



ICAO

Address by Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
ICAO Secretary General
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1. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of the United Kingdom and the UK Civil Aviation Authority for their warm welcome and excellent arrangements for this Third Edition of the Civil Aviation Legal Advisers Forum, the CALAF.
2. We are honoured to have over 200 Officials from 61 States across all ICAO regions here today, bringing your valuable expertise and insights to our discussions.
3. This third edition of CALAF builds upon the momentum of our previous gatherings in Singapore and Oman. CALAF has now established itself as the premier global platform for government legal advisers to exchange ideas and shape the future of international air law.
4. We gather today in this magnificent building of the Royal Aeronautical Society – the oldest aeronautical society in the world.
5. It is indeed a fitting venue as we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Chicago Convention – the foundation of international civil aviation.
6. The Chicago Convention has stood the test of time. Its principles continue to guide modern international aviation. We will honour this remarkable achievement at an Extraordinary Session of the ICAO Council next week in the very same Chicago hotel where it all began.
7. The United Kingdom, as one of the original signatories to the Chicago Convention, has played a pivotal role in shaping international aviation law. From its contributions to the original Convention text to the landmark Bermuda I agreement of 1946, which set the template for bilateral air services agreements, the UK's influence has been profound. This leadership continues today through its uninterrupted service on the ICAO Council since the Organization's inception.
8. This Third Edition of CALAF arrives at a crucial moment as our industry pursues innovation and sustainability in air transport.

9. We face unprecedented challenges: the rise of new technologies like unmanned aircraft systems and artificial intelligence, the urgent imperative of addressing climate change, and evolving security threats. Through all these challenges, we must ensure that the benefits of aviation are shared equitably across the globe.
10. Our new long-term strategic plan for 2026-2050 provides a comprehensive roadmap for aviation's future, with safety, security, and sustainability at its core.
11. ICAO's vision is clear: we aim to create a safe, secure, and sustainable international aviation system that connects the world for the benefit of all nations and peoples.
12. This vision is supported by three key aspirations:
 - i. The goal of Zero fatalities in international aviation from accidents and acts of unlawful interference.
 - ii. The long term global aspirational goal of Net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 for international civil aviation operations.
 - iii. The goal of aviation to serve as an integral part of a thriving, connected, accessible, inclusive, and affordable transport system for people and goods, contributing to socio-economic development, while ensuring no country is left behind.
13. To realize these aspirations, one key goal specifically focuses on addressing all challenges through our legal framework, namely that the International Civil Aviation Convention and other Treaties, Laws and Regulations address all Challenges.
14. This legal framework goal aims to adapt international air law to maintain the rules-based system that is ICAO's foundation. We must ensure it remains robust, relevant, and conducive to global cooperation in the coming decades.
15. While the challenges facing international aviation are significant, each of us can contribute to overcoming them. As an international legal community, we have a special responsibility to uphold the rule of law while pursuing these objectives.
16. One measure of our progress is the growing acceptance of ICAO treaties. Since our last CALAF in February 2023, we have recorded 87 new depositary actions affecting various air law instruments.

17. This progress is encouraging, particularly given our recent efforts to promote ratification of international air law treaties. However, much work remains to ensure all States benefit from this robust and uniform legal framework.
18. Our Organization has focused particularly on promoting key legal instruments: the 2016 Protocols on Article 50 (a) and 56 of the Chicago Convention concerning Council and Air Navigation Commission membership, the Montreal Convention 1999 on air carrier liability, and the key aviation security treaties, including the Beijing Convention and Protocol of 2010, and the Montréal Protocol 2014 addressing unruly passenger behavior.
19. Most urgently, the Protocols on Council and Commission expansion have now secured ratification from 105 States, still short of the minimum required.
20. Meanwhile, 140 of ICAO's 193 Member States are now party to the 1999 Montreal Convention. Following this year's review, new liability limits will take effect on 28 December 2024.
21. In addition, the Council on the 4th of November adopted a revised set of Rules for the Settlement of Differences, updating the 1957 Rules to facilitate future dispute resolution.
22. The aspects of our new Strategic Plan pertaining to ensuring a skilled and educated workforce is of direct relevance to this group.
23. The 41st session of the Assembly in 2022 indicated the importance of legal expertise in civil aviation administrations and endorsed a competency framework to support CAAs in recruiting, training, and developing civil aviation legal advisers.
24. We will be carrying our human resource work forward through our Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) Programme and by helping accelerate progress toward gender equality in our sector.
25. On the subject of gender equality, I invite you to join me in celebrating the fact that the recently concluded 39th Session of the ICAO Legal Committee elected its second consecutive female Chairperson, with women now comprising a majority of the Committee's officers. The newly elected officers are:
 - Alice Serpa Braga from Brazil as Chairperson
 - And Susanna Metsälampi from Finland, Mohammed Al-Ruqaishi from Oman, June Lee from the Republic of Korea, and Maria Makalla-Memba from the United Republic of Tanzania as Vice-Chairpersons

38. Before concluding today, I would like to highlight the critical legal topics on our agenda. You will address the challenges of artificial intelligence and new technologies, explore ways to enhance the effectiveness of civil aviation legal advisers, and discuss how to prepare the next generation of aviation professionals.
39. You will also address air transport facilitation, as we mark the 75th anniversary of Annex 9 this year.
40. Perhaps most crucially, you will examine environmental sustainability and the implementation of our net-zero commitment.
41. Let me take this opportunity to confirm that ICAO is actively engaging with governments, financial institutions, and industry leaders to promote investment in green aviation technologies, infrastructure development, and capacity building.
42. In addition to the legal and regulatory work, meeting our ambitious environmental goals, including net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, will require coordinated financing action.
43. To this end, ICAO is developing the Finvest Hub – a platform to connect the finance community with large-scale decarbonization projects, particularly in developing nations.
44. In conclusion now, I am confident that the diverse and talented speakers, panelists, and guests here today will inspire rich, insightful, and inspiring discussions. Your work here will inform effective responses and approaches to all these challenges and opportunities.
45. Thank you.