



ICAO President underscores importance of solidarity, innovation, and sustainability to sectoral recovery strategies

For immediate release

Montréal, 24 November 2020 – Speaking to the leadership of the global airline and European aviation sectors today, ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano stressed the importance of placing solidarity, innovation, and sustainability at the heart of States’ and operators’ recovery plans.

His remarks were delivered by videoconferencing to the [76th Annual General Meeting of IATA](#) and the [AeroDays2020 Berlin Aviation Summit](#).

“There is an onus upon us to have the vision to look beyond this downturn and maximize the opportunities afforded by it,” the President said. “We must learn the lessons this disease is teaching us, and make our global network more resilient to future pandemic threats.”

On the topic of sectoral solidarity, President Sciacchitano drew attention to the many activities and responses undertaken by ICAO to support continued safe operations, and the alignment being achieved in air transport public health responses in light of the Take-off Guidelines issued by the ICAO Council Task Force on Aviation Recovery.

Noting the successes being achieved through the guidelines continuing implementation, the ICAO Council President highlighted the improved connectivity and traveller confidence being seen where countries have established international public health corridors, and the higher sustainability of areas around the world which have more robust intra-regional travel.

He also drew attention to the new Phase II version of the ICAO recovery Take-off Guidelines, and its recommendation that States assess their passenger medical testing options using the risk assessment tools according to the new manual which ICAO has just developed for this purpose.

“The objective is to accelerate every prudent means of restoring public confidence in air travel, including through the promotion of effective tests aiming to encourage governments to relax quarantine requirements,” he stressed. “Governments reserve their sovereign right to address a public health threat with whatever measures necessary to protect the lives of their citizens. At the same time, it is important that they recognize how dire the situation may become if air travel is not reasonably ensured.”

When introducing the topics of innovations and sustainability, President Sciacchitano underscored to his airline CEO audiences that, as air transport leaders at this moment in time, “we must remain steadfast in assuring that, even in a climate of diminishing financial resources sector-wide, aviation safety and security and environmental priorities will be continuously and vigorously addressed.”

He noted that related solutions will require significant degrees of aviation innovation going forward, whether to make air travel more resilient in the face of future pandemic threats, or to safely integrate the incredible new developments taking place in autonomous, sub orbital, and supersonic flight.

“Artificial intelligence, blockchain, and many other innovative technologies will also be a big part of this evolution, and it will also require changes to how regulators and standard setters assess and adopt new innovations for global benefit,” he noted. “To meet this challenge, the ICAO Council is establishing a high-level forum on innovation with industry leaders, and this will play an important role in how our community considers and adopts innovations in the important years ahead.”

The Council President also remarked that “there is a strong global expectation that we will build back better post-pandemic, both in terms of our emissions and overall contributions to sustainability,” and highlighted the unwavering commitment of States and industry to the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA).

The President concluded his respective remarks by welcoming the participation of airlines, through IATA, in ICAO’s response and recovery efforts and outcomes, and by noting to his Berlin Summit audience that ICAO will continue to help the many governments, regions and stakeholders who cooperate through it to benefit from one another’s’ insights and best practices.



Resources for Editors

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created by governments in 1944 to support their diplomacy on international air transport matters. Since that time, countries have adopted over 12,000 standards and practices through ICAO which help to align their national regulations relevant to aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, enabling a truly global network to be realized. ICAO forums also provide opportunities for advice and advocacy to be shared with government decision-makers by industry groups, civil society NGOs, and other officially-recognized air transport stakeholders.

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