



## High-level WEF meeting explores post-pandemic future for global mobility

For immediate release

**Montréal, 15 September 2020** – ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu participated, on 14 September, in the Stewardship Board Meeting on *Shaping the Future of Mobility* organized by the World Economic Forum (WEF). The meeting focused on exploring how innovation will help the world and individuals reconnect more safely and sustainably post-COVID-19.

Dr. Fang Liu co-chaired the meeting with Lord Adair Turner, Chairman, Energy Transitions Commission of the United Kingdom. The Ministers of the United States, Germany, Canada, Japan and India as well as other high level governmental officials and CEOs taking part in the meeting expressed wide ranging views during sessions focused on topics including ‘Travelling in the New Normal’, and ‘Resetting Urban Mobility’.

Innovation is highlighted as vital in the new normal, and the participants called for the international community to seize the post-COVID recovery as a great opportunity for aviation and other sectors of mobility to build back better. The meeting also discussed latest updates from the Board’s project teams for ‘Clean Skies for Tomorrow’, ‘Urban Aerial Mobility’, and ‘The CommonPass.’

In her opening remarks setting the tone for the meeting, ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu took note how “many of the topics here today have direct tie-ins to work items and priorities now being addressed by States through ICAO.”

“As our CART guidelines and other resources continue to help those countries to respond and recover from COVID-19, we’ll be looking to innovations such as some of those to be discussed here today to help us build back better and more sustainably in air transport.”

Underscoring how COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on local and global air connectivity, and on the many countries and operators who made that connectivity possible, Dr. Liu emphasized how this dynamic “has also tragically impacted the lives of the hundreds of millions of economically vulnerable men and women around the world, many of them depend on aviation and tourism for their very livelihoods.”

She stressed how impacts on international passenger travel have been most severe. “Overall ICAO has recorded a 1.8 billion passenger or 69% decrease from January thru August of this year,” Dr. Liu noted. “This translates into airline losses of between 350 and 400 billion dollars.”

Dr. Liu acknowledged that cargo traffic was at first more resilient to these impacts, “notably as the world relied heavily on the speed and dependability of our network to keep urgent medical, humanitarian and food supplies moving to where they were needed most.”

More recently, however, air freight markets have also shown decline as manufacturers have responded and retooled to meet local demands for these types of goods, and Dr. Liu stressed that, in terms of a recovery, “ICAO is presently forecasting that traffic levels will return to 2019 levels no sooner than 2022, and possibly as late as 2024.”

Looking past these downturns, while emphasizing their potential for change and renewal in civil aviation, the ICAO Secretary General concluded her opening comments by noting that “our sector

is already using this opportunity to build back better and more sustainably, whether in terms of fleet renewal with greener aircraft, or the leveraging of latest innovations in order to improve passenger health and security screening to make air travel much more resilient to future pandemic events.”



## 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 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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### General Contact

[communications@icao.int](mailto:communications@icao.int)

Twitter: [@ICAO](#)

### Media Contact

#### William Raillant-Clark

Communications Officer

[wraillantclark@icao.int](mailto:wraillantclark@icao.int)

+1 514-954-6705

+1 514-409-0705 (mobile)

Twitter: [@wraillantclark](#)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/raillantclark/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/raillantclark/)