



**Keynote remarks by
the Council President of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,
to the 2022 Hermes AGM & Leaders Forum**

‘Sustainability of the Aviation Industry’

(Virtual, 9 June 2022)

Dear friends,

A very warm good morning from Montreal to the participants of the 2022 Hermes Leaders Forum. It would have been a pleasure to be in Brussels with you today, but, as you probably know, the Council is in full session in preparation of the ICAO 41st Assembly.

The theme of this Forum is ‘Sustainability of the Aviation Industry’. Actually, ‘Sustainability of the Aviation Industry’ comprises many challenges in the post-pandemic context.

One of them is to consider the lessons learned during the acute phase of the pandemic and, on that basis, to build aviation back better and more resilient. Should a similar crisis reoccur, governments, together with industry, will have to take more coordinated action to stabilize and support continued air connectivity. It will also require more concerted efforts in taking measures to protect citizens with regard to border closures, subsidies or other economic support measures, and health protection requirements. Enhanced resilience will also entail advancing liberalization efforts for example in cargo.

Enhanced resilience will also mean providing Member States with an enhanced regulatory framework established by Annex 9 to the Chicago Convention on Facilitation. This must be a cornerstone of our resilience to future challenges from public health emergencies and communicable disease outbreaks.

The recent adoption by the ICAO Council of new and revised Annex 9 provisions relating to public health is an excellent start, and closer cooperation with the World Health Organization will continue to be critical.

The communication of health-related information between States also brings to mind the privacy and data protection laws of States.

ICAO's extensive experience in dealing with encoding personal information into a secure document, notably the e-passport, is very relevant here, and we have been bringing this knowledge and experience to bear during the pandemic with the development of the ICAO standard called VDS.

Using the Passport Key Directory or PKD framework, States already issuing electronic travel documents have been able to issue digital health credentials more quickly, and those already participating in the PKD can verify them more efficiently.

Perhaps the most fundamental development supporting seamless and contactless air travel will be the deployment of digitized travel documents.

ICAO has developed Digital Travel Credentials (DTC) specifications to encourage this progress, building on pre-existing technology frameworks already in place for the issuance and inspection of today's passports.

Introducing Digital Travel Credentials into the travel continuum will completely reform many passenger processes, allowing for the contactless presentation of biographic and biometric data, even remotely and in advance of travel, and using the existing security backbone of the physical ePassport.

Digital credentials can also facilitate the deployment of facial recognition solutions, opening up further possibilities for an overall future passenger experience which is more convenient and comfortable for travellers, and more efficient and secure for State border authorities and industry operators.

To build back better international aviation will need to address climate change challenges as a matter of urgency.

UN Secretary General Guterres has called for all means of transport to realize net-zero emissions by 2050, and aviation operators have now answered his call with detailed plans and aggressive targets.

Aircraft today are 80% more fuel efficient than aircraft flying in the '60s. Technological advances will continue to support CO₂ emission reduction. Much of our sector's near-term emissions response will rely on lower-carbon and Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF), more efficient operations and flow management, and the global offsetting being managed under CORSIA.

But ultimately aircraft have to decarbonize, and that means moving entirely to zero emission propulsion solutions.

States are poised to discuss their Long Term Aspirational Goal for aviation emissions at ICAO's 41st Assembly this fall, and we look forward to very high levels of environmental leadership and engagement in doing so.

Industry's well-publicized net-zero ambitions are an excellent example of how civil aviation is building back better in the post-COVID environment.

In advance of this year's Assembly, ICAO has been pursuing an ambitious series of outreach initiatives toward the upcoming July High-level Meeting we're hosting on the new Long-term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) which States are expected to adopt this September.

The High-level meeting will also be preceded by the next ICAO Stocktaking event exploring latest innovation updates.

The detailed CAEP report on the feasibility of the long-term goal it is now available on the ICAO LTAG website, and I would emphasize here that this document will be critical to upcoming deliberations at both the high level meeting and Assembly.

We know that the cost of SAF is currently higher than fossil fuels. However, we also know that huge financial resources are available to be invested in SAF in order to increase its affordability. The challenge for ICAO is to take an ambitious decision on decarbonisation putting in place at the same time mechanisms to unlock these investments.

In conclusion, 'Innovation' and 'Resilience' are the key themes we've set out to guide States' engagements at our Assembly this year, with a strong undercurrent of sustainability informing each, and I'm sure I'm joined by everyone in attendance today in looking forward to increased ambition and progress being realized when countries come together again through ICAO this September.

Thank you.