



**Recorded remarks
by the Secretary
General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
For the 100th anniversary Pan American Sanitary Code**

(Virtual message – 4 November 2024)

Distinguished colleagues, honorable guests, ladies and gentlemen,

1. I am honored to participate in this celebration of: “The Sanitary Pan American Code: 100 Years of Health Collaboration.
2. A century ago, as aircraft were just beginning to transform our world, visionary leaders gathered to sign the Pan American Sanitary Code. They made a remarkable decision: to include aviation in their groundbreaking health regulations. In an era when international travel meant long ocean voyages and most health measures focused on seaports, these pioneers looked to the skies and saw the future.
3. That inclusion of 'buques aéreos' - aircraft - in Article 61 of the Code, came at a time when commercial aviation was still in its infancy. Yet those early architects of international health cooperation already understood what we now know with certainty: that the future of public health would be inextricably linked with air travel.
4. Coming just five years after the Paris Convention of 1919, which established the first international rules for air navigation, the Pan American Sanitary Code built upon decades of international health initiatives. The later Convention on International Civil Aviation would similarly recognize the crucial link between aviation and public health through three articles addressing disease prevention and travel facilitation.
5. These articles established three fundamental principles: preventing the spread of disease, streamlining aircraft entry procedures, and facilitating efficient border processes. This early framework recognized that protecting public health must be balanced with maintaining efficient air transport operations.

6. Today, the principles established in the health and aviation codes remain fundamental to our work at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). These principles - international cooperation, standardization of measures, and the balance between protecting public health and facilitating commerce - are anchored in Article 14 of the Chicago Convention. This article requires States to take effective measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases through air navigation. It also mandates close consultation with agencies responsible for international health regulations, particularly the World Health Organization, to mitigate the impact of public health events on aviation.
7. These principles are embedded throughout ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices, appearing in eight of our Convention Annexes, with particular emphasis in Annex 9 on Facilitation. Our framework is strengthened by detailed Procedures for Air Navigation, comprehensive guidance materials, and specialized programmes. Among these is the ICAO Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation, known as CAPSCA.
8. The COVID-19 pandemic powerfully reminded us of the essential intersection between aviation and public health. During this unprecedented crisis, we witnessed how rapidly changing health requirements could severely impact aviation through flight bans and passenger restrictions. ICAO's Council Aviation Recovery Task Force led our global response, providing guidance and Implementation Packages that reflected our "No Country Left Behind" principle. This experience led us to strengthen our partnership with the World Health Organization in 2022 through a formal Memorandum of Understanding, establishing an annually updated working plan at both global and regional levels.
9. As we mark this centennial of the Pan American Sanitary Code, we honour those visionary leaders who first recognized aviation's crucial role in public health. Their legacy lives on as ICAO works closely with PAHO, the WHO, and our United Nations partners to address today's challenges. From emerging diseases to climate change, we continue their spirit of international cooperation and visionary thinking, ensuring aviation connects our world safely, securely, and efficiently.

Thank you.