



**Videotaped Address by the Secretary General  
of the International Civil Aviation Organization,  
Raymond Benjamin  
to IATA AVSEC World 2009  
Cape Town, South Africa  
(10-12 November 2009)**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

I would have truly liked to be here in Cape Town with my many friends and colleagues for this AVSEC World 2009. In this brief recorded message, I would like to outline ICAO's vision for aviation security and hopefully contribute to the success outcome of this conference.

ICAO is currently developing a Comprehensive Aviation Security Strategy for submission to the next Assembly of the Organization in September 2010. The strategy will focus on seven basic areas.

First, we need to be more proactive in identifying potential and emerging threats to civil aviation. Among them are unconventional terrorist attacks on airports and aircraft, cyber attacks on aviation systems, including air traffic management facilities, and threats concerning general and other forms of aviation. This aspect of aviation security will be incorporated into the next amendment to Annex 17 expected in March of next year.

We also need to develop and implement more innovative and efficient measures to counter threats that are becoming more sophisticated, deadly and disruptive. Technology is clearly the most likely source of countermeasures but it can be expensive. A number of States may not have the human or financial resources to conduct their own research and development. To address this shortcoming, we should promote a greater exchange of information on technological advances.

At the same time, we must be more attentive to the human factors dimension of security. This is often underrated because the contribution of human factors on acts of unlawful interference is not always well understood or managed. In reality, human factors are closely associated with a large proportion of security failures. They are, for example, the most common reason for prohibited articles being introduced into airports or onboard aircraft. Everyone involved in operations must be more security conscious and more alert to potential threats. A security culture must impregnate all stakeholders, industry and regulators alike, and at every level of their organizations.

Another challenge in the context of technological and human factors improvements is reaching and maintaining an optimum balance between more stringent security and pressing facilitation requirements. Obviously, I do not imply compromising one at the expense of the other. What I do emphasize is that when we introduce new security measures, we must fully consider the impact of procedures on passenger and cargo operations. If a new measure does not facilitate the overall process, then at least it should not have an adverse effect on the viability of the industry. The introduction of MRTDs and ePassports is one example of an innovation that was well researched and that led to improved security and speedier operations.

In line with this focus on analysis and research, ICAO is looking into the possibility of moving towards a continuous monitoring approach for its security audit programme, much in the way it is doing with the safety audit programme. This could improve the availability of time-sensitive information and improve response time. Concurrently, we should provide more support to States requiring assistance in the implementation of action plans to correct deficiencies identified through the security audits.

In support of this, international cooperation must be expanded. Again I stress the sharing of information, including audit reports, information on threats, and best practices as well as the pooling of resources and expertise. This promotes greater harmonization in the implementation of security measures and procedures. It can also assist in mutual recognition of aviation security measures between states and potentially the development of one-stop security agreements.

Finally, all of us have to do a better job at emphasizing the critical importance of security – among States, stakeholders and, yes, within ICAO. This may somewhat redundant with some of my earlier comments but it needs to be reinforced. Effective communications are essential in every aspect of our business and security is certainly no exception.

Ladies and gentlemen, those of you who know me understand how committed I am to aviation security. As Secretary General of ICAO, I intend to create a Security Branch that will have the resources needed to better support States in the implementation of aviation security programmes and activities worldwide. I also intend to strengthen the Regional Offices of ICAO so as to accelerate global harmonization of security measures.

All of this implies a higher degree of cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders, at the national, regional and international levels. This is what this meeting can reinforce as a message. That we are all in this together and together we will succeed in making the world a safer and more secure place.

I wish you a most successful AVSEC World 2009.

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