial air transport (CAT) operations often place undue burdens on small operators and private owners.
18. Fortunately, ICAO and the general aviation sector have already established a very healthy and productive level of collaboration to address these and other issues.
19. This includes our joint work not long ago on Annex 6 to the Chicago Convention, but additionally on priorities relating to Safety Management, Environmental Protection, and the overall modernization of Global Air Navigation systems.
20. I would like to acknowledge that ICAO is aware of and sensitive to the related concerns of IAOPA and its community, for instance regarding whether this modernization may be realized at the expense of the general aviation community.
21. But I would also like to reassure you that the Member States of ICAO understand that a balanced approach is key to making the future system sustainable.
22. This is the case for example with respect to increased equipage and training requirements, the reduction of 'Class G' airspace to make room for new routes, or the proliferation of approvals required to fly internationally.
23. Through the excellent advocacy work of Mr. Frank Hofmann, the IAOPA has been making its voice heard in the ICAO Air Navigation Commission and at relevant conferences and panels we convene.
24. But I must also call on your community to give Mr. Hofmann more assistance and to expand these efforts further. We need to see more general aviation representatives being more participative in ICAO governance processes.
25. This would include our Aerodrome Design and Operations Panel (ADOP), ATM Operations Panel (ATMOPSP), and of course our Flight Operations Panel (FLTOPSP).
26. And your voices would also add good value to our discussions and related guidance determinations concerning the safety of operation of UAVs.

27. Importantly, it is not simply a matter of merely being present at these meetings, but more so about rolling up your sleeves and working with ICAO's experts on general aviation's key priorities.
28. This same need for your increased participation similarly applies at the national level, where I know you are currently seeking a more commensurate application of regulations for general aviation activities.
29. Being proactive with national governments is just as imperative as being proactive at ICAO, and this points to an important responsibility and role for the many national pilot associations who come together under your IAOPA umbrella.
30. ICAO's work with Next Generation Aviation Professionals (NGAP) is an area critical importance today, and one which would also benefit tremendously from greater general aviation inputs.
31. Our NGAP objectives would also be aided by the wider roll-out of outreach efforts such as the AOPA "You Can Fly Initiative" in the United States. The IAOPA is in an excellent position to see programmes such as this implemented more globally.
32. One thing I wish to make clear is that we clearly recognize in ICAO today that if the overall general aviation community becomes diminished, then so too will the pool of skilled aviators which is so essential to the future viability of civil aviation – especially in developing countries.
33. And it is equally important that today's pilots continue to master the basics of airmanship. In this regard, I would encourage you to continue working with commercial airlines on initiatives that provide our sector with seasoned pilots, and by this I mean both men and women who have benefitted from exposure to hands-on flying on a variety of aircraft types.
34. As some of you may be aware, ICAO's Member States have been requesting to reinvigorate our Gender Equality Program so that it can coordinate and lead sector-wide initiatives.
35. A mere 3-to-4 per cent of commercial pilots worldwide are women today, and we will be looking to efforts from the general aviation sector to help address in the future this through proactive outreach initiatives.

36. There can be no aviation without aviators, after all, and with the overall shortages for skilled pilots now being forecast we cannot afford to ignore the huge potential which is inherent in the world's next generations of young women and girls.
37. Ladies and gentlemen, a major priority at ICAO today involves the assistance and capacity-building we coordinate for States under the banner of our *No Country Left Behind* initiative.
38. But where General Aviation is concerned, we also recognize the importance of leaving no aspect of the air transport sector behind.
39. As a United Nations specialized agency, ICAO today is working hand-in-hand with the entire UN network toward the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals which world States adopted under *Agenda 2030*.
40. We have worked to map out aviation's role in supporting the achievement of these visionary socio-economic objectives, but I'd also encourage IAOPA to begin to track the specific contributions of general aviation to their attainment.
41. This can only help to raise the profile of general aviation globally, and better ensure your sector's contributions are being suitably appreciated, and ICAO will certainly be pleased to continue to make general aviation a priority.
42. I am very encouraged that our many shared objectives should help to make our working relationship even more productive going forward, and as we approach ICAO's 75th anniversary next year, I'd like to ask your membership to consider what it can do to help highlight this great moment for aviation and all that we have accomplished together at the service of mankind.
43. The cooperation and commitment of organizations such as IAOPA are essential to ICAO's success today, as they have been throughout the history of civil aviation, and on that note may I wish you all a very engaging and productive 2018 World Assembly.
44. Thank you.