



**Remarks by the
Secretary General of ICAO,
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,
to IATA's Wings of Change Americas Event**

(Mexico City, Mexico, 27 June 2023)

1. I'd like to commend our colleagues at IATA for organizing this important and timely forum today, and to recognize both governments and industry for their recent and respective commitments to carbon neutral air transport by 2050.
2. The solidarity this exemplifies reflects a very long and results-based history of public-private consensus, informing long-term and sustainable progress in the aviation sector. Since I was appointed Secretary General of ICAO in 2021, I have made it a key priority to encourage the building of bridges between governments and industry and nowhere is this more important than in the area of sustainability.
3. However, it's not only the sustainability of our sector's progress and success that's important today, but also the sustainability of our planet and its diverse cultures and economies in the face of climate change impacts that are already upon us.
4. The science is clear that humanity must quickly and collectively address its increasing green house gas emissions, and the air transport customer base is just as clear that it expects aviation to do its part.
5. A critical factor informing countries' new long-term global aspirational emissions goal through ICAO was the detailed feasibility report prepared for them by the ICAO Council's Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP). This built on the excellent work done by the industry through your various associations over the last few years.

6. The CAEP report, produced by over 300 experts on the Committee, also clearly underscored that sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) is our best way forward to achieve meaningful near-term CO2 emissions reductions.
7. SAF is an important component in the four-pronged set of priorities countries have adopted through ICAO to reduce international flight emissions, alongside innovations in technologies and operational measures, and the offsetting to be achieved through the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA).
8. The new agreements now being forged to support the global ramp up in production and availability of SAF, point to an exponential increase in future capacity, with SAF production tripling to 300 million litres in 2022.
9. To help achieve that growth sooner rather than later, ICAO is encouraging governments to take policy decisions today that will incentivize the urgently needed capital investments in infrastructure and distribution capacity.
10. We also encourage countries to consider quantitative targets and other supporting policies for SAF use, something we'll be working towards in view of our third Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels to be held in Dubai, UAE in November.
11. ICAO is also now engaging with development banks and private equity entities, regionally and bilaterally.
12. It's clear that we need a significant early push on SAF all around the world. That is vital to get the sector to where we need to be by 2050. And in making that push, let's not forget the potential in the developing world. We should focus not just on the big markets but the small ones as well. The ICAO No Country Left Behind initiative should mean exactly that in the field of SAF deployment.
13. As you're well aware, airlines are now busy securing multi-year sustainable fuels off-take contracts, driven by corporate sustainability goals and policy incentives, but also the growing consumer demand for green travel.

14. Some have gone the route of securing equity investments in SAF production facilities, and I'd like to emphasize that these arrangements in particular are raising the SAF confidence levels of major institutional investors.
15. Major manufacturers have now committed to producing 100% SAF-capable aircraft by 2030, and taken together all of these commitments demonstrate our sector's clear understanding of the challenge, and our high motivation to meaningfully address it.
16. I think that we all recognize that air transport is a 'hard-to-decarbonize' section and the scale of the challenge can appear daunting. However, I do believe that the tone of the conversation has shifted and we are focusing much less on the percentage of global emissions that aviation contributes to climate change, than on how we collectively are going to address our environmental impact.
17. This is why ICAO's vision for innovation and sustainability places key focus on how we can preserve the sector's significant contributions to individual and societal prosperity, even as we meaningfully decarbonize.
18. To do so, the first priority is obvious and clear: making serious commitments and taking concrete actions.
19. From my standpoint this is exactly what aviation is doing.
20. Secondly, we need to continuously re-assert how important international air connectivity is to so many of humanity's most fundamental objectives for peace, prosperity, personal and cultural fulfillment, and global sustainable development. I believe that collectively we can work together to deliver that message to our passengers and indeed to society at large.
21. Finally we need to innovate. I'm truly passionate about seeing all of the developments in the new types of aircraft and propulsion methods, or operational measure that are emerging at such an incredible pace today.
22. At ICAO we understand only too well that for technological and operational advancements to be adopted as quickly as needed, we and the regulators we work with require much more efficient enabling frameworks for the certification and standardization of today's cutting edge developments.
23. This is why both our Secretariat and Council are now fully engaged in transforming our Organization to achieve this result.

24. Another important component in this equation demands that we help countries to modernize and expand their local capacities, so that when a new technology or procedure becomes standardized and available, they have the local personnel and resources to be able to benefit from it.
25. Just last month we hosted over 1,000 participants from more than 50 countries in Seoul, Korea at our Global Implementation Support Symposium, to explore the significant new range of integrated training, capacity-building, and implementation support services which ICAO is now delivering to meet this challenge.
26. Much of this work is now focused on helping countries understand and develop their SAF potential and CORSIA offsetting responsibilities. So we can see how NetZero 2050 goal is engaging and mobilizing our sector, revolutionizing international civil aviation for the better, and attracting the interest and collaboration of many new global partners.
27. Before I conclude today, I wished to acknowledge the excellent work produced by IATA in your series of roadmaps to net zero by 2050. This is a really important contribution to our collective assessment of how technology, infrastructure, operations, finance and policy will contribute to the long-term global aspirational goal.
28. Our impact on climate change is a global problem and it needs global solutions.
29. In concluding today, I wished to underscore again how multilateral cooperation remains critical to how successfully we achieve this critical and urgent transition in aviation.
30. I also wish to re-emphasize that this will be an area where cutting edge advances across many science and engineering domains will be constantly and rapidly evolving and developing.
31. Lastly I would stress that that going green is not only a matter of doing what's right for the planet. It's also about doing what's right if the industry is to continue to deliver its significant economic and social benefits to the world.
32. The progressive decarbonization of commercial flight has been innate to this sector since the dawn of the jet age, and working together I am extremely confident we will achieve full carbon neutrality by 2050.

33. Let me close with a personal reflection. We have a huge challenge ahead of us to decarbonise the aviation sector. But I truly believe that collaboration will get the sector through this – collaboration across the industry and collaboration between industry, governments and ICAO. There is real strength in collective action. And it falls to each of us to make that a reality.

34. Thank you.