



**Closing Remarks by the Secretary General
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Raymond Benjamin,
to the High-level Conference on Aviation Security**

14 September 2012
Montréal

Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Over the past few days you have focused on topics of critical importance to us all – regulators, industry and ultimately, of course, the travelling public.

If the objective of this Conference was to agree on the strategic course guiding future aviation security improvements for the benefit of all of these stakeholders, in my opinion you have met your challenge very successfully.

As this meeting comes to a close, I would draw your attention to a few of the key goals that have been accomplished.

The participation at this event of over 700 participants, including Ministers and senior officials representing 132 States and 23 international and regional organizations, must be highlighted.

This strong level of commitment sends a very clear signal to the world that ICAO, its Member States, the industry and our partners are addressing threats to civil aviation as a matter of the highest priority.

What has been particularly noteworthy during these proceedings is your commitment to pursue progress in aviation security while minimizing its adverse consequences on air transport.

This aspect is highly significant, given that sustainable, risk-based measures are essential if we are to mitigate security risks without penalizing industry, travellers and shippers with costly or unnecessary procedures.

I have therefore proposed that, for the next triennium, ICAO's Strategic Objective in this area should be expanded to include both security *and* facilitation.

You have reached decisive consensus at this conference on many complex, global issues in a short period of time. I wish to commend you on your efforts and your results.

To cite a key example, one of your goals was the enhancement of air cargo and mail security without compromising on the efficient flow of goods. You have produced a comprehensive framework of actions to achieve exactly that, reinforcing the fact that ICAO's closer collaboration with the World Customs Organization and Universal Postal Union is essential for success at this point in time.

Your discussions and the results of this Conference remind us that the best way to overcome international security challenges is to progress our efforts on a strongly collaborative basis. A remarkable spirit of international cooperation has characterized this event and it will serve us well as we set to work on the tasks before us.

On a very practical note, let us remember that the true measure of our success is the prevention of unlawful interference with civil aviation. We must support effective responses to acts and threats of terrorism, encourage the resumption of normal civil aviation operations when disruptions occur, and pursue an overall positive aviation security environment for air transport development.

In these respects, our vigilance and commitment in taking forward this Conference's outcomes must be constant and unwavering.

Through the Conference Report and Communiqué, the course you have set will guide us in our efforts to enhance global aviation security and facilitation as we head toward the 38th Session of the ICAO Assembly next year. By successfully addressing critical strategic issues, you have strengthened the global framework and defined the way forward for ICAO, its Member States, industry, consumers and other stakeholders.

Allow me also to thank all of those who contributed to our meaningful discussions. My appreciation includes, of course, the sponsors who generously provided us with occasions to socialize and solidify important relationships going forward.

I would like to thank His Excellency, Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansoori, Minister of Economy and Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority of the United Arab Emirates, for his very capable chairmanship of the Conference. His leadership has been essential to our positive outcome.

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