



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 20: Innovation in Aviation

FUTURE AVIATION FORUM (FAF) 2026

(Presented by Saudi Arabia)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Future Aviation Forum (FAF) 2024 was held in Riyadh from 20 to 22 May 2024, under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz. Organized by the General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) under the theme "Elevating Global Connectivity", the event served as a global platform for shaping the future of the aviation sector through collaboration, innovation, and investment.

The next edition, FAF 2026, planned to take place in April 2026, will build on this momentum by fostering deeper international partnerships, advancing ICAO-aligned priorities, and showing transformative aviation solutions.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- acknowledge the Future Aviation Forum as a key international platform supporting ICAO's global objectives on safety, sustainability, innovation, and facilitation;
- encourage ICAO and member States to actively participate in and contribute to FAF 2026, both through high-level representation and technical collaboration aligned with strategic priorities; and
- support the integration of FAF outcomes into ICAO's global agenda to accelerate industry-wide progress.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to all strategic goals.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not Applicable
<i>References:</i>	

¹ English and Arabic versions provided by Saudi Arabia.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Future Aviation Forum (FAF) 2024, has registered over 8 500 participants from 130 countries, including 31 ministers and 77 Civil Aviation Authority leaders who engaged in 73 sessions featuring 300 + global speakers across diverse aviation disciplines.

1.2 Agreements worth over SAR 75 billion were signed, covering infrastructure, cargo, MRO services, training, and sustainability.

1.3 A landmark fleet expansion deal was signed to acquire 105 Airbus A320neo and A321neo aircraft, accelerating network growth and fleet modernization.

1.4 More than 102 bilateral air service agreements and cooperation MOUs were signed with partner nations.

1.5 The forum spotlighted forward-looking innovation, such as, AI-driven passenger solutions, low-carbon aviation fuels, advanced air mobility (eVTOL), and digitization as pillars of the industry's sustainable future.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Future Aviation Forum 2024 established itself as a powerful global platform, driving significant advancements in the aviation industry. Notably, the forum catalyzed around \$20 billion in investments targeted at sustainable aviation projects, highlighting its role in fostering economic growth and environmental responsibility within the sector.

2.2 The forum's contributions align closely with ICAO's core priorities, emphasizing the importance of strengthening global air transport connectivity and facilitation. Additionally, it promotes sustainable aviation growth by encouraging investment, advancing digitalization, and implementing environmental measures, thereby supporting ICAO's commitment to a safer, more efficient, and environmentally responsible aviation industry.

2.3 The upcoming Future Aviation Forum 2026 (April 2026, Riyadh) will serve as a strategic milestone to:

- a) review progress on FAF 2024 Commitments and measure impact against ICAO benchmarks;
- b) facilitate deepened policy alignment and technical collaboration with ICAO programs;
- c) showcase ICAO's leadership through dedicated technical sessions on emerging regulatory frameworks;
- d) amplify global aviation collaboration through public-private partnerships;
- e) advance sustainability via innovation (e.g., SAF, LCAF, eVTOL) and policy alignment; and

f) strengthen connectivity by streamlining air service agreements and infrastructure investments.

2.4 Saudi Arabia recognizes the critical role of ICAO as a unifying global platform for aviation policy and capacity development. To achieve the full potential of the outcomes initiated at FAF 2024 and planned for FAF 2026, it is recommended that ICAO take an active role in shaping the FAF 2026 program and knowledge tracks, Encourage Member States to participate, contribute experiences, and align strategic objectives and develop enhanced cooperation mechanisms between FAF organizing bodies and ICAO to ensure that forum deliverables contribute meaningfully to global aviation priorities.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The Future Aviation Forum has established itself as catalyst for actionable outcomes, global partnerships, and long-term vision—in shaping the future of global air transport. The upcoming FAF 2026 promises to elevate this impact further by turning today's innovations into tomorrow's standards.

3.2 The next Future Aviation Forum will be held in April 2026 in Riyadh. It will build on the 2024 forum's success by:

- a) highlighting progress on strategic and policy commitments; and
- b) expanding international collaboration on sustainability, safety, connectivity, and digital transformation in aviation.

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