



Address by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization
Dr. Fang Liu
to the 2021 Pacific Regional Aviation Minister's Meeting

(Virtual, 30 June 2021, PNG) (29 June 2021, Montreal)

1. It's an honour to join you virtually today for this important and very timely meeting.
2. ICAO is deeply grateful for Papua New Guinea's support for this event and for its longstanding commitments to ICAO's mission and priorities more generally.
3. I would also like to re-emphasize our appreciation for the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO).
4. Global and regional aviation connectivity is a vital enabler of your countries' international tourism markets, and of many other critical drivers impacting your national economic well-being and sustainable, prosperous development.
5. COVID-19 has largely severed those connections, and in so doing it has significantly hindered your core logistical capacities for a return to economic growth post-pandemic.
6. I must therefore strongly reiterate the importance of making aviation a key component of your highest level pandemic recovery planning, and of assuring your governments' full support for your national aviation regulators at this time.
7. This prioritization of aviation in each of your States is critical to assure the local levels of ICAO compliance, which will ultimately restore this region's significant aviation's benefits, and it's my hope that the *Port Moresby Declaration* you intend to realize, will suitably emphasize the importance of air transport to national and regional recoveries.

8. One important step States can take collectively in this direction would be to strengthen your support for the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO). This would directly address the current below-world-average performance of Pacific Island States in the implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) on Safety and Security.
9. This is one of the key recommendations which emerged from the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) Aviation Needs Analysis Study which ICAO recently conducted, and whose further recommendations we would also expect to see reinforced through this Conference and its Declaration.
10. I would appreciate and applaud in this context the over three hundred million dollar financial commitment which the Government of Australia has announced for Pacific COVID-19 response and recovery, two million of which will be earmarked for PASO assistance specifically.

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11. ICAO understands that the Pacific Island States are especially vulnerable to the pandemic's effects, and I would therefore encourage your States to continue taking advantage of the comprehensive guidance established by the ICAO Council's Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART), in addition to the pandemic resources we've developed for you such as the ICAO Implementation Packages (iPacks), and our dedicated COVID-19 Response and Recovery Implementation Center (CRRIC).
12. ICAO is grateful to the donors who are presently assisting with iPack roll-outs in several beneficiary States here, and for the fact that our iPack and other resources targeted toward the establishment of public health travel corridors are assisting with the current progress on their establishment now being seen here.
13. Further key areas I would invite your States to address alongside these pandemic priorities include certifying the outstanding 11% of international airports in this region, completing the full regional implementation of the Common Aeronautical Virtual Private Network, and addressing your environmental responsibilities with respect to the CORSIA offsetting programme and your ICAO State Action Plans for aviation emissions reduction.

14. ICAO is encouraged that the virtual formats we've presently adopted are facilitating your officials' increased and cost-effective attendance at our Regional and Global meetings, and we hope to see the Ministers and senior officials in attendance here today joining us for our important High-level Conference on COVID-19 this October.

15. Your continued cooperation through ICAO helps to assure that the Pacific Region will continue to grow and to prosper, and in that same spirit I wish you all a very productive and collaborative meeting.

16. Thank you.