



**Address by the Secretary General of ICAO  
Mr. Raymond Benjamin  
to the Regional Aviation Security Conference**

*(New Delhi, 14 February 2011)*

1. It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to this Regional Conference on the Implementation of the ICAO Declaration on Aviation Security.
2. This regional conference can be like no other. It has the potential to kick-start a process that will shape the course of aviation security for years to come, if you want it to.
3. Let me explain by referring to the genesis of the Declaration. It goes back to the attempted bombing of a commercial airliner on 25 December 2009, which you no doubt remember. Shortly after that incident, I convened a series of Ministerial-level conferences on aviation security in Mexico City, Tokyo, Abuja and Abu Dhabi. The purpose was to address this type of new and emerging threat to the security of flights.
4. In all of the meetings, there was a strong commitment by States to protect civil aviation from all kinds of terrorist threats. There was also a sincere expression of collective responsibility for taking action.
5. Underlying this consensus was the reality that terrorism is a global problem that requires global solutions. To be effective, security measures must be uniform and consistently enforced in all countries, through the highest of global cooperation among States, and with industry stakeholders.
6. It is out of those regional conferences that the Declaration on Aviation Security was born and later unanimously adopted by the 37th Session of the Assembly last fall.
7. The challenge, OUR challenge, is to turn commitment into action. New Delhi represents the first opportunity to act collectively and proactively. It represents a new beginning.
8. Over the next few days, States can agree on a draft blueprint for enacting the Declaration's measures in the region - enhanced screening technologies to detect prohibited articles, strengthening international standards, improving security information-sharing and providing capacity-building assistance to States in need.
9. The roadmap, with concrete actions and timelines, will clearly show to the world the political will and priorities of States, through unprecedented collaborative effort.
10. In this call to action, ICAO will play a fundamental role. You have my personal assurance.
11. We have recently begun to implement our new comprehensive aviation security strategy, which allows us to allocate resources more efficiently to critical objectives, such as the requirement to address new and emerging threats.

12. In addition to further development of our policy and regulatory framework, the strategy involves a continuation of security audits of Member States, while focusing on addressing security shortcomings through assistance. This will require greater reliance on capacity-building initiatives that address aviation security concerns on a permanent basis.
13. In this way, implementation of the ICAO Comprehensive Aviation Security Strategy, or ICASS, will support the central premise of the Declaration - the fight against new and emerging threats.
14. In fact, ICAO is in the process of finalizing a more structured AVSEC assistance and capacity-building strategy. We will focus our resources and attention on Member States with the greatest need for assistance in meeting their obligations, to establish sustainable security regimes and oversight systems.
15. This is but one example — albeit a very important one — of how ICAO initiatives dovetail with efforts by Member States to counter threats through enhanced international cooperation. As you might expect, our diverse activities touch on all points made by the Declaration.
16. Here are two more examples that appropriately illustrate ICAO's role in promoting aviation security cooperation.
17. Under the nine action points of the Declaration, Member States are urged to strengthen security screening procedures and utilize modern technologies to detect prohibited articles. ICAO is collaborating with the industry in the development of a blueprint for an airport checkpoint of the future and improved screening processes.
18. A few months ago, in Geneva, we conducted a workshop on this topic and, this coming March, the AVSEC Panel will be discussing this concept further. I invite you to follow the results of their deliberations.
19. Again under the Declaration, States are urged to develop and implement strengthened and harmonized measures and best practices for air cargo security. ICAO has already taken certain steps that help bring this to fruition.
20. In particular, new and strengthened Standards in Annex 17 will become applicable this July, including the requirement for States to establish a supply chain security process for air cargo. The Annex amendment requires that cargo undergo appropriate security controls, including screening where applicable, prior to carriage on any commercial passenger aircraft.
21. An ICAO Study Group has been formed with the aim of developing appropriate security controls for air cargo, in coordination with other regulatory agencies. The goal is to achieve the highest level of end-to-end cargo security, while preventing unnecessary delays in the movement of goods across international boundaries, and to ensure a harmonized approach to supply chain security.
22. My point in citing these examples is to emphasize that the priorities of States, as defined by the Declaration on Aviation Security, are ICAO's priorities. And with ICAO's continued leadership and support, a worldwide solution to the ever-present threat of terrorism is achievable.
23. Adoption here in Delhi of an implementation roadmap for the Declaration on Aviation Security will be a historic contribution to bolstering aviation security not only in the region but around the world.

24. It will be a model for other regional aviation security conferences to come, and ultimately for a global security conference planned for next year at ICAO Headquarters in Montreal.
25. That future rests with each and every one of you in this hall. I urge you to seize the moment. Let us not wait for the next terrorist attack to act. Let us act now and prevent terrorists from striking.
26. With this thought in mind, I would like to sincerely thank the Government of India for hosting this conference and for believing that we can indeed start the world on the path the more secure skies.

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