

SPEECH NOTES FOR H.E. FERİDUN BİLGİN
ON THE OCCASION OF ICAN 2015

OPENING REMARKS

*President of the ICAO Council, Dr. Aliu,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Executives of the Civil Aviation World,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

- I would like to welcome you to Antalya and Turkey, home of various civilizations.
- It is a great pleasure for us to host you here in Turkey.
- We are very happy to organize the eight ICAN2015 event in Antalya. I am proud to state that this will be the second ICAN even Turkey hosts in six years.

CIVIL AVIATION POLICY OF TURKEY

- Distinguished guests; by this occasion, I would like to share with you civil aviation policy of Turkey and the improvements achieved in this sector.
- In terms of its geographical location, Turkey is a natural hub for aviation networks at the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa.
- As a natural hub, particularly the city of İstanbul is within a maximum 3-hour flight distance to 41 countries and 5-hour flight distance to 66 countries.
- With a population of 78 million citizens and GNP per capita above 10 thousand USD; Turkey is an important member of G20.
- Anatolia has served as the centre of many civilizations since BC 2.000s such as Hittite, Persians, Roman, Byzantium, Seljuk and Ottoman civilizations.

- In addition to being an open-air museum exhibiting works of art of these civilizations, Turkey is the 6th most preferred destination of the world thanks to its natural beauties.
- We have realized that aviation is the locomotive sector of Turkey considering her strategic location, population density, economic capacities and tourism opportunities. For this reason, our Government has attached special importance to aviation in the last 13 years.
- We set two mottos in 2003 to convey this importance to our people: “Every Turkish citizen will fly at least once” and “Airways will be the public way”.

- In this scope, big steps were taken in domestic and international lines towards sectoral liberalization. State-owned Turkish Airlines was privatized in this parallel.
- As a result of liberalization policies; passenger, cargo and air traffic have increased approximately 5 times since 2003.
- In line with this vision, Turkey upgraded from 30th to the 10th row in the ICAO country ranking related to air transportation.

Number of passengers increased from 35 million to 165 million; international flight destinations from 60 points to 242 points (Turkish Airlines is the airport which flies to the highest number of

international destinations in the world); aircraft fleet increased from 162 to 482 aircrafts; and the number of active airports from 26 to 55.

While we had ASA (Air Service Agreement) with 81 countries in 2003, this figure increased up to 164 today. I hope that this number will increase to 168 during ICAN2015 event.

- 16 millions of Turkish people flight for the first time. Competition has contributed to reduction in ticket prices and increasing the number of choices for the air travellers.
- With its 187 thousand direct employees and 20 billion USD turnover, Turkish civil aviation sector is one of the most important strategic fields establishing business and tourism connections between Turkey and the rest of the world.

- Since 2003, we have invested more than 4.35 billion USD in the aviation sector. Currently, investments at worth of 13.49 Billion USD continue to be made with private sector financing. It will be possible to share our BOT experience during these meetings.
- To meet increasing traffic demand in İstanbul and to make this city (which is a natural hub) serve the world aviation sector more efficiently; we have initiated “Big Istanbul Airport” project which will be a 6-runway airport with the capacity of 150 million passengers. The whole airport project is made by PPP. With an estimated cost of 10 Billion USD, this project is planned to be put into service in 2017.

- We are determined to further develop our growing aviation sector in a safe, competitive and productive manner. We attach importance to capacity development to enhance supervision and surveillance capacity of the General Directorate of Civil Aviation of Turkey.
- We also hope to share our experiences to contribute to global civil aviation.
- In line with this vision, we give full support to “No country left behind” policy of ICAO. In this context, in addition to our monetary support to AFI program, MoU’s signed between our Ministry and ex-General Secretary Raymond Benjamin and current General Secretary Dr. Fang Liu ICAO create the required framework.

- Turkey thinks that aviation is a global business and cooperation and is ready and eager to share her experiences in this scope.

RELATIONS WITH ICAO

Distinguished guests,

- Turkey is a founding member of ICAO and has been represented in the Organization permanently since 1990.
- Remarkable growth of our civil aviation sector and our future visions today requires Turkey to be more effective in and make more contributions to ICAO.

- Our General Directorate of Civil Aviation has close relations with ICAO, ECAC, EUROCONTROL, EASA, D-8 and other regional organizations. Moreover, Turkey negotiates with the EU on signing of Safety Agreement.
- 2023 aviation plans of Turkey envisage increasing the number of wide-body aircrafts to 750 and the number of passengers to 350 million. Equipped with the capacity of producing aircraft parts, Turkey has started the 70-seat aircraft production project.

Turkey is the 17th donor country of ICAO and has upgraded to 10th row in terms of air transport.

As a country having such developed aviation, it is Turkey's strong desire to play a more effective role in ICAO.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP OF TURKEY

- Considering developing and growing aviation sector of Turkey which exceeds the limits of its European counterparts, as the Ministry, we think that Turkey's membership to ICAO Council after 66 years will be important as echoing of a different voice in the Council.
- We do strongly believe that efficiency achieved by Turkish aviation sector and our future visions verify this desire and we have no doubt that our friends will agree with us on reasonable grounds.

CLOSING REMARKS

- Finally, Esteemed President of the Council, Distinguished Guests,
- I believe wholeheartedly that hosting of ICAN2015 event (which is an important organization for the aviation sector) by Turkey will contribute to further strengthening of her relations with ICAO and its member states.
- I would like to reiterate our happiness to host you here in Turkey, cradle of civilizations, and wish you all a beneficial and fruitful meeting.

With my best regards.