



**Remarks by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,
to the Aviation Information Security and Analysis Center
& U.S. Aviation Cyber Initiative Global Summit on**

“Unmasking Cyber Risk and Building Resilience”

(Virtual Meeting, 21 September 2021)

1. I wish to thank our hosts for organizing this important event, and for the invitation to address you with opening remarks.
2. Digitalization is a crucial element for interoperability of international aviation, which in turn is fundamental across all of civil aviation Strategic Objectives to enhance the sector’s safety, security, capacity, efficiency, and sustainability.
3. This accelerating digitalization brings with it new cyber risks, however, with characteristics and properties unique from the traditional physical threats we have confronted so effectively until now.
4. For example, cyber-attacks know no borders or boundaries, being able to originate in one country, with the target being in a second country, and the impact of the attack manifesting in a third country.
5. They can similarly propagate across networks, companies and organizations, whether national or international, and be orchestrated in parallel with physical attacks so as to aid or augment either attack’s destructive outcomes.
6. These non-traditional properties of cyber threats require a non-traditional approach: one that ensures that our response is globally harmonized, consistent and holistic across the civil aviation sector and its different domains, including safety and security.

7. Global harmonization is essential to current cybersecurity and cyber resilience objectives for international aviation, and this highlights the unique value of ICAO's multilateral role in driving aligned international planning, responses, and progress.
8. ICAO's Aviation Cybersecurity Strategy was adopted by countries during our Assembly in 2019, and it plays an important role in aligning international actions and results in support of:
 - Enhanced cooperation;
 - Improved national governance, accountability, regulations, and legislation;
 - National policy development and improved information sharing;
 - Effective emergency response and business continuity plans which are continuously tested and enhanced through exercises;
 - And last but certainly not least, assuring that we have sufficient skilled personnel ready and able to drive all of these ambitious outcomes as part of a holistic and global cybersecurity culture.
9. With respect to the Strategy's focus on national coordination mechanisms between the different domains of civil aviation, as well as with the wider national cybersecurity authorities, I would like to take the opportunity here to commend the very successful efforts of the United States in establishing its multi-agency *Aviation Cyber Initiative*.
10. I would also like to commend the efforts of *Aviation ISAC* in supporting and promoting cybersecurity information sharing in aviation. Our Organizations have realized some very productive cooperation through the years, and ICAO looks forward to continuously leveraging this relationship as we address aviation cybersecurity and cyber resilience together.
11. People are generally considered to be the weakest link in the cyber chain, mainly as they're prone to being imperfect, and susceptible to being targeted by a variety of cyber-attacks such as phishing and social engineering.
12. This also, however, makes them the first line of defence against cyber threats. This explains why implementing an effective cybersecurity culture, where cybersecurity becomes everyone's responsibility, is so essential to keeping aviation protected.

13. ICAO and the aviation community have been celebrating 2021 as the *Year of Security Culture* to help reinforce these points with governments and industry, and cybersecurity awareness features very prominently in this campaign.
14. We also continue to encourage countries to very promptly adopt the 2010 *Beijing Convention and Protocol*, very important multilateral agreements supporting these critical global efforts to deter and prosecute cyber-attacks against civil aviation.
15. In terms of our ongoing priorities and work programme, ICAO currently has Study Groups reviewing topics such as the international legal mechanisms under which cyber criminals can be effectively pursued and charged, and developing a governance model for an *International Aviation Trust Framework* to support the availability, integrity, and confidentiality of the digital information our network increasingly relies upon.
16. We're also reviewing and refining how we address these types of topics through relevant panels and expert groups, transforming our internal governance structure so that cybersecurity and cyber resilience are being addressed through a more unified and results-based work programme.
17. Given the extent of these initiatives, and the diversity of stakeholders each involves, we can appreciate that ICAO has become a key global forum for cybersecurity dialogue and progress among governments and industry.
18. In concluding today, I wish to emphasize that in order for air transport to fulfil its role as a catalyst of socio-economic development, a transporter of vaccines and emergency and humanitarian aid, and a connector of cultures and peoples, its safety, security, efficiency, and capacity must be continuously monitored and improved.
19. Digital innovations in air transport are surely going to accelerate with time, especially given the continuous advances in communications and applications we are witnessing, and the advent of new airspace users and unmanned aircraft systems.

20. These innovations are essential for the aviation sector to grow and deliver on its ambitions and goals, meaning effective and robust cybersecurity will only become *more* fundamental as this evolution continues.
21. We have achieved so much together as a sector due to our close and effective collaboration in the areas of cybersecurity and cyber resilience, and it's important that we keep our engagement dynamic and productive.
22. Finally, I would like to reiterate my appreciation to the Aviation ISAC and the Aviation Cyber Initiative for their invitation and for holding this timely and important event, and I look forward to addressing any questions you may have.
23. Thank you.