



Speech by the ICAO Secretary General

Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar

to the UNFCCC COP26 Transport Day Side Event

“Zero Carbon Transitions: Ambitions and Actions in the Transport Sector”

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pre-recorded

1. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been felt strongly by aviation.
2. Global passenger traffic in 2020 fell drastically by 60% compared to 2019.
3. However, we have started to see the signs of a gradual recovery and with that, opportunities to build back better.
4. The recent IPCC report made it very clear: that we need to act and we need to act NOW.
5. Every fraction of degree counts, and every sector needs to act.
6. According to the IPCC, the international aviation sector accounts for approximately 1.3% of the world’s man-made carbon emissions.
7. These are addressed through ICAO, as they are not covered by the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.
8. Long term commitments are essential for the construct of decarbonisation pathways but should not shadow the need for immediate action.
9. ICAO States have been active in achieving 2% annual improvements to fuel efficiency, and carbon neutral growth.

10. 121 Member States have submitted State Action Plans on how to reduce CO₂ emissions from international aviation, including in-sector mitigation measures such as aircraft technologies, operational improvements, and the use of sustainable fuels. Despite the pandemic, the implementation of a global market-based measure – the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) – is fully on track.
11. ICAO is now working with priority on the feasibility of a long-term global aspirational goal (LTAG) for international aviation, for consideration by our Assembly next year. To ensure a transparent and inclusive process for the LTAG work, ICAO is consulting on the matter with all its Member States and prior to the Assembly, ICAO will convene a High-level Meeting to facilitate the views of States.
12. ICAO is also fostering initiatives to enable new technologies and clean energy for a sustainable aviation sector, including promoting investments in electric and hydrogen-powered technologies and sustainable aviation fuels. Clean energy is key to the achievement of ambitious goals.
13. COP26 is critical in demonstrating that we are en-route to a better future. An ambitious outcome here will further encourage States to take an ambitious decision for international aviation at the ICAO Assembly next year, to complement the Paris Agreement objectives.
14. It is imperative to put in place the right policies and legal frameworks, infrastructure and access to clean energy amongst all sectors, with a view to achieving level playing field for an inclusive and effective green recovery.
15. Thank you for your attention.