



## ICAO Council President: African airport capacity critical to continent-wide sustainable prosperity

For immediate release

**Montréal and Lagos, 17 April 2018** – Addressing African aviation and government leaders at the Airports Council International's (ACI's) 2018 Africa Regional Conference in Lagos, Nigeria, ICAO Council President Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu highlighted yesterday that the continent's rapidly-expanding air traffic can only be sustained and optimized through the continued development and modernization of local aviation infrastructure, particularly at airports.

"The industry here generates very positive impacts on tourism and trade, directly and indirectly supporting 6.8 million jobs and generating 72.5 billion dollars in Gross Domestic Product (GDP)," President Aliu said. "But due to the more recent and effective focus on air transport liberalization, many African hub airports are now expected to exceed their capacity by 2020."

The ACI Conference was declared open by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation of Nigeria, Mr. Boss Gida Mustapha, in the presence of over 280 participants from 47 Countries and numerous international organizations. Also present were CEOs from the aviation industry (airports, airlines, air navigation service providers, manufacturers, etc.) and members of the Nigerian Senate and House of Representatives and other senior government officials.

In delivering his keynote address at the opening of the Conference, the ICAO Council President also noted that airport modernization and capacity "is a key reason why ICAO's Global Plans are designed to establish globally-harmonized aviation objectives and requirements in support of the worldwide modernization which is now underway." He stressed that ICAO's goal in this respect "is to ensure there are no constraints of infrastructure capacity, technology and financial resources for aviation development," and noted that ICAO's World Aviation Forum events are specifically designed to address these concerns and bring project planners and financiers together.

Another key development priority stressed by President Aliu was that related enhancements in human capacity development, through improved education and training, should be seen as "directly supportive of the sustainability of any new infrastructure project or new capacity being considered." From a more operational standpoint, he drew attention to the fact that airport facilities are much more than just impressive new terminal buildings, and that ICAO remains concerned that many African airports are seeking to attract international flights without the requisite certifications.

"More attention must continue to be paid to the airside safety priorities at Africa's airports," he said, "including international airport perimeter fencing, taxiway and runway safety, effective fire services, and better wildlife management," he remarked.

The President concluded by focusing upon the important aviation security role of airports today, and the many new innovations which are helping them to operate with less noise and emissions than in the past.

During his mission in Lagos, President Aliu met with Nigeria's Minister of State for Aviation, the Honourable Hadi Sirika, to discuss the State's progress on the development of aviation infrastructure and related partnerships subsequent to ICAO's World Aviation Forum event which was conducted in Abuja, Nigeria, last November. Minister Sirika briefed President Aliu on recent investments made in

upgrading the Nigerian aviation training school in Zaria, an ICAO-endorsed Regional Training Centre of Excellence, and the need and means to promote the facility to greater regional benefit was also discussed.

He also spoke to CEOs of local aviation agencies regarding safety, security, passenger facilitation, and environmental performance priorities, and in discussions with ACI's Director General, Ms. Angela Gittens, he applauded her organization's successful APEX-in-Security programme while noting further collaborative opportunities for the two Organizations. He also expressed his deep appreciation to DG Gittens for ACI's determined support to-date of ICAO's 'No Country Left Behind' assistance and capacity-building priorities.



ICAO Council President Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu delivering his remarks yesterday at the Airports Council International's (ACI's) 2018 Africa Regional Conference. He stressed to the almost 300 African aviation and government leaders present that the continent's rapidly-expanding air traffic can only be sustained and optimized through the continued development and modernization of local aviation infrastructure, particularly at airports.

## 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 192 Member States.

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