



ICAO

**Opening Remarks by  
the Council President of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,  
to the 34th AFCAC Plenary**

*(Dakar, Senegal – 14 July 2022)*

*Honourable Ministers,  
Honourable President and Interim Secretary General of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC),  
Madame Commissioner Abou-Zeid of the African Union Commission (AUC),  
Director General of Civil Aviation of Senegal,  
Directors General of Civil Aviation,  
Council Representatives,  
Distinguished Delegates,*

I would like to express my appreciation to the AFCAC Bureau and Interim Secretary General for the invitation kindly extended to ICAO to participate in this auspicious event.

The hospitality and generous support and facilitation provided by the Government of the Republic of Senegal have enabled the convening of this important event, while the high level of participation is a clear demonstration of the commitment and solidarity to strengthen civil aviation on the African continent, especially as we all strive to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and build back better a resilient aviation system. I would also like to express ICAO's gratitude for this.

Aviation is a crucial catalyst as you know for sustainable national development that will underpin the ability of states to achieve the African Union Agenda 2063 and United Nations Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, and the implementation of African Continental Free trade Area (AfCFTA).

This is why ICAO salutes and supports the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). We are persuaded that this African Union Flagship Programme, which was launched in January 2018 in support of the effective implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision, will stimulate improved mobility, trade, tourism, and services, both within Africa and with the rest of the world.

Indeed, while ICAO auditing proves that governments have made exemplary progress in improving aviation safety and security systems in Africa, significant enhancements to connectivity on the continent could be achieved through improved air transport policy. The long-standing challenges in this area must be addressed if Africa is able to take advantage of the existing growth potential, particularly now as the demand has started growing again worldwide.

On this point, I would like to reiterate that ICAO is firmly committed to its No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative, with Africa continuing to be high on ICAO's agenda to provide assistance and support. Over the years, the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan) and the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation

Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL Plan) have significantly contributed to the enhancement the aviation safety, security and facilitation in African States.

Furthermore, the 2021 ICAO-AFCAC Project Implementation Agreement (PIA) supports AFCAC and the African Development Fund (ADF) on the overall institutional support project for the implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) project.

By enabling the provision of targeted and measurable assistance to applicable African States and providing a framework for collaboration between ICAO and AFCAC, this agreement will help accelerate progress on safety, security, and sustainability priorities and the implementation of the SAATM.

Emphasis should also be placed on assuring sufficient training capacities to adequately meet training needs in the region, based on the Roadmap developed by the African Aviation Training Organizations (AATO), in coordination with the ICAO Global Aviation Training (GAT) Office, and the ongoing AFI Aviation Professional Gap Analysis and Enhancement Project.

Looking forward, with its enormous natural and human resources, and a blue sky attitude towards the adoption of emerging aviation technologies, Africa is well positioned to contribute to global leadership as the next revolution in air transport takes shape.

Africa is poised, for example, to champion the development and production of sustainable aviation fuels, directly supporting the achievement of the CO<sub>2</sub> aviation reduction long-term aspirational goals. To give another example, Africa has many lessons to share following its highly innovative approach to unmanned aviation presented during the First Africa Drone Conference held in Kigali, Rwanda, in February 2020.

ICAO recognizes that to achieve the success of this and the other priorities I mentioned requires harnessing synergies and strong collaboration between all key players. This is why we are working with new and non-traditional partners to meet currently emerging and future demands on the sector.

In light of this, and in the wake of easing the travel restrictions, I encourage all African States and relevant Organizations to attend the 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly scheduled for September - October this year. Your active participation to the in-person global event will assure that African aviation has a strong voice at the global platform, and help ICAO underscore the relevance of aviation ecosystem to bring peoples together and spur social and economic development.

I also look forward to the active participation of African States at the upcoming High-level meeting on States' Long-term Aspirational emissions goal (LTAG) from 20 to 22 July 2022, and the fourteenth ICAO Air Services Negotiation Event (ICAN 2022) to be held in Abuja from 5 to 9 December 2022. ICAN will provide you with a central meeting place to conduct bilateral, regional, or multilateral air services negotiations and consultations.

With these future opportunities in mind, I wish you constructive deliberations today, and look forward to further strengthening the long-standing bond and relationship between ICAO and AFCAC.

Thank you.