



ICAO Secretary General addresses UN Global Counter-terrorism Compact on aviation and pandemic responses

For immediate release

Montréal, 28 August 2020 – In her keynote address today to the UN’s fifth Principal-level Meeting of the Global Counter-terrorism Coordination Compact Entities, ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu discussed the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has posed to air transport, tourism and trade, and its impacts on countries’ efforts to counter terrorism and organized crime.

Dr. Liu began her remarks by drawing attention to ICAO’s ongoing and active efforts to convey regular counter terrorism and aviation-related updates during the pandemic, and to serve as a key facilitator among States and applicable organizations.

“A key priority in this regard is air transport facilitation, which relates to identity management, travel documents, and the efficient management of border control processes, as well as the expedited clearance of aircraft, passengers, and crew, and all aspects of baggage and cargo screening and processing,” Dr. Liu emphasized.

The ICAO Secretary General stressed that Security and Facilitation objectives are highly inter-related, and that ICAO has been strongly emphasizing the importance of States maintaining effective National Facilitation Committees and National Facilitation Programmes during the pandemic, supported by results-driven cross-sectoral collaboration with National Civil Aviation Security Committees and other appropriate stakeholders.

“ICAO has also established special COVID-19 Security and Facilitation information and monitoring platforms, and has issued related guidelines and implementation resources which are vital to controlling pandemic-related response risks,” she noted.

Dr. Liu drew attention to the fact that while so much of attention is now focused on COVID-19, ICAO has also been continuing to push for progress on enhanced border security and the development of new Passenger Name Record (PNR) data standards in line with UN Security Council resolution 2396 (2017).

“In June, this work achieved an important milestone when our Council adopted Amendment 28 to Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention, establishing an international framework for the transfer and exchange of PNR data,” she told the assembled officials.

Despite how the pandemic has temporarily disconnected so much of the world, ICAO continues to encourage and empower States to cooperate at the regional and sub-regional levels. It is also drawing governments’ attention to the fact that the establishment of effective identification management processes are strongly supportive of UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.9, which concerns the protection of human rights through enhanced social, economic, political, and legal inclusion.

In concluding her remarks, Dr. Liu highlighted that “ICAO will continue to demonstrate its leadership and commitment in all matters pertaining to global aviation security policy, regulation, standardization, quality control, audits, assistance, and training. Looking forward I am deeply optimistic that with new methods of working together, and stronger coalitions, we can strengthen

still further the Global Counter-Terrorism capacities and resources of States, and realize a more peaceful and prosperous world for us all.”

The virtual Global Counter-terrorism Coordination Compact meeting was chaired by United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism Under-Secretary-General Mr. Vladimir Voronkov. He praised the efforts made by ICAO to swiftly progress the work on the PNR Standards, despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, as a key contribution to the Counter Terrorism Travel Programme.

The meeting featured the participation of Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Ms. Michèle Coninx, Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). Also contributing was the chair of the UN Security Council’s 1267 Committee, and the Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism. The chairs of the eight working groups of the Counter Terrorism Global Compact provided a progress update to 150 participants from the 43 Global Compact members and observers.



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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 guidance 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 193 Member States.

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