



**Remarks by the  
Secretary General of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),  
Dr. Fang Liu,  
ICAO-OHCHR Joint Forum  
on Combating Trafficking in Persons in Aviation**

*(Geneva, Switzerland, 28 May 2018)*

1. It is a great honour to open today's forum and to introduce to you the joint Guidelines for Training Cabin Crew on Identifying and Responding to Trafficking in Persons, which are designed to help airlines deliver effective cabin crew training.
2. I'm very encouraged by the great turn out for this event. I would like to extend my deep appreciation to our colleagues at the UNOHCHR for the lovely facilities and very warm welcome we've been greeted with here in Geneva.
3. I would also like to acknowledge representatives from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, with whom we also collaborate, as well as the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Migration who also join us in the fight to end human trafficking as part of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.
4. Civil aviation today connects the peoples of the world and is a key driver of socio-economic growth.
5. Nations can leverage its connectivity benefits and build upon the foundation they establish to realize prosperous and sustainable local economies.
6. As a UN specialized agency, ICAO works with its 192 Member States and industry groups to achieve a safe, efficient, secure, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible civil aviation sector.

7. We pursue these objectives through the consensus-based determination of global civil aviation standards, which in turn harmonize air transport regulations and operations all over the world.
8. It is this standardization which permits aviation to serve as truly global network, one which today permits more than 10 million passengers to take off and land on more than 100,000 daily flights.
9. Because it has such a profound supporting role in so much of the world's socio-economic activity, the civil aviation sector actively contributes to the achievement of no fewer than 15 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals adopted under Agenda 2030.
10. This includes goals 5, 8 and 16, which draw specific attention to our shared priority to end human trafficking.
11. Trafficking in persons is a global issue and the international air transport sector has an important part to play in identifying and mitigating related activities.
12. Sadly, these 10 million passengers that air transport network so safely processes each and every day includes human traffickers and their victims.
13. They have been abusing aviation's global connectivity as a means to transport their victims across borders, and this explains why ICAO has pursued its collaboration on these new guidelines so urgently with the OHCHR.
14. By working together, we are much better able to ensure that aviation will no longer be abused by those with dishonourable and criminal intent.
15. It's in light of this abuse by traffickers that cabin crew members and other airline employees are seen as likely to encounter a situation of trafficking on board a flight.
16. This explains why it's so important that we provide them with the right tools and proper training to adequately identify and respond to human trafficking scenarios.

17. These actions respond directly to related requests ICAO received from our Member States and the airline industry at our 39th Assembly in 2016.
18. They also respond to the related resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, better known as the *United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons*, as well as international conventions and protocols on transnational organized crimes, forced labour, slavery and of course on human rights.
19. The United Nations General Assembly strongly urged all responsible United Nations entities to coordinate their efforts to fight trafficking in persons effectively, and to protect the human rights of its victims.
20. This explains why ICAO reached out to the OHCHR to explore the possibility of developing joint guidance material. Upon its positive response, we began the development of the guidelines we're here to introduce today.
21. This process later benefitted from further analysis and recommendations from the ICAO Cabin Safety Group, a pre-existing body at ICAO made up of representatives from Member States and other entities.
22. Among its members is IATA, the association of the commercial scheduled airlines who need to implement the related measures.
23. And we were also very fortunate that the OHCHR's Advisor on Trafficking in Persons was actively involved in the development of the guidelines from their onset.
24. It was this very collaborative effort, among both aviation and human rights specialists, which has enabled us to produce a training resource that is at once meaningful and practical to our communities' respective needs.
25. It's important to note that this work does not begin and end with the realization of these guidelines. The civil aviation authority in each ICAO Member State also has an important role to play in ensuring the overall success of this initiative.

26. It is beholden upon each CAA to mandate the airlines registered or operating in their airspace to provide trafficking mitigation training for their personnel, as detailed in these new guidelines.
27. And if a State has other agencies which mandate or provide training on identifying and responding to trafficking in persons, the civil aviation authority will be expected to develop suitable partnerships and effective collaboration.
28. In addition, each airline active in international air transport should develop a policy and procedures, including reporting protocols, around the issue of trafficking in persons.
29. It is with this intent in mind that we are gathered at this Forum, which has brought together representatives from several United Nations organizations, States, the aviation industry, and the human rights community.
30. It's my hope it will help you become better informed on the important role that aviation plays in addressing the problem of trafficking in persons, and provide you with helpful, practical examples of existing airline training programmes.
31. Also to be reviewed are some further initiatives being undertaken by States and other international organizations to combat trafficking in persons in aviation.
32. In addition to ICAO's initiative on cabin crew training, we are also hard at work on reinforcing related aviation security and facilitation measures which can also play an important part in the fight against human trafficking.
33. For example we recently updated our standards on the transport of minors – both accompanied and un-accompanied – and the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme strategy plays its part by making travel documents, and the identity management processes supporting said documents, much more robust and cost-effective for governments.

34. This helps to harmonize the global line of defence against traffickers, international terrorists and others who would seek to use our network for ill intent, in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.
35. Ladies and gentlemen, in concluding now I would like to urge all States to contribute to the eradication of human trafficking by adopting these guidelines, and by ensuring they are disseminated and promptly acted on by the airlines in their national jurisdictions.
36. I hope you come away from this Forum with a greater sense of hope and empowerment in terms of our shared desire and ability to end this terrible and tragic abuse of innocent lives, the serious violation of human rights, and ICAO has been very proud to play its part in this noble endeavour.
37. Thank you.