



Presentation by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the Meeting of the Council for Integral Development (CIDI)
of the Organization of American States (OAS)

1 October 2024, Washington, DC (virtual participation)

1. I would like to begin by commending Ambassador Darius-Clarke for bringing us together to address "Air Connectivity to Unlock Economic Growth." Maximizing aviation's role in sustainable development is a critical priority that requires concerted action from all of us.
2. The International Civil Aviation Organization, a specialized agency of the United Nations, actively supports the OAS's mission to drive economic and social progress throughout the Americas, recognizing aviation's crucial role.
3. For those less familiar with the organization, ICAO was established by the Chicago Convention in 1944. We facilitate international cooperation on aviation safety, security, and sustainability strategies and standards. Additionally, we assist our 193 Member States with implementation through auditing and capacity-building programmes.
4. This year, as ICAO celebrates its 80th anniversary, we are introducing a new vision for global air transport along with our first Long-term Strategic Plan, which looks ahead to 2050. We envision a safe, secure, and sustainable international civil aviation system that connects the world, benefiting all nations and people.
5. This vision is supported by three key aspirations:
 - a) Zero fatalities in international aviation from accidents and acts of unlawful interference;
 - b) Net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 for international aviation operations; and
 - c) Aviation serving as an integral part of a thriving, connected, accessible, inclusive, and affordable transport system.

6. These aspirations are ambitious and essential. They drive us to push boundaries as we work towards a safer, cleaner, and more accessible global aviation network.
7. This meeting's focus on enhancing connectivity for economic and social development aligns perfectly with ICAO's new vision, particularly our commitment to environmental objectives.
8. Reducing distances and flight times between city pairs through new direct services will decrease fuel burn and carbon emissions. This operational improvement, along with important new aircraft and engine technologies, sustainable aviation fuels, and more efficient air navigation procedures, will all contribute to our ambitious goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.
9. ICAO is moving forward on enhancing air connectivity.
10. We help States develop the necessary legal and regulatory frameworks, and how regulators can assure the safe, secure, seamless and sustainable movement of aircraft, passengers, and cargo. We help States design and support regulatory bodies that can provide adequate oversight. We also assist States in maintaining and improving the physical and digital infrastructure critical to this objective."
11. Finally, liberalization is key to improving aviation connectivity.
12. I wish to take this opportunity to commend many of the OAS States for their notable efforts in this direction.
13. These efforts are evident in several key agreements.
14. Recently, in April last year, an important breakthrough was achieved at a meeting in Santiago, Chile. There, South American civil aviation directors, along with representatives from the United States, Europe, and industry associations, convened to identify a strategic course for sustainable growth and development.
15. The outcome of this meeting presents a comprehensive approach to addressing industry challenges while seizing the opportunities ahead.
16. This approach commits to transforming South American civil aviation through progress on six priorities: competitiveness, environmental sustainability, human resources, effective planning, CAA governance, and innovation.
17. This Santiago Declaration builds upon efforts initiated at the 2018 ICAO World Aviation Forum in Fortaleza, Brazil, which produced the "Declaration to Promote Connectivity through the Development and Sustainability of Air Transport in the Pan-American Region - Vision 2020-2035."

18. In 2010, States signed the Multilateral Open Skies Agreement for the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (LACAC) Member States, which entered into force in 2019.
19. To unlock the full potential of all these promising agreements, comprehensive implementation is crucial.
20. The Americas are brimming with potential for aviation growth. The region's geography, with its challenging terrain for surface transportation and lower population densities, and many island States, naturally favours air travel as a primary mode of connectivity.
21. This is why aviation has emerged as a critical connectivity mode in the Americas. These factors won't change, meaning we must increase investments in aviation infrastructure and innovation while deepening our collaboration. Harnessing our collective expertise and resources will accelerate the realization of an efficient, sustainable, inclusive, and accessible Pan-American aviation ecosystem.
22. The benefits will extend far beyond the aviation sector, touching every aspect of the economy and society. Well-connected airports and excellent air service networks make countries more attractive to multinational corporations, leading to increased foreign direct investment, job creation, economic growth, and technological transfer.
23. Airlines will play a particularly crucial role through strategic network planning, innovative route development, partnerships, and emerging business models. Their impact is enhanced in liberalized operating environments, where competition, innovation, and improved service quality are encouraged.
24. However, airlines alone cannot achieve the goal of safe, secure, sustainable, and seamless air connectivity throughout the Americas. This ambitious goal requires concerted action from all stakeholders.
25. ICAO is eager to elevate our partnership with the OAS, its Member States, and all stakeholders present today. We envision expanding our collaboration through targeted initiatives and shared expertise tailored to the unique needs of the Americas.
26. I encourage you to actively engage with ICAO and our global network of partners to identify specific areas where we can amplify your aviation development goals. Together, we have the opportunity to build an aviation system in the Americas that not only meets the region's distinct challenges but also sets a new global standard for connectivity, sustainability, and innovation.
27. Thank you.