



Asia and Pacific ministers endorse joint declaration on regional aviation safety and efficiency priorities

For immediate release

Montréal and Beijing, 5 February 2018 – With the Asia and Pacific (APAC) air traffic market poised to become the world's largest by 2022, ministers in charge of civil aviation representing 36 governments met together in Beijing last week to endorse a new declaration formalizing their shared commitments on high-priority aviation safety and efficiency objectives.

Gathering at ICAO's 2018 APAC Ministerial Conference, hosted by the People's Republic of China, the high-level officials agreed to pursue cooperative progress on objectives relating to aviation safety oversight, State Safety Programme (SSP) implementation, airport certification, the timely implementation of the Asia/Pacific Seamless Air Traffic Management Plan, and the sharing of information and best practices for air navigation and search and rescue services.

"This new declaration will also reinforce your agreements and actions supporting the establishment of independent accident investigation authorities, as well as toward some additional and very critical objectives for human capital development and the training and retention of this region's next generation aviation professionals," highlighted ICAO Council President Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu.

"And from a broader standpoint it should be appreciated as an unprecedented platform for high-level interaction between your States, a signal of the level of your safety and efficiency commitments to the travelling public and industry, and a tool to help foster long-lasting relationships in the areas of bilateral or multilateral technical cooperation and assistance."

ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu commented that "the Asia Pacific today is seen as a very promising region with great potential, but there are also some serious challenges for many local governments. For example, while there is rapid growth with respect to your Region's traffic, operators, and fleets, there is also quite low corresponding growth in many of your regulatory authorities' resources and capabilities."

ICAO's APAC Regional Office in Bangkok has been working through the UN aviation agency's *No Country Left Behind* initiative to drive a range of assistance and capacity-building projects regionally, with recent successes of its Combined Action Teams on raising five States' levels of safety oversight compliance above the current target in ICAO's *Global Aviation Safety Plan*.

"This brings to mind one of the key messages that ICAO is carrying around the world today regarding the direct links between the levels of ICAO compliance in States, and their ability to realize and benefit from the positive socio-economic impacts of air transport," stressed Dr. Liu.

The Ministerial Conference in Beijing was the first such high-level gathering in the ICAO APAC Region in recent memory. The historic event brought together not only very high-level government and aviation officials from Asia and Pacific ICAO Member States, but also a number of ICAO Council Representatives and leaders and senior officials from international aviation organizations.

In terms of the overall regional picture for international air traffic in 2017, Asia and Pacific Revenue Passenger Kilometres (RPK) grew by a very healthy 9.6 per cent according to ICAO's latest figures. The region continues to manage the second largest market share of international traffic at 29 per

cent, with its overall air transport sector employing over 30 million people and contributing more than \$630 billion in regional GDP.



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About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 192 Member States.

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