

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

OPENING ADDRESS

BY

**DATO' AZHARUDDIN ABDUL RAHMAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
OF MALAYSIA**

Mr. Chairman of the HLSC2015

**His Excellency Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu
President of the ICAO Council,**

**Mr. Raymond Benjamin
Secretary General of ICAO,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Thank you for affording Malaysia the opportunity to address this esteemed gathering of Ministers, Directors General of Civil Aviation and strategic decision-makers of the international civil aviation community. We have gathered here today to build consensus, obtain commitments and formulate recommendations deemed necessary for the effective and efficient progress of key aviation safety activities.

2. Without a doubt, 2014 was an extremely difficult year for Malaysia as we were struck by not one, but two unprecedented tragedies in the span of merely four months. Malaysia is greatly indebted to all countries and individuals for their assistance. We offer our heartfelt gratitude for the generosity of response in the darkest hour of the aviation history. If the MH370 and MH17 tragedies tell us anything or reinforce, it is that:

- (i) The need for aviation industry and governments to stand united and committed to ensuring the safety and security of the global air transport system and its users.
- (ii) We cannot delay implementing changes in the way global commercial aviation operates.

3. Words cannot express how deeply the families of the passengers and crew involved have been affected by these events. Our hope is that they find some comfort not only in the united support and cooperation that we in the aviation world have demonstrated, but more importantly, in the galvanised

actions taken by the respective governments and ICAO, including decisions that are expected to be undertaken at this High Level Safety Conference, to improve aviation safety.

4. You will note from the Agenda of this conference, Malaysia's unfortunate experience has brought the attention on two emerging safety issues of "*global tracking of aircraft*" and "*risks to civil aviation arising from conflict zones*". It is my sincere appeal that the discussions emanating from this conference should provide us with the appropriate recommendations to enhance the safety and security of civil aviation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. ICAO has been instrumental in setting the standard for aviation industry with Chicago Convention served as the cornerstone. In light of MH370 tragedy, it is timely that ICAO took the initiative to collaborate with key industry participants and form the "*Aircraft Tracking Task Force*". For this, ICAO deserves high praise, but more must be done. In this millennium age, the facts that an airplane could go missing and the flight recorders could not be recovered are unacceptable.

6. The Governments of Malaysia, China and Australia have spared no expense and resources in the search for MH370. The underwater search is still ongoing and currently being performed by 4 vessels, namely the Go Phoenix, Fugro Discovery, Fugro Equator and Fugro Supporter. To date, the search has covered over 18,600 square kilometres. Despite all these efforts, the search unfortunately has yet to yield the location of the missing aircraft.

7. After 327 days of search and based on all available data as well as all circumstances, survivability in the defined area is very unlikely. Therefore, on 29th January 2015, we officially declared Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 an "*accident*" in accordance with the standards of Annexes 12 and 13 to the Chicago Convention and all 239 of the passengers and crews onboard MH370 are presumed to have lost their lives.

8. This declaration is by no means the end. The Government of Malaysia will forge ahead with the cooperation and assistance of the Governments of China and Australia. MH370, its passengers and its crews will always be remembered and honoured. On this premise, we put forward the following recommendations:

- (i) Establish requirements for real time global tracking of commercial aircraft as soon as possible.

- (ii) Extend transmission life of Underwater Locator Beacons installed in flight recorders on all commercial aircraft.
- (iii) Establish a clear legal instrument for the declaration of “*loss*” of aircraft.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. The Government of Malaysia acknowledges the vital role played by ICAO in aircraft accident and incident investigations especially for MH17. However, the progress on MH17 investigation has unfortunately been greatly hindered by the geopolitical situation on the ground. This clearly demonstrates the crucial need to review the existing guidelines for investigations in cases where an air crash occurs in a conflict zone.

10. I stand before you today and call upon the international civil aviation community to urge all states and stakeholders to assist the international investigation team and render full and unrestricted cooperation. With this in mind, it is fitting to recall Article 3 *bis* of the Chicago Convention 1944, which prohibits the use of weapons against civil aircraft and we continue to demand that those responsible are brought to justice.

11. We are encouraged that efforts are underway in the aftermath of MH17 including the fact that ICAO has taken the initiative, in collaboration with State and industry counterparts, forming a Task Force on Risks to Civil Aviation arising from Conflict Zones. Malaysia’s strong recommendation on this emerging issue will be for:

- (i) Mandatory and timely reporting of relevant information regarding flight risks to a centralised system for the prompt sharing of information, so that the right information reaches the right people at the right time.
- (ii) ICAO to establish global protocol through the refinement of the NOTAM system to better disseminate conflict zone risk information to member states and airlines.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. Our presence here today also signifies our commitment to the cause of safety and security in international civil aviation and we all know that there is still much to be done. This is a challenge that requires the cooperation of the entire civil aviation community, and Malaysia for one will continue to

support the good work of ICAO and the international authorities to fulfil these objectives. It is also our collective responsibility to ensure that “*no country is left behind*” and that every passenger is provided a safe, secure, efficient and reliable transportation whatever the chosen destination.

13. In closing, I would like to leave you with the thought: “*Aviation safety is about you and me, including all of our loved ones and not forgetting all passengers and crew who count on our global network to carry them rapidly and reliably – wherever we fly in the world*”.

Mr. Chairman, once again, I offer my deepest gratitude for allowing me to address this conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you a very successful conference.

Thank you.