



**Opening Remarks  
by ICAO Secretary General  
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,  
to the APAC Session for Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS)**

*(Singapore, 7 April 2022)*

*Distinguished Directors General and representatives of Pacific Island States,  
Ladies and gentlemen,*

1. It is my great pleasure to address you for the second time as Secretary General of ICAO, last time virtually from Montreal and now a bit closer in Singapore, and I really look forward to the next time being in person within your region.
2. We all know civil aviation is vital for the Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS), especially for their connectivity, socio-economic development and disaster relief efforts.
3. Many of your countries depend significantly on tourism for your socio-economic development, for example, and the vast majority of those visitors arrive internationally by air.
4. But as small island States you also face many challenges relating to climate change and other factors, and we're well aware in ICAO that these can and do impact your ability to address civil aviation compliance and effective implementation objectives.
5. As supported by the ICAO Council and our 39th Assembly, ICAO accordingly embarked on an Aviation Needs Analysis in conjunction with your States in 2019.
6. This research took into consideration a variety of air transport and other factors, and included assessments relating to important UN frameworks such as the *2030 Agenda*, the *Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway*, and the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*.

7. The recommendations of the PSIDS Study have enabled us to consider your needs more holistically, and most recently on the basis of a ‘Pacific aviation roadmap’ to make your air transport and related oversight systems more efficient, sustainable, and resilient.
8. The Study was made possible by generous in-kind and financial contributions of a number of States, and this has been both instrumental and greatly appreciated in terms of safety and security objectives most especially.
9. The establishment of a dedicated Pacific Small Island State liaison officer as an extension of our Asia Pacific (APAC) Office in Bangkok is a key step in moving forward with implementation of the PSIDS Analysis recommendations, and most importantly to establish increased and long-term engagement and communication with your countries, and be able to provide more implementation support.
10. I think that this will be important to rebuilding trust, empowering your CAAs, and enhancing regional cooperation, and ICAO is very grateful to Singapore for generously offering to fund this position for the first year.
11. Until this new officer is in place, the APAC Regional Office has identified a Coordination Officer who is an expert in safety implementation to provide your States with interim support, and the first bilateral meetings of the Regional Office with Kiribati and Fiji have now been conducted on this basis, following up the invitation from the APAC Regional Director to all 14 Pacific Small Island States.
12. Also consistent with the results of Needs Study, ICAO is also supporting the implementation of the Port Moresby Declaration endorsed by the Pacific Island Regional Aviation Ministers, which will strengthen the regulatory oversight capability, capacity and effectiveness of Member States, in addition to the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO).
13. Moving forward, there are opportunities that your States can capitalize on to advance their civil aviation capacities.
14. One of these is civil aviation planning – an area of vital importance for the socio-economic development of your States.

15. This reminds us why aviation should be meaningfully captured in your strategic policies and plans at the regional and national levels, in line with ICAO's National Aviation Planning Framework. In this regard, ICAO is this week validating a new course on developing national Civil Aviation Master Plans which will be delivered over the next year in all ICAO regions, including in the Pacific. Together with Singapore we are also developing a new course for DGCAs on Resilience which will be delivered in Singapore in May and the day before the Assembly starts in Montreal.
16. As a result of the devastating impact of the COVID19 pandemic, your States have been encouraged to continue taking advantage of the comprehensive guidance established by the ICAO Council's Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART).
17. This guidance, in addition to the pandemic resources offered through ICAO's Implementation Packages, or iPacks, are critical to assure a successful pandemic recovery phase.
18. To-date, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and Vanuatu have benefited through complimentary Aerodrome Restart, FAL, and PHC i-Packs made available by ICAO.
19. Ladies and gentlemen, ICAO encourages partners and donors to join forces with us to successfully implement the Aviation Needs Analysis roadmap.
20. With partner support, and the full commitment and engagement of your States, and collaboration with other key stakeholders such as PASO and the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), we are hopeful that your national civil aviation capabilities will be strengthened, and that your local and regional prosperity will greatly improve as a result.
21. At the same time, please remember that despite the challenge of distance and time, ICAO's mission is to serve you as Member States, and I encourage you to continuously share with us in the Regional Office and Headquarters your needs so that we can find the best ways to provide you implementation support through all our available mechanisms and resources.
22. Thank you.