

Statement by the Honorable Mohamed Ameen,
Minister for the Transport and Civil Aviation, Republic of Maldives

2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation, New Delhi, India

11-12 September 2024

Honourable Shri Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu, Minister of Civil Aviation of India

ICAO Council President Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano

Mr. Tao Ma, ICAO APAC Regional Director

Excellencies, Honourable Ministers,

Ambassadors, Directors General, Industry Partners,

Distinguished Attendees

Assalaamu A'laikum warahmathullah wabarakaathuh

1. Firstly, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Government of India, particularly to the Prime Minister, H.E. Shri Narendra Modi, for generously hosting this Ministerial Conference in the beautiful city of Delhi.
2. I would also like to extend my gratitude to ICAO Council President Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano for organizing this significant event, which enables APAC member states to strengthen their regional cooperation and enhance aviation's contribution to the global community
3. It is always an honor and a privilege to be among the Ministerial colleagues, contributing to aviation safety, security, efficiency and continuity of an orderly transport network.
4. I believe all of us realize the role required by the politicians, the Ministers in achieving ICAO goals and I am glad to be here to adopt and commit to the Ministerial Declaration of this conference.
5. APAC region has become the largest aviation market in the world. To cater for the market, we must continue to develop suitable infrastructure and regulatory frameworks.
6. We recognize the opportunity for growth in the Maldives and therefore, we continue to invest in aviation infrastructure including aerodrome development and air navigation services.
7. Development of Velana International Airport, the main gateway to the Maldives, is progressing at an accelerated pace. After assuming office, The Maldives President H.E. Mohamed Muizzu has advanced the target date for making the state-of-the-art new terminal operational. Insha Allah, we will be rolling out a phased approach, with the first batch of gates commencing service in the first half of next year.
8. This is one of the most important aviation infrastructure development projects in the country. The new international terminal would alleviate the current challenges on infrastructure and congestion and would serve 7 million passengers annually on completion.
9. Along with the development of the main airport, we are also continuing to develop the northern and southern hubs as full-fledged international airports with a network of domestic airports and water aerodromes for seaplane operations.
10. Timely implementation of the Asia/Pacific Seamless Air Navigation Service Plan is critical. I am pleased to announce that The Maldives has established a National Air

Traffic Service as an independent entity. This forms part of our work to enhance the air navigation services and would plug into our implementation of Asia/Pacific Seamless Air Navigation Service (ANS) Plan

11. I am very pleased with the progress we have made so far. We have certified all our international aerodromes and implemented PBN in our country. Our aim is to continue on this progressive path.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. The geographical nature of the Maldives has made us more vulnerable to the consequences of climate change
13. Unfortunately for us, climate change and environmental degradation threaten the very 'beauty' we rely on for our economic prosperity.
14. With honor and privilege, the Maldives reiterates our commitment to all ICAO programs, both mandatory and voluntary, to take substantial steps in combating climate change. Since 2023, we have been a participating Voluntary State of ICAO CORSIA, and we are dedicated to ICAO LTAG initiatives.
15. We are working to find smarter ways of continuing our development projects in a sustainable manner as human civilization continues.
16. In this regard, the Maldives is open to investments on Advanced Air Mobility and advancement in innovation and technology
17. The Maldives CAA has issued a notice to proposed rulemaking on unmanned aerial vehicles, providing opportunities for new types of aircraft to take flight in our clear blue skies
18. One of the key areas of focus, in my opinion, to enhance aviation safety is the regulatory organizational setup. We need empowered aviation authorities with adequate resources and quality assured training opportunities.
19. Equally important is our support for establishing independent accident investigation authorities, which will strengthen our ability to learn from incidents and prevent future occurrences.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

20. The effective implementation of the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan, Global Air Navigation Plan, and Global Aviation Security Plan, along with their associated regional plans, is crucial. These plans provide detailed guidance and frameworks to help States align with ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices. Our collective efforts in this regard will foster a safer and more secure aviation environment for all.

21. The Maldives has embarked on a journey in this direction. As the Aviation Minister, I am committed to enhancing our regulatory structure to fulfill the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and the Delhi Declaration, which we will adopt at this Conference without reservation.
22. We will continue to pursue cooperative progress in enhancing aviation safety oversight capabilities, implementing State Safety Programs, and certifying aerodromes for international operations.
23. These actions are essential for maintaining the highest safety standards and ensuring that our aviation infrastructure supports seamless global connectivity.
24. Turning to the ICAO Global Plans, our commitment remains steadfast.
25. I would like to thank our international partners and the Maldives aviation industry in the help and cooperation extended to make our work a success
26. I would especially like to thank my fellow Ministers for being here, taking part in this meeting and continuing to be our partners in aviation development.
27. Before concluding my remark, I would like to once again thank ICAO APAC Office and the Regional Director for bringing us together
28. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the Civil Aviation Ministry for hosting this conference. We are encouraged by India's contributions and engagement in the development of global aviation. Let's give a round of applause and a big thank you to the Honorable Shri Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu, the Minister of Civil Aviation, India.

Thank you very much for the audience

Wassalaamu A'laikum