



**Address by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the Sixth Meeting of the
Directors General of Civil Aviation – Middle East**

(Abu Dhabi, UAE, 1-3 November 2022)

1. Though I greatly regret that I could not be with you in person this week, to help guide your discussions within the next few days, I wished to share some perspectives and reflect on the priorities resulting from ICAO's recently-concluded 41st Assembly.
2. First and foremost, I am very pleased to announce that ICAO Member States have adopted a long-term global aspirational goal (LTAG) for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, thanks to the unanimous support from States in this fast growing and futuristic outlook region.
3. They have also agreed that achieving this objective will rely on the combined effect of multiple aviation CO₂ emissions reduction measures, including innovative aircraft technologies, streamlined flight operations reducing fuel burn, and the increased production and deployment of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF).
4. As we will plan for and work together toward this long-term objective, offsetting under ICAO's Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), and the increasing roll-out of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF), will be critical to our near- and mid-term objectives.
5. The Assembly accordingly completed the first periodic review of CORSIA, with countries agreeing on a new CORSIA baseline from 2024 defined as 85% of CO₂ emissions in 2019.
6. It also underscored the importance of the new ICAO ACT-SAF: the assistance, capacity-building and training programme for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF).
7. **Air transport system resilience** in the post-pandemic era was another important focus at this year's ICAO Assembly.

8. The outcomes of ICAO's 2021 High Level Conference on COVID-19 factored importantly into States A41 decisions in this area, for example on the need for a contactless digital passenger experience which is closely informed by new public health related ICAO provisions.
9. Countries agreed in this context to promote the global adoption of internationally interoperable health certificates featuring ICAO Visible Digital Seal verification features, and they also voiced their support for the ICAO Health Master List, which aids both States public health and aviation stakeholders, in achieving efficient and secure authentication of traveller vaccination status and test result certificates.
10. States further endorsed at A41 that ICAO must develop a new strategy to better prepare the world for future public health and other types of emergencies. They instructed us to do so through our CAPSCA Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation, and to establish a comprehensive crisis management framework.
11. Additionally, in the **Security domain**, the Assembly acknowledged the importance of ICAO's Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) and Roadmap, while recognizing that it will need to be updated to provide a strong focus on cybersecurity, human factors, performance, and the professionalization of the aviation workforce.
12. In the areas of **Aviation Safety and Air Navigation**, Assembly States endorsed the latest editions of ICAO's Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).
13. This endorsement will help ICAO to continue to bring the aviation community together around common targets and pathways to achieve an agile, safe, secure, sustainable, high-performing and interoperable global air transport system, and we were particularly encouraged that the cyber resilience of safety critical systems was underscored as a key priority for the next edition of the GANP.
14. Getting back to the Assembly, ICAO's High-level Conference on COVID-19 also delivered a number of safety recommendations which States formally adopted at A41, and in this context they agreed that regional aviation safety organizations and accident investigation bodies should be better supported through more sustainable funding and legal frameworks.

15. I would emphasize in this regard the ambitious project in this Region to operationalize the MENA RSOO, which thanks to Saudi Arabia's Host State contribution and the support now being offered by other Member States, is currently expected to be officially launched sometime next year.
16. With respect to the **Economic Development of Air Transport**, ICAO Member States formally recognized aviation as a powerful enabler of social and economic recovery.
17. They also underscored the need for increasing liberalization of air services, and the role of air cargo operations in keeping our world supplied and connected in times of crisis.
18. In addition to these developments relating to ICAO's core Strategic Objectives, countries at A41 also showed their strong support for ICAO's new **Implementation Support Policy**.
19. They further acknowledged the value-added aspects of ICAO's technical cooperation and assistance resources, as well as its portfolio of products and services to support the recovery, resilience and sustainable development of international aviation.
20. This includes the invaluable assistance to Member States provided through ICAO's global aviation training activities and programmes, and in a related decision States have asked ICAO to convene a conference this triennium to fully assess current and future human resources skills requirements and training needs for global aviation.
21. In this regard, I congratulate here both your States and Regional Director Mohamed Abubaker and his team in Cairo on the development and implementation of the MID Region *No Country Left Behind* Strategy.
22. I must also underscore ICAO's deep appreciation for the financial and in-kind contributions we've received from MID States which play such an important role in helping to elevate overall regional compliance.
23. For almost 80 years, aviators have harnessed innovation, and a bold spirit of adventure, to make possible what seemed impossible. To connect what was disconnected. To turn the adversity of distance into opportunity and prosperity.
24. And so when challenges confront humanity on a truly global scale, as they most certainly do today, there is an expectation for aviation to be at the leading edge of our collective global response.

25. The future we're now confronted with will need more than a transformed and carbon-neutral aviation network, and by this I mean, it will also need a modernised ICAO.
26. I have therefore committed to transforming ICAO to become a more agile and responsive multilateral solutions provider, and we will be working closely with States and industry as this process continues to assure that we are fully fit for purpose for the exciting future of aviation which now lies ahead of us.
27. This vision has now been fully detailed and formalized in ICAO's 2023-2025 Business Plan, in a new transformational objective, and underpinned by a sound results-based management (RBM) approach.
28. The 2023-2025 Transformational Objective includes Outputs which will drive much needed organizational change at ICAO, in the areas of human resources, ethics, digitalization and information security, and financial and operational management.
29. The regular budget for the Organization to implement its Business Plan has been adopted by the 41st Assembly, but what countries have agreed to will not be sufficient to achieve everything we've aimed for.
30. We are therefore also undertaking a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy to support and deliver on the ambitious outcomes.
31. In concluding, I would like to encourage MID States to continue their continuous engagement with the ICAO MID Regional Office, and active participation in relevant regional groups.
32. I would like to take a moment here to commend the spirit of cooperation and respect for safety prioritization exemplified by the rapid addressing of several ATM operational challenges through the MID Contingency Coordination Teams (CCTs), and the ATM Contingency Plan.
33. As you all know, the FIFA World Cup 2022 will take place in few days in Doha, Qatar, and this will have a significant impact on the airspace and airport operations in the MID Region.
34. This will require the implementation of ATFM measures which will be based on a collaborative decision making that allows all members of the ATM Community to participate in the decision making process, in particular the adjacent States.
35. In this respect, I have been greatly encouraged with the teamwork and results of the MIDANPIRG FIFA World Cup 2022 Task Force.

36. Lastly, it is my tremendous pleasure today to commend the MID Region for the establishment of the MID Flight Procedures Programme (MID FPP) here in Abu Dhabi.
37. The MID FPP will further support States in meeting their obligations relating to flight procedure design and PBN implementation, and we are still looking forward to more MID States joining the Programme as “Active States” through their signature of the Project Document. I invite Directors of those remaining States to consider doing so this week on the side of this high-level meeting.
38. Ladies and gentlemen, ICAO, as always, remains extremely grateful for the dedication of our Member States, and all of our future objectives together will rely on our continuing and very successful collaborations.
39. On behalf of ICAO and the participating States and international organizations, I express our appreciation to UAE for hosting this important meeting.
40. I wish you all a very productive meeting, and we look forward to helping you realize its results.
41. Thank you.