



ICAO concludes successful 2016 air services negotiation event

For immediate release

MONTRÉAL, 12 DECEMBER 2016 – The 9th ICAO Air Services Negotiation Conference (ICAN2016) wound up successfully in Nassau, Bahamas on Friday, with 67 States/territories taking advantage of the event's cost-effective multi-negotiation framework to expand air transport liberalization and market access through the signing of over 400 air services agreements and arrangements.

Personally thanking the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Mr. Perry G. Christie, whose government generously provided the facilities and hospitality for the ICAN2016 participants, ICAO Council President Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu underscored in his opening remarks "...the importance ICAO attaches to the Caribbean Region, and the critical role air transport plays in enhancing the tourism and overall prosperity of Small Island States more generally."

Adding that continued liberalization of market access creates a better operating environment for the air transport industry, which generates \$2.7 trillion for the global economy each year, and provides 63.5 million jobs globally, President Aliu also updated the ICAN audience on a new partnership initiative ICAO has developed "to bring together aviation and development partners to identify synergies, challenges and opportunities in support of helping States leverage all available air transport benefits and to meet the objectives reflected in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."

In his keynote address, Prime Minister Christie highlighted the challenges being faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) like the Bahamas, including the requirement to provide infrastructure facilities for every island to ensure air connectivity and essential services.

PM Christie also informed the audience of the on-going restructuring of his country's aviation industry to be more ICAO compliant. He thanked ICAO for its efforts and assistance under the *No Country Left Behind (NCLB)* Initiative, which he stressed would assist many SIDS like the Bahamas to enhance safety and security while promoting the growth of air transport, trade and tourism.

This year's event also provided an opportunity for a special meeting of Caribbean States on NCLB, where they discussed the priorities and targets of the initiative for 2017.

More than 366 negotiators took part in some 430 meetings during the five-day ICAN marathon in Nassau this year. Since the event's inception in 2008, successive ICANs have been held in every world region and have made important contributions to the liberalization of international air transport and the enhancement of air connectivity for the benefit of States, the industry, and the travelling public.

ICAO ICAN events have also become an important platform for air transport regulatory reform, and a useful vehicle for promoting understanding and cooperation amongst government policy makers, regulators and industry players, as well as other aviation stakeholders.

The next ICAO Air Services Negotiation Conference (ICAN2017) will take place in Sri Lanka in December 2017.



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Resources for Editors

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.

Background: ICAO and Aviation Development

Aviation development refers to a wide range of infrastructure, human resources, training, and related capacity-building activities. The ultimate goal of these efforts is to realize a safe and efficient air transport foundation in a given State, one which is consistent with ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and Strategic Objectives for the global air transport network.

Once ICAO-compliant air transport connectivity is established, it begins to support expanded tourism and many other local and regional socio-economic development goals for States and Regions. Opportunities for local citizens, businesses and producers to access foreign supplies and markets begin to multiply significantly, and further important benefits for governments and societies are realized through improvements in medical transport, emergency response and cultural exchange.

Recognizing the importance of aviation development to ICAO's global mandate and the new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Organization has begun to more actively engage States and donor/development stakeholders and to map its work against SDG deliverables. We do so not only by serving an essential coordinating role, but also by providing States with the planning and monitoring tools they need to develop practical and effective business cases supporting dependable socio-economic returns on investment.

[The ICAO Economic Development website](#)

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