



**Opening Address by the Secretary General
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Dr. Fang Liu
to the ICAO Aviation Security Symposium (AVSEC2017)**

(ICAO HQ Montréal, 12 September 2017)

Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

1. It's my great pleasure to welcome you to Montreal for this inaugural ICAO Aviation Security (AVSEC) Symposium hosted in collaboration with Airports Council International.
2. We envisage this event becoming an essential annual meeting and are greatly encouraged at how many of you have joined us for its inaugural edition.
3. The importance of the ICAO-ACI partnership on this event is underscored by our critical and shared priority to balance the rigour demanded by effective security with the just-as-important facilitation and convenience concerns of travellers and operators.
4. We greatly appreciate ACI's participation in our deliberative bodies and expert groups, and in preparing for this event it has become clearer than ever that this cooperation will be essential to our success with future initiatives.
5. Two initiatives which I would highlight today are United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 2309 (2016), and the new ICAO Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP), each of which seeks to reduce the likelihood that an act of unlawful interference will be committed against civil aviation.
6. Resolution 2309 was unanimously adopted last September and spotlights terrorists' continued attraction to aviation targets. It emphasizes the global interconnectedness of our unique network and operations, the need for international cooperation to address air transport security challenges,

and the importance of information sharing, and especially Advanced Passenger Information, to our future security approaches and goals.

7. Resolution 2309 further highlights a number of steps which should be prioritized by ICAO's Member States in order to strengthen their implementation of security-related Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), including forging better coordination among their related domestic departments and agencies.
8. I attended a special follow-up meeting this July on these topics, held by ICAO and the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), which focused appropriately on "*Terrorist Threats to Civil Aviation*."
9. Technical sessions were held just prior to it, and during these the experts focused on some long-standing concerns such as security culture, landside security, information sharing limitations, and border control management.
10. More recent developments, relating to cybersecurity and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) concealed within Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs), were also reviewed.
11. Throughout, ICAO's pre-eminent leadership in aviation security was emphasized by the representatives from the 15 States that compose the Counter-Terrorism Committee, and additional collaboration with UN organizations, including the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate and the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre, were also discussed.
12. The second initiative I mentioned, ICAO's new Global Aviation Security Plan or 'GASep', aligns with the objectives of Resolution 2309 and will serve as a key mechanism through which it will be implemented.
13. The GASep was developed with the assistance of a specialized Task Force which included Member State and industry experts, many of whom you'll be hearing from over the coming days at this event.
14. The Global Aviation Security Plan's formal review is now complete, and it will be presented for approval by the Council during its next Session this November.

15. The GAsEP comprises five priority outcomes, including: enhanced risk awareness and response; the co-development of effective security cultures and the human capabilities needed to support them; improved technological resources and greater innovation; improved oversight and quality assurance; and lastly increased cooperation and support.
16. It is no coincidence that these priority outcomes for the GAsEP are also the focus of this Symposium. AVSEC2017 provides us with an invaluable opportunity to vigorously explore these topics, and to identify the actions needed to fulfil both the short- and long-term objectives of the GAsEP and Resolution 2309.
17. And it is also no coincidence that our entire aviation community, from regulators to airlines and airports to manufacturers, will have an opportunity here to bring their perspectives to the solutions we resolve.
18. The GAsEP includes an Implementation Roadmap which identifies the key tasks – and the responsible parties – necessary to achieve progress. It also includes a general target aimed at encouraging States to improve upon their overall effective implementation of security provisions.
19. Meeting this target will require attention to all sectors of civil aviation security, and not only the implementation of certain ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).
20. It's our great hope that the feedback we receive from you, here at this event, will help us to ensure this Roadmap is both robust and realistic.
21. We must also acknowledge, of course, that aviation security remains a very dynamic context of emerging threat and risk, and that we still have important challenges ahead of us.
22. One of these is a lack of political will to set out the changes in policy and approaches now required. Some States for instance still think that threats are other States' problems and will not occur locally. Others worry that the costs of security are not commensurate with the benefits. Still others are influenced by the perceived inconvenience on travellers.

23. ICAO works tirelessly to confront these perceptions, but there is also a tremendous need for us to work together to foster a much deeper appreciation globally of security's importance to our sector, and to its socio-economic benefits.
24. Another important challenge we face is to bolster our capacity building efforts. To meet the GAsEP targets, States will require assistance in strengthening their counter-terrorism posture and resolving local vulnerabilities, whether those pertain to equipment and technology, or to training and mentoring.
25. The GAsEP establishes a mechanism which permits Member States to request this assistance on a confidential basis, whether as the result of an ICAO security audit or through their own self-generated risk assessments.
26. ICAO's role will be to analyze these requests, especially respective of the competencies we're aware of in other States, and then to recommend the partnerships and approaches to best resolve the identified gaps or weaknesses.
27. A similar challenge which persists is a lack of willingness to share key information.
28. Some actionable details regarding recent security events remain unavailable to ICAO and other Member States after they take place, and we must find a way to identify and judiciously share essential threat information in order to set out appropriate and timely mitigation measures.
29. Resolution 2309 reinforces this point, and States acknowledge it. Through the GAsEP, ICAO, States, and industry can jointly and effectively address it.
30. In concluding now, ladies and gentlemen, I would re-emphasize for you that we must address terrorist threats to civil aviation by reinforcing, strengthening and promoting ICAO's international framework of aviation security standards.
31. The GAsEP and its implementing Roadmap will drive and coordinate our priorities in the years ahead, and future symposia, modelled after this week's event, will sustain our suitable attention to them.

32. But we must also acknowledge that neither the GAsEP nor Resolution 2309 can bring about the needed changes without the endorsement and committed partnership of all air transport stakeholders, in addition to much higher levels of passion and innovation.
33. Ultimately, we must work more and better together in order to establish a united front against unlawful interference to international civil aviation in fulfilment of Resolution 2309 and ICAO's Global Aviation Security Plan. This event represents an excellent first step along that journey, and may I wish you all a very productive and engaging next three days here at ICAO.
34. Thank you.