

**SECOND HIGH-LEVEL SAFETY CONFERENCE 2015 (HLSC 2015)  
PLANNING FOR GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY IMPROVEMENT**

**OPENING ADDRESS**

**João Aguiar Machado – Head of EU Delegation**

**ICAO High Level Safety Conference - opening intervention**

Mr President, Mr Secretary General, distinguished delegates.

It is an honour and a privilege, as part of my introduction to the “ICAO world”, to have been given the opportunity to be part of the opening of this Second High-level Safety Conference.

As a relative newcomer to the world of aviation, I have had a steep learning curve in familiarizing myself with the vast number of areas, issues and activities being addressed, not only at a European level but indeed at the international level. This being the case, there is one very clear message that stands out from all others – **Safety has been, is and will continue to be the absolute top priority** when dealing with any and all aviation related matters! It is with this very premise that we are in a position to proudly point to aviation as the safest transport mode across the globe.

This being said, the aviation community cannot be seen to be resting on its laurels when it comes to safety. It is incumbent on us all to ensure that the current situation is maintained, and where possible improved upon, when considering forecast traffic growth and the economic pressures.

Unfortunately the tragic events witnessed in the course of 2014 have underlined the need for the aviation community's constant vigilance and ability to act so as to ensure we keep meeting the public's demands for the highest safety standards.

This conference, building on the achievements of the past and mindful of new developments, will set the stage for the advances in terms of aviation safety for the years to come. In doing so, it can and should make an essential contribution to the necessary regulatory conditions and best practices to make aviation even safer than it is today.

I would like to share with you a number of key considerations:

- With regard to “planning” for safety improvement, it is important to note that this is not just about looking to the future. The future is only achievable if based on the past and present, and in this context we must ensure that enough attention is given to ensuring that the basis from which we want to progress is solid enough to allow for that, based on an **effective implementation of existing safety provisions** by all, this is ICAO's core business.
- With regard to the adoption and implementation of Annex 19, an impetus has been provided to the evolution towards risk- and performance-based safety oversight, thus enabling a welcome improvement to **Safety Management**, although it must be remembered that such an evolution is reliant on the effective compliance with established rules.
- **Protection of safety information** is a key element of effective safety management. It is by affording the appropriate level of protection that the availability of safety information can be assured in order for safety hazards to be identified and risks mitigated.
- We all agree that the **sharing of safety information** is important to develop effective safety programmes and safety management processes. This is however a sensitive issue that requires careful consideration and gradual implementation.

- The growing reality and evolution towards **effective regional cooperation** is such that a reflection is called for on how this reality can be integrated into the framework of the global aviation system, mindful not only of the benefits of such regional initiatives in their own right, but also the benefits that they can bring at a global level. We are proud of what we have achieved in Europe.
- All of the above have a home in the **Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP)**. The further evolution of the GASP should be based on input from the aviation community as a whole. It will play a strategic part in ensuring the ability to plan, prioritize, monitor, measure and report on progress and improvements as regards aviation safety.

With specific regard to the issue of **Emerging Safety Issues**, there is no need to recall the reasons why this features so prominently on the conference agenda. Without pre-empting the conference deliberations on these issues, I will limit myself to commending ICAO for the actions undertaken to address both the issue of “**Global Flight Tracking**” and that of “**Risks to Civil Aviation Arising from Conflict Zones**”, and reiterate our continued support and commitment to collaborate with ICAO and its Contracting States in taking this forward. I think it is fair to say that the eyes of the world are on this conference, and there is a need to demonstrate our ambition and resoluteness in dealing with these issues to avoid any future repetition. The public is expecting practical results on tracking and conflict zones.

We are ready and committed to work with everyone who shares these views, and believe that there are many in this hall willing to do so. We have a lot of hard work ahead of us, but thanks to ICAO, we have all the facilities we could ask for to “get the job done”. May this conference succeed in its ambitious goals.

In closing, Mr President, Mr Secretary General, distinguished delegates, I would like to also extend, on behalf of the new European Commissioner for Transport, Ms Violetta Bulc, who regrets that she could not be here, the best wishes for a constructive and successful conference.

Thank you.