

**Statement by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
to the Fifty-first Session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body
for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA51)**

(Madrid, Spain – 2 to 9 December 2019)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On this Saturday, 7 December 2019, ICAO is celebrating its 75th anniversary. The achievements of the Organization during the 75 years were the centrepiece of the recent ICAO Session of the Assembly in October. Our triennial Assembly highlighted the incredible environmental progress achieved by international aviation.

Aircraft today is 75% quieter and 80% more fuel efficient than in the 1960s. Whilst many sectors are still figuring out how much emissions they are responsible for, aviation had a dedicated IPCC special report in 1999 and subsequent IPCC reports, according to which, aviation remains to account for approximately 2% of global CO₂ emissions produced by human activity.

International aviation is the first sector with a goal to achieving “carbon neutral growth from 2020” and implementation of measures to achieve it are on track. The main objective is to achieve the necessary CO₂ emissions reductions within the sector to the extent possible, and if necessary to compensate with offsetting of the remaining emissions.

This is not a goal for 2050, but for 2020, which is only a few weeks away. To ensure the achievement of this aspirational goal, ICAO has been progressing work in all fronts.

On technology, the use of best available technologies on aircraft will be ensured by applying the ICAO global CO₂ certification Standard adopted in 2017. In addition, the pace for introducing innovative technologies is unprecedented, which was clearly illustrated at the recent ICAO Innovation Fair in September. By 2022, we expect to see hybrid and electric aircraft already entering in service on shorter route flights. In addition to the promotion of such innovations, ICAO continues to facilitate their deployment through necessary regulatory and operational frameworks.

Regarding the use of cleaner sources of energy in aviation, more than 200,000 commercial flights have used a blend of sustainable fuels. Aircraft are now able to fly using different, more sustainable feedstocks, such as used cooking oil, waste, and other sources of biomass. In the past years, six conversion processes were certified for use in aviation. Today, seven international airports regularly distribute blended sustainable fuels.

On the operational side, many steps have been taken on the ground and in the air to reduce aviation emissions. A substantial number of airports have electricity sources by solar energy, and installed electrified gates that provide clean energy to aircraft preparing for the flight, instead of using aviation fuel. Modern air traffic management allows for substantial fuel savings, for example by the optimization of routes, and less waiting time for departing and landing. More recently studies on “formation flight” shows that fuel savings up to 10% could be obtained.

A lot of attention has been focused on CORSIA, the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation, the first global market-based measure for a sector. I have good news. CORSIA implementation is on track.

Since its adoption in 2016, ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and guidance for the implementation of CORSIA Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system were successfully adopted in June 2018. As of January this year, ALL aircraft operating on international routes are being monitored for their CO₂ emissions and results will be verified and reported in 2020 to the CORSIA Central Registry.

To ensure the timely implementation of CORSIA by all States and airlines, an unprecedented level of Assistance, Capacity-building and Training programme: ACT-CORSIA was put in place under the spirit of ICAO's "No Country Left Behind" initiative. In addition, CORSIA Buddy Partnerships provide major additional support for implementation of CORSIA, bridging together more than 120 donor and recipient States in all regions.

Just last week, the ICAO Council adopted the implementation elements for CORSIA, related to the harmonized assessment of life-cycle CO₂ benefits using CORSIA eligible fuels that can be deducted by airlines from their offsetting requirements under CORSIA. Again, aviation is pioneering in establishing a globally-agreed framework for assessing these benefits.

ICAO is also progressing its work on eligible emissions units that airlines will use to meet their offsetting requirements under CORSIA. These eligible emissions units will be determined by the ICAO Council, considering the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Body in March 2020.

Mr. Chairman, the recently held ICAO Assembly renewed the commitment of Member States to take the lead in addressing all environmental issues relating to international aviation. With the cooperative spirit that has been our trademark over the last 75 years, ICAO and its Member States will work together over the next three years to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the Assembly, taking into account the concerns and reservations expressed by Member States at the Assembly.

While the Assembly recognized the progress achieved in all elements of the basket of measures to achieve the sector's carbon neutral growth from 2020, it requested that work on the feasibility of a long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation, with the aim of considering options and an implementation roadmap at the next ICAO Session of the Assembly in 2022.

The Assembly also reaffirmed its support for CORSIA as the only global market-based measure to apply CO₂ emissions from international aviation, so as to avoid a possible patchwork of duplicative national or regional measures, thus ensuring that international aviation CO₂ emissions should be accounted for only once.

Mr. Chairman, the achievement of the ICAO global aspirational goals requires adequate financial resources within the sector itself, and it is of utmost importance that CORSIA be treated as one element of the basket of mitigation measures to achieve the sectoral goal. In this regard, the ICAO Assembly requested that "ICAO and its Member States express a clear concern, through the UNFCCC process, on the use of international aviation as a potential source for the mobilization of revenue for climate finance to the other sectors".

In closing, I would like to convey our appreciation to the UNFCCC Secretariat for its continuing support, as well as its participation at various ICAO events and sharing of its experience and knowledge toward the development of the CORSIA architecture.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.