



**Keynote remarks
by the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,
to the 2023 EUR/NAT DGCA Meeting**

(20 June 2023, Paris, France)

1. It is my great pleasure to provide opening remarks to this year's EUR/NAT DGCA Meeting. Unfortunately, I cannot join you in person today due to the ongoing ICAO Council session.
2. This meeting will address key strategic topics, including Sustainability, Resilience, Cooperation in Implementation Support, Gender Equality, and the Ratification of International Air Law Treaties.
3. Since last year, the air transport sector has achieved some major milestones in terms of traffic recovery and reconnecting the world, and underpinning all of this activity has been a tremendous new international consensus on aviation sustainability.
4. With the adoption by 184 States of the Long term Global Aspirational Goal (LTAG) at ICAO's Assembly last October, and the earlier commitment to NetZero2050 by the world's major industry groups, I have begun seeing a major mobilization across this sector.
5. But in addition, important near-term CO2 emissions reduction solutions, such as Sustainable Alternative Fuels, are engaging some new and very enthusiastic partners for aviation, and most notably from the global finance and energy sectors.
6. I have every confidence that the multilateral momentum being generated will help provide countries with everything they'll need to optimize their SAF production and distribution potential, and preparing to take best advantage of this energy revolution in aviation is **a first and very important priority** I would raise with your States today.

7. ICAO has already placed numerous tools and resources at countries' disposal to do so, and our Assistance, Capacity-building and Training for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ACT-SAF) programme is specifically designed and delivered to help you get started on your sustainable fuel journey.
8. I would also further emphasize that our third Conference on Aviation Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3) will be taking place in Dubai this November, and encourage all EUR/NAT States to participate very actively there and help ICAO to drive increased capacity, partnership, and ambition in this area.
9. Innovation, including green innovation, is **a second key priority** I would raise with you today.
10. An entirely new era of air transport is rapidly taking shape right before our eyes at the moment, and with it comes new solutions, as well as new paradigms and new challenges, all of which we need to address together in a coordinated and collaborative manner.
11. In particular, we are seeing rapid progress in the areas of Remotely-piloted and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (RPAS/UAS), in addition to Advanced Air Mobility.
12. ICAO is actively participating in these areas, and I would invite you and your teams to join us in defining a safe and beneficial integration of these new entrants at the 2023 ICAO DRONE ENABLE Symposium to be held in December this year.
13. In addition, we are now in the preparatory stages of the first Advanced Air Mobility Symposium, targeted for September of next year, and both events will be taking place at our Headquarters in Montréal.
14. As we survey the aviation context post-pandemic, we can see that air traffic levels in Europe are fast approaching their pre-pandemic highs, with some States progressing quite rapidly in this respect, and a few States recording growth above 2019 levels.
15. While the UN World Health Organization (WHO) has now declared an end to the COVID-19 emergency phase, **a third priority** I would raise with you today is for States and the aviation community to remain engaged and results-driven toward strengthening our global health crisis preparedness and management frameworks.

16. As we continue to pursue that objective, however, we should also not forget to celebrate and build upon the significant results already achieved through our collective global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
17. I wish to thank once again the States in the EUR/NAT area which participated in the leadership of that global effort through the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force, and encourage all States to continue to drive strong collaboration among all related national and regional stakeholders.
18. While this past year has brought good news for international aviation, on several fronts, we are still facing many challenges globally and regionally.
19. These have included a number of cyberattacks, and this is another important area where we need to join forces to cost-effectively enhance our individual and collective resilience.
20. A last development I must regrettably raise with you is the ongoing aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation, a violation of the UN Charter that was condemned by the United Nations, and the most recent ICAO Assembly.
21. I wish to underscore that in a world of increasing unpredictability, it remains the solemn duty of each and every one of us to pursue and showcase the incredible progress that can be achieved when countries respect each other's peace and sovereignty, and cooperate together to their mutual benefit under international rules based agreements such as the Chicago Convention.
22. You will soon hear introductory remarks by our EUR/NAT Regional Director, Mr. Nicolas Rallo. Since he started his functions one year ago, he has been committed to strengthening our collaborations with all stakeholders, and has conducted several official visits to EUR/NAT States, which have paved the way for enhanced coordination and cooperation.
23. Director Rallo is here to listen and to better understand your specific challenges and opportunities, and I wish to thank all States and Regional Organizations for the support you have been providing to him and his team.

24. I also would like to express my gratitude to our Regional Office's Host State France, for its high level of support, strengthened collaboration, and significant support for the upcoming renovation works of these premises, which are co-owned by France and ICAO.
25. In concluding today, I wish to give you my personal reassurance that ICAO is committed to transforming itself to more efficiently support improved global performance in all our Strategic Objectives, and wish everyone very productive discussions.
26. Thank you.