



**Opening remarks by
the President of the Council of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,
to the ICAO 2022 Innovation Fair**

(Live and Virtual Event, 09:05, ICAO Assembly Hall, 24 September 2022)

Dear participants in the ICAO 2022 Innovation Fair,

I wish to extend to you all a very warm welcome.

This ICAO Assembly Hall, which will be hosting the 41st ICAO Assembly starting on 27 September, is an important symbol of the historic global efforts undertaken to advance international civil aviation safely, securely, and sustainably, through mutual understanding and determined cooperation.

We are therefore glad to be hosting here and for the next three days senior representatives of ICAO Member States, of leading research entities, the aviation industry and private sector innovators to hold discussions on the future of the sector and how we can best work collaboratively to realize it.

The increased pace at which innovations are developed today, and the involvement of more diverse stakeholders, have together compelled ICAO to consider how the Organization can enhance its responsiveness and relevance in this fast-changing environment.

Over the past months, for example, the ICAO Council has intensified its discussions at the strategic level with industry leaders, through the establishment of an Industry Consultative Forum.

The ICAO 2022 Innovation Fair is another stepping-stone on ICAO's path towards a reinvigorated relationship with the aviation and innovation communities.

Together, we have already scanned the industry's horizon of priorities for the coming years, identifying climate change, COVID-19 recovery, digitalization, and cybersecurity, as being key areas for our attention and action.

In particular, areas of work pertaining to the operations and deployment of urban air mobility concepts require unprecedented levels of collaboration, not just at the technical level but also across various levels of governance.

Importantly, the Innovation Fair provides the opportunity to hear from the stakeholders involved in building, operating and facilitating electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) operations, their perspectives on the challenges they face, and the possible role of ICAO in implementing a globally harmonized response.

We also very much look forward to hearing the insights of the ICAO Member States, noting that civil aviation authorities are at the forefront of many challenges posed by the integration of frontier technologies and methods.

Understanding and building upon their lessons learned will be invaluable to our current efforts, and integral to realizing effective and comprehensive solutions.

In the area of lessons learned, we see that new and more agile forms of cooperation are helping new ideas rise to the forefront much more quickly than before.

This afternoon, a panel will be dedicated to exploring the role of innovation accelerators and incubators, with a keynote opening from Ms. Natalia Bayona, Director for Innovation, Education and Investments at the United Nations World Tourism Organization.

One of the key intentions of the ICAO 2022 Innovation Fair was to provide a prominent platform for innovations and initiatives that will contribute to a more resilient future for the air transport sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to proposals for numerous technical and policy solutions to help reconnect the world in its aftermath, but a more systematic approach to disaster risk identification and management will be necessary to circumvent the compound impacts of multiple disasters. This is a pre-requisite to building a resilient future for our sector.

In the course of the Innovation Fair, we will also be exploring much more than just technologies and operations.

Following on the webinar on Behavioural Sciences, organized by ICAO in June this year, a discussion will be held tomorrow to investigate how developments in this area can help us improve safety and security decision-making to accompany future mobility concepts.

Artificial Intelligence is also expected to advance and impact many aviation domains, and a number of recent aviation innovations are already being applied by other sectors, raising questions of general interest and the common good which are of clear relevance to multilateral decision makers.

This year's Innovation Fair will also be hosting a dedicated Aviation Security and Facilitation Day, on Sunday 25 September, and we will be honoured to welcome the Administrator of the United States of America's Transportation Security Agency (TSA) as a keynote speaker.

Mr. Pekoske will introduce a number of sessions during which panellists will address security and facilitation technologies that are anticipated to evolve over the medium term, employing new processes and capacities such as machine learning and open architecture.

These new capabilities will push back current technological limits and ultimately better protect aviation against acts of unlawful interference, while enhancing passenger and security efficiency.

AI, machine learning and big data applications, as well as electric and hydrogen propulsion technologies and the overall digitalization of aviation more generally, are just a few of the frontier technologies that we will collectively need to develop a better understanding of.

This is especially the case when trying to determine the practical need for associated global Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

Another very interesting aspect of recent aviation innovation will be engaged around this coming Monday, when key stakeholders in the field of implementation support discuss new learning technologies and methods.

That same day we will also hear from Ms. Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), on how innovations power the sustainable growth of aviation in Africa.

Last but certainly not least, I wish to invite you all to visit the Innovation Fair exhibition, where private sector companies, start-ups, civil aviation authorities, and others, are presenting state-of-the-art technologies and novel concepts for air services and operations.

I am sure I speak for all of my Council colleagues in acknowledging the tremendous value your insights will have for ICAO, and in appreciating this important opportunity to establish a more intensive on-going dialogue at the global level.

I wish you all a very engaging and illuminating next few days.

Thank you.