



International Civil Aviation Organization

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## **ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

### **PLENARY**

#### **Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States**

#### **STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE PETE BUTTIGIEG, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

(Presented by the United States)

Thank you very much and good afternoon.

Madam President and distinguished colleagues, we come together at a critical time: facing major challenges in the aviation sector but at the same time reaching for some of the most extraordinary opportunities.

In this context, with optimism that reflects the successes of our predecessors who delivered the Chicago Convention in 1944, and mindful of the resilience of the last two years shown by this institution and by all of you, I come today to share the United States' vision for the next chapter of our shared international civil aviation framework.

#### **CLIMATE**

Our focus begins with climate change. The reality is inescapable and the urgency clear. More floods and droughts and wildfires are already being felt by people across the globe. Our transportation systems, including aviation, are a significant contributor to climate change. As such, aviation must be a significant part of the solution.

We must act collectively to address what is inherently a collective problem. We must strengthen CORSIA. And we must together adopt an aspirational goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. This is achievable if we act.

We recognize that different countries will contribute to this goal based on their national circumstances. The draft resolutions approved by the ICAO Council in August represent a compromise but also a strong commitment. We call on this Assembly to approve them and to bring ICAO fully into the world's fight against climate change.

For our part, last month, the U.S. approved the biggest investment against climate change in history. Among many other actions, it will catalyze production of sustainable aviation fuel, or SAF. Our national goal is to

produce – by 2050 – enough SAF to power all U.S. aviation. We see great opportunity in the transition to cleaner transportation, and last week we released a SAF “Grand Challenge Roadmap” to achieve that goal. And we are reaching out to our partners around the world with technical assistance, capacity building, and joint research.

## **AVIATION SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Our climate goals sit alongside longstanding priorities that remain as important as ever. Today, aviation is safer than ever before, but we cannot take that achievement for granted. We must remain committed to strengthening aviation safety and security, always our top priority and as important as ever.

No matter whose airspace they are in, passengers expect a high level of safety and security. They expect that we will uphold the principles of the Chicago convention and that they are not only safe, but secure from emerging threats, including growing cyber threats.

The U.S. is a strong supporter of both the Global Air Navigation and Global Aviation Safety Plans, and we just released our own National Aviation Safety Plan. We encourage States to endorse the Global Plans and create their own national plans as well to elevate the level and coordination of safety across airspace. We also support the evolution of the Global Aviation Security Plan to ensure it is fit for purpose.

We also believe aviation security should be considered on par with the other critical pillars of both national and ICAO organizational structures.

There are a number of additional priorities we will pursue in the next three years.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY PRACTICES**

We will support ICAO’s economic regulatory work to ensure that States respect the rules-based system for international aviation, so that all people can benefit from the economic opportunity and growth that come with a level playing field. ICAO’s economic work program has an important role to play in addressing the remaining pandemic-related measures that continue to disrupt the system, while ensuring that States have means to coordinate the implementation of any health-related travel restrictions in the future.

On a related note, through ICAO we must support essential aviation workers – the foundation of the global air transportation system – with sensible common standards for treatment that protect the crews themselves and mitigate public health risk.

We also strongly support strengthening the aviation sector’s efforts to combat human trafficking – including a resolution to promote comprehensive strategies, procedures, and reporting.

## **GLOBAL LEADERSHIP**

Our final point is relevant to all the others: we believe ICAO is crucial to safe and effective international civil aviation and we commit to strengthening it.

We thank Council President Sciacchitano and Secretary General Salazar for their leadership. Recognizing the many challenges that ICAO has overcome, and as a demonstration of our confidence in this current leadership team, we are supporting a significant budget increase for the next triennium.

We believe that all of international civil aviation’s most important stakeholders – particularly those who

administer critical airspace like Taiwan – should have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in ICAO’s work. But right now we are experiencing grave challenges to the safe and secure system of international aviation that ICAO and the Chicago Convention have created. Countries that flagrantly violate the rules should not have leading roles in ICAO.

Last week at the UN General Assembly, President Biden described an American policy rooted in the strength of our values, eager to support other nations, and always open to finding common ground. These values and goals are reflected in our work in this organization, where we value every opportunity to partner with other members for the benefit of all. To continue this important work, the United States is seeking re-election in Part 1 of the ICAO Council, and we ask every State for your vote of support.

## **CONCLUSION**

ICAO’s motto, No Country Left Behind, applies across all of aviation’s priorities – safety, security, economic growth, and tackling the climate crisis. To keep our citizens safe and secure, we must work together, and the U.S. stands ready to partner.

The work we do collectively in the coming days – work we can only do collectively – will bring us to ever higher heights and yield clear skies ahead for all of the people that we serve.

Thank you again for your partnership.

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