



ICAO Secretary General highlights value of cooperation and assistance when addressing aviation sector growth

For immediate release

Montréal and Athens, 16 October 2017 – Speaking at the 2017 ICAO Global Aviation Cooperation Symposium hosted by the Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority (HCAA) and the Athens International Airport, ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu delivered a clear message on the power of ICAO-compliant civil aviation to improve the lives of people everywhere.

“The aviation system has evolved over the decades to become an irreplaceable global network connecting the world’s cultures and economies,” Dr. Liu commented. “It brings together people and businesses to the tune of 10 million passengers daily on over 100,000 flights, while supporting at the same time some 63.5 million jobs globally, fully one third of world trade by value, and more than 2.7 trillion dollars annually to global GDP.”

ICAO GACS events are designed to raise awareness on the main aviation-related challenges being faced by States and industry operators, and to highlight for them the ICAO Technical Cooperation Programme at their disposal to effectively address them. Noting that State commitments, planning and political will are critical components in any successful large-scale development project, Dr. Liu noted to the audience of high-level officials that “Your presence here, and commitment to this process, are the first and most important steps along that journey.”

Highlighting that growth in air transport flight and passenger volumes will be the main challenge facing both developed and developing States in the coming decades, Dr. Liu noted that the forecast doubling in aviation’s global capacity presents challenges to States and industry in terms of how to manage the expansion of their local facilities and infrastructure to optimize air transport’s socio-economic benefits.

“This helps explain why goal number one of this Symposium is on helping governments to manage change,” she commented, “but sectoral growth cannot be permitted to negatively impact our key strategic performance targets. Existing levels of aviation safety, security, efficiency, passenger facilitation, and environmental protection must also improve even as we expand.” In this context, cooperation in civil aviation is crucial for achieving a better level of effective implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

Recognizing that many governments in attendance at the Athens event are now keenly engaged towards achieving the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals being worked toward under the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Dr. Liu noted that the ability of air transport connectivity to permit States to expand their route networks, improve foreign market and supply chain access for local suppliers, and in the end bring wide-ranging and sustainable prosperity benefits to their local populations should figure prominently in all related development planning.

“I cannot underscore strongly enough how fundamental this ICAO compliant air connectivity is to States’ long-term socio-economic ambitions,” she underscored.

ICAO’s Technical Cooperation Programme is presently assisting more than 100 States and organizations annually with various aviation projects, and mainly in support of their capacity building and infrastructure development objectives, human resources training programmes, the recruitment

of expert consultants, and the procurement of civil aviation equipment and services.

Dr. Liu's mission to Greece also provided her with an opportunity to undertake high-level bilateral meetings with Greece's Minister for Infrastructure and Transportation, Mr. Christos Spirtzis, Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Georgios Katrougalos, and General Secretary for Tourism, Infrastructure and Investments, Mr. George Tziallas, as well as with Mr. Konstantinos Lintzerakos, Governor of the Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority. Focussing on the importance of increased air connectivity to the sustainability of the growth of Greece's crucial tourism sector and economy, these discussions highlighted the need for continued progress on participation in and compliance with ICAO's safety, security and environmental initiatives, and the associated need to ensure that the HCAA is appropriately structured and resourced, particularly in terms of human resources.

To achieve this, cooperation between ICAO and Greece will be strengthened at the global and regional levels, and Greece will consider participating in ICAO's Traveller Identification Programme (TRIP) Strategy, including its Public Key Directory (PKD). The TRIP is the cornerstone of ICAO's response to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2309 on preventing the travel of foreign terrorist fighters. It is also a key element in ICAO's upcoming Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP.) Greece will also enhance its support of gender equality and ICAO's [Next Generation of Aviation Professionals](#) initiative in order to address the human resource challenges that were identified.



ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu delivering her keynote address at the 2017 ICAO Global Aviation Cooperation Symposium, hosted by Greece's Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority (HCAA) and the Athens International Airport. Dr. Liu delivered a clear message to the attending high-level officials on the power of ICAO-compliant civil aviation to improve the lives of people everywhere, and on aviation connectivity is so fundamental to States which are seeking to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals under *Agenda 2030*. Photo: ICAO

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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.

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