



**Opening Remarks
by the Secretary General
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,
to the ICAO Legal Seminar in the Republic of Korea**

(Seoul, Republic of Korea, 12 April 2022)

1. On behalf of the International Civil Aviation Organization, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea for the very warm welcome extended to ICAO and its officials, and for the excellent facilities it has provided for this timely ICAO Legal Seminar.
2. I would remark as well that this is the sixth ICAO Legal Seminar hosted by the Republic of Korea, and that these events have been taking place on a roughly triennial basis since 2006.
3. ICAO is extremely grateful for this longstanding commitment from the Government of the Republic of Korea, and for its consistent and comprehensive support for ICAO's work, whether in the legal or any other air transport domain.
4. After two years marked by the international public health crisis, it's tremendously encouraging that this seminar can take place over the next two days in a hybrid format, and with a large number of participants attending in-person here in Seoul.
5. I for one am very pleased to be able finally to travel to meet with State officials and other stakeholders in person after all this time, just as I'm sure many of you here with us today are as well.
6. This seminar will explore a wide range of contemporary subjects in the legal field, some of which are currently on the Work Programme of the Legal Committee of ICAO.
7. It will also explore several new and emerging topics, such as the recent developments that are taking place at ICAO with respect to pilotless aircraft, cyber attacks against civil aviation, climate change, and support to families of aircraft accident victims.

8. We will also be exploring the recovery of international civil aviation and the application of public health measures onboard aircraft, topics of great importance to the long-term resilience of the sector against future global public health crises.
9. Since I was appointed as Secretary General of ICAO last year, I have made it my key priority to support the sector's pandemic recovery and reconnect the world, while keeping vigilant on our long-term strategies to support the development of safe, secure and sustainable air transport.
10. I have also committed to focus on instilling good governance and ethics in ICAO's work, to drive the digital transformation of the Organization's infrastructure and working methods, and to increase our responsiveness and multi-stakeholder engagement.
11. In all of these matters, the role of lawyers and the importance of the rule of law is fundamental. The agenda for this seminar is therefore particularly relevant and important.
12. I am, of course, aware that there have been strong concerns expressed recently within the ICAO Council regarding some of the legal issues arising from the current events in Ukraine. Whilst those issues are not on the agenda for this meeting and will be continue to be addressed by the Council – which is I believe the most appropriate place for that – the ICAO Secretariat has taken steps recently to remind Member States of their obligations under the Chicago Convention. And we are fully aligned with the views which have been expressed by the UN Secretary General. I hope that we will see a speedy and peaceful resolution to the current situation.
13. Leading this seminar this year will be the (relatively!) new Director of the Legal Bureau, Michael Gill, along with ICAO Legal Officers Andrew Opolot, Christopher Petras and Mathieu Vaugeois.
14. I also wish to highlight that 2022 marks several anniversaries at ICAO, including the 75th anniversary of the entry into force of the Chicago Convention on 4 April 1947, and the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Legal Committee by the First Session of the ICAO Assembly in May 1947.
15. And, as already highlighted yesterday evening, this year marks the 70th anniversary of the Republic of Korea's adherence to the Chicago Convention.
16. In concluding, please let me remind you that the success of this event is very strongly tied to how actively you participate in it.

17. I encourage all participants to take full advantage of the opportunity we have organized, and wish you all an engaging and very thought-provoking seminar.

18. Thank you.