



**Opening Remarks
by the Secretary General
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Dr. Fang Liu,
to the 60th Anniversary celebration
of the Agency for the Safety of Aerial Navigation
in Africa and Madagascar
(ASECNA)**

(EVO Banquet Hall, Montreal, 11 Dec 2019)

Distinguished friends and colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is my great honour to be here this evening on behalf of ICAO, and to celebrate with you the historic and very impressive 60th Anniversary of ASECNA.
2. Established under the Saint Louis (Senegal) Convention of 1959, ASECNA's founding was a key development for Africa and for aviation.
3. It represented one of the most important collective decisions on the cooperative management of airspace ever adopted, and today provides air navigation services for 17 African States and oceanic airspaces.
4. ASECNA's collaborative model and pioneering leadership through the decades have been immensely important to civil aviation progress in Africa, and they have helped both ASECNA States and Africa more broadly to harness and maximize the benefits of air transport on the basis of enabling regulatory environments and quality infrastructure.
5. This spirit of cooperation has always been the core foundation of the safe, secure, and sustainable civil aviation network we know and appreciate all over the world today.
6. And undoubtedly the fact that ASECNA demonstrates it so effectively was a key factor in why it was selected in 1972 to receive an Edward Warner Award from ICAO, the very highest accolade in all of international civil aviation.

7. In terms of underscoring what countries can achieve by cooperating together, and pooling their limited resources, ASECNA has served as a tremendous example to the world and it still does today.
8. Additionally, through its tremendous contributions to ICAO's AFI Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG), our Regional Aviation Safety Group for Africa (RASG-AFI), and the annual AFI Aviation Week events we host, ASECNA is playing a critical role in many other cooperative areas of African aviation.
9. Furthermore, as chair of the Africa ANSP Steering Group, it has delivered important leadership in establishing the Africa ANSP Peer Review Mechanism with assistance from CANSO.
10. A very high priority for civil aviation today concerns the capacity expansion needed in many States and Regions, in order to accommodate and safely manage the forecast air traffic growth in the coming decades.
11. While we expect to see a doubling of flight and passenger volumes by the mid-2030s, and a great deal of additional traffic for ASECNA and other ANSPs to manage in Africa, it is also encouraging that key objectives for aviation infrastructure financing and modernization are already being supported by the *Declaration and Framework* adopted at the Third ICAO World
12. This modernization will lead to new types of technologies being employed, and require a new generation with new aviation skills to operate them.
13. This means that ASECNA-managed airspace and aerodromes will require more and more highly trained, qualified, and competent personnel, managing many new types of aircraft and operations and at flight levels and speeds never experienced before in traditional aviation.
14. And while they accomplish these significant tasks, they will also be responsible for assuring a sound safety culture and the application of the best quality management principles.
15. Clearly then these objectives today must be supported by a robust Human Resources Development Policy, and one which begins to nurture an aviation and technology career path not only once students have graduated to become adult learners, but rather from their earliest years in their educational experience.

16. As we work together to drive that momentum, we can be encouraged by the fact that the Regional Training Centres of Excellence which ICAO has already established in Africa are closely cooperating today with our Global Aviation Training Programme and our TRAINAIR Plus specialists.
17. This framework is making important contributions to aviation training capacity in Africa today, but much more must be done, and stronger national commitments are needed, if this continent is to be fully prepared to optimize Africa's air transport benefits in the coming years.
18. Already today aviation's direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts are resulting in almost 56 billion dollars in pan-African GDP, with the related travel and tourism sectors generating another 194 billion.
19. Every person directly employed in the aviation sector in Africa supported another 14.8 jobs elsewhere on the continent, and as your airlines achieved 7.5% passenger growth last year, and are forecast to continue growing at this or higher rates for the foreseeable future, I think we can all clearly recognize that the potential for aviation growth on this continent represents a tremendous opportunity for increased prosperity for all Africans.

Ladies and gentlemen,

20. As ASECNA celebrates its 60th Anniversary this year, ICAO has been celebrating its own 75th which culminated this past Saturday on International Civil Aviation Day.
21. We have taken advantage of this historic moment to appreciate aviation's past, but primarily to be inspired by its future and the roles to be played by the incredible new aviation innovations which are emerging all over the world.
22. In the same spirit, I would encourage ASECNA to reflect on how the exciting innovations arising in air services today will bring it new missions and new roles in the coming decades, as it continues to effectively manage over 16 million square kilometres of airspace.
23. Since the establishment of your organization in 1959, ASECNA has very consistently and reliably demonstrated keen foresight by supporting the development of the aviation sectors of its Member States.

24. This has been accomplished in part through the implementation of leading-edge technologies, and its mission and role will only become more important as Africa now confronts the significant growth and capacity challenges which lie before it.
25. ICAO remains your steadfast partner for African Aviation, and we have been grateful to be working so closely with you since 1990, when ASECNA established a permanent representative to ICAO.
26. Our world and our skies are changing more quickly today than at any other time in the history of flight, and on behalf of all ICAO let me please underscore how grateful we are to be able to count on the partnership and vision of ASECNA as we work with African governments to ensure a harmonized and sustainable future in Africa for international civil aviation.
27. Thank You.