



**Address by the Secretary General of ICAO
Mr. Raymond Benjamin
to the**

ICAO/IATA/Eurocontrol EUR/NAT Regional Runway Safety Seminar (RRSS)

(Istanbul, Turkey, 6 - 8 November 2013)

1. Good morning everyone.
2. It's a great pleasure to welcome you to the third ICAO EUR/NAT Regional Runway Safety Seminar. I wish to begin by expressing ICAO's thanks to the Turkish Authorities for generously hosting this very important event, and to IATA and Eurocontrol for partnering with ICAO on its successful organisation.
3. Yesterday, I delivered the keynote address to IATA's 22nd AVSEC World, also here in Istanbul, where I was grateful to promote ICAO's strategic priorities in the area of global civil aviation *Security and Facilitation*. Today, I am similarly grateful for the chance to discuss our global civil aviation *Safety* objectives, stressing some recent and related decisions by our 38th Assembly and including of course the specific work we have undertaken or are presently planning in the area of runway safety.
4. ICAO concluded its 38th Assembly last month on a number of very successful notes, receiving endorsement and support from our Member States for sector-wide global strategic and tactical planning across all five of our 2014 to 2016 strategic objectives.
5. For those of you who are not yet aware of the five areas around which ICAO will be planning its work for the next triennium, they are: *Safety; Air Navigation Capacity & Efficiency; Security & Facilitation; the Economic Development of Air Transport; and Environmental Protection*.
6. Of primary concern to those of you who have joined us here today will be the fact that the 38th Assembly has delivered a clear and strong endorsement for two revised ICAO Global Plans.
7. ICAO's Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) will henceforth be instrumental to how States and industry unite to safely expand air traffic capacity and efficiently accommodate the projected doubling of air traffic by 2030. Each Plan now includes complementary collaborative methodologies and clear operational performance objectives.
8. In the Safety domain specifically, the 38th ICAO Assembly reiterated global aviation's fundamental commitment to reduce the rate and number of aircraft accidents worldwide. It also confirmed that this work will now be guided by the incremental targets we have outlined in the revised Global Aviation Safety Plan.
9. These collective endorsements give ICAO a clear mandate to continue driving greater transparency, collaboration and responsiveness in safety improvement, through real-time analysis and reporting cycles and, importantly to all of you here today, greater regional accountability.

10. It also sends a strong message that collaboration and partnership on air transport's sector-wide safety challenges remains *essential* to achieving positive results. ICAO will therefore be driving these efforts in the years to come through more intensive engagement with all regional players.
11. A major challenge for aviation in the years ahead will be to rise above the complacency that too often accompanies success. Air transport's global safety record has witnessed some tremendous improvements in recent years, especially with respect to major accidents and associated fatalities, and your work on reducing runway-related safety incidents has been instrumental to our overall progress.
12. The 2013 Edition of the ICAO State of Global Aviation Safety, released during the Assembly and currently available in all ICAO languages on our public website, indicates that runway safety related accidents have fallen considerably, from nearly 60 per cent of total accidents during the 2006 to 2011 benchmark period, to 48 per cent of all accidents in 2012.
13. Regarding overall fatalities, the contribution of runway safety related accidents has fallen from an average of 18 per cent in the same benchmark period, to just one per cent in 2012.
14. But we must remain determined moving forward to ensure that our successes don't become an impediment to our underlying goal – which is to achieve a sector-wide safety culture based on transparent metrics, continuous monitoring, and constant improvement.
15. As our number one priority with respect to safety implementation today, and an area of clear recent success, runway safety will therefore be a useful test-case for how we maintain our vigilance and continue to leverage collaborative programmes in the years ahead, in order to successfully address this and other multidisciplinary safety challenges.
16. Indeed, it is precisely in this spirit of collaborative decision making and coordinated action that ICAO has gathered again here today with EUROCONTROL, IATA, ACI, the FAA, EASA, ICCAIA, CANSO, IFALPA, IFATCA, and several States and service providers to agree on some important next steps in our joint runway safety planning.
17. Continuing the work begun at our Global Runway Safety Symposium in 2011, as well as at follow-on seminars which have taken place throughout the world during 2012 and 2013, this European Runway Safety Seminar features a number of objectives which help to illustrate both our recent achievements and the wider runway safety dynamic here in the ICAO EUR/NAT Region.
18. First, the seminar will review two important plans developed in Europe: the *European Action Plan for the Prevention of Runway Excursions* and the *European Action Plan for the Prevention of Runway Incursions*. Both will be presented and examined and their successful implementation to date will be illustrated through practical examples.
19. Secondly, the seminar will highlight the work which is now getting started within the European Regional Aviation Safety Group (RASG-EUR) framework and addressed up by the ICAO's Regional Expert Safety Team. This work takes place within the portion of the ICAO EUR/NAT Region not covered by the regulatory frameworks of the European Union (EU) or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

20. The ICAO Expert Safety Team has already established a Runway Safety Group which has begun working on new safety enhancement initiatives – building on the achievements of existing groups such as the European and U.S. Commercial Aviation Safety Teams. The establishment and operation of Local Runway Safety Teams figures prominently in these efforts, and you will hear more about this planning during the course of the seminar.
21. Ladies and gentlemen, let me end today by reaffirming that ICAO's European Regional Aviation Safety Group initiative and the outcome of your work over the next three days must continue to meaningfully contribute to the improvement of runway safety across this region. Given the clear spirit of collaboration and our record of achievement in this area, I am confident of your continued success.
22. It is on this note that I would like to renew the commitment of ICAO to these and related safety initiatives and wish you very productive deliberations during the next three days.
23. Thank you.

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