



**Opening remarks by
the Council President of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,
to the 77th IFALPA Conference**

(ICAO HQ, 5 May 2023)

*Airline pilot leaders,
Distinguished guests and colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

It is a great pleasure for ICAO to be hosting this 77th edition of the IFALPA Conference, and to be able to recognize and applaud your organization's historic 75th anniversary this year.

Founded in 1948 to provide a mechanism through which airline pilots worldwide could contribute to the processes and outcomes of the then-newly-formed ICAO, IFALPA continues to provide key contributions to the civil aviation progress achieved by States and industry through this agency.

In 2012, IFALPA Headquarters relocated to Montreal, and in the years since that relocation has fulfilled every objective set out for it in terms of improving the frequency and value of our organizations' interactions.

IFALPA is represented on many of our current panels and expert groups, and has played a pivotal role in providing expert advice and opinion in many areas of significance.

One such example is the work conducted to provide level conversion tables for the implementation of reduced vertical separation minima in Chinese airspace, many of which are still in use today.

IFALPA has also been very active contributing to the work of the ICAO Facilitation Programme, whether through its participation as an Observer to the Facilitation Panel, or through its important contributions to our related Working Groups in areas such as human trafficking.

In the Aviation Security domain, IFALPA is active as an Observer to our Aviation Security and Cybersecurity Panels, where it also makes important contributions.

Lastly I would like to underscore and appreciate how the voice of airline pilots was also critical to aviation's united response through ICAO to the COVID-19 pandemic, notably via its inputs to the ICAO Air Transport Committee's Task Force on *Health Issues Outbreaks in Aviation*, or through its co-sponsoring of a Working Paper to our most recent ICAO Assembly concerning *An Integrated Approach to Health, Facilitation and Crisis Response*.

This is in addition to its contributions to ICAO's High-level Conference on COVID-19, in which it co-sponsored working papers to improve government and industry consideration on *Innovative*,

Practical, Interoperable Solutions for Travel Acceptance, as well as *Unruly and Disruptive Passenger Incidents*.

Looking ahead, there are many more challenges facing air transport where the voice of airline pilots will remain invaluable to global harmonization and progress.

According to the most recent forecasts from ICAO, the recovery of air passenger demand is expected to be swift in 2023, with most routes returning to pre-pandemic levels by the first quarter of the year.

By the end of the year, it is anticipated that the industry will have achieved growth of approximately 3% compared to 2019 figures, but this resurgence of passengers and traffic is happening within a still-constrained capacity environment, and one where the role of airline pilots in assuring full operational safety performance will continue to be paramount.

This positive development in terms of traffic recovery is a testament to the resilience and adaptability of the aviation industry, however it has also presented a unique opportunity for the industry to rebuild itself in a more sustainable and resilient way.

In this regard, ICAO continues to be committed to support a safe, secure, efficient and sustainable international air transport development on the basis of the three pillars - standard setting, oversight and implementation support to Member States.

I would underscore in this regard that the 41st Session of the ICAO Assembly last year adopted a collective long-term global aspirational goal (LTAG) of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 for international aviation – a truly historic decision on air transport decarbonization.

ICAO recognizes that achieving this goal will require a concerted effort from all stakeholders in the aviation industry, combining multiple measures aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions.

This includes the accelerated adoption of innovative aircraft technologies, the implementation of more efficient flight operations, and the increased production and use of sustainable aviation fuels (SAFs).

Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAFs) will play a fundamental role in the near-term, and ICAO is heavily committed to facilitating their increased investment and production worldwide.

Technological advances will meanwhile see new advances in aeronautics and avionics requiring global standardization, in addition to aircraft propulsion evolutions involving hydrogen and electric engine technologies.

The same is true for operations, with key measures such as implementing optimized routes, collaborative approaches, and enhanced ATM management all being areas of high priority to help decrease fuel burn and lower emissions.

The most aggressive of our forecast scenarios envisage that CO₂ emissions could be reduced in 2050 by up to 87%, with 21% of these gains deriving from new technologies, 55% from fuels, and 11% from operational improvements.

The remainder will be reduced through out-of-sector measures such as emissions offsetting under the CORSIA global framework.

CO₂ emissions reductions can be achieved across all phases of flight with closer cooperation among relevant stakeholders, and pilots have a very important role to play in how air transport responds to this critical global climate challenge.

Pilots can, for example, provide valuable feedback and insights to the aviation industry regarding new technologies, operational procedures, and new training programmes aimed at enhancing sustainability.

As you know, with air traffic now on track for a solid recovery globally, the availability of pilots and other licensed personnel to keep pace with increasing flight demand will be critical to our safety and capacity objectives.

This also brings to mind the significant investments which will be needed for the modernization and expansion of aviation infrastructure, something which ICAO is continuing to address in support of future capacity needs and relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

From an economic standpoint, building back better will also rely on overcoming protectionist approaches and opening the door to liberalization efforts to unlock all the socio-economic benefits that aviation offers.

In this regard, ICAO is continuing its work on the development of a *Draft Convention on Foreign Investment in Airlines*, as well as assessing the need for a multilateral agreement on the liberalization of air cargo services, in line with the *ICAO Long-term Vision for International Air Transport Liberalization*.

As the global voice of over 100,000 members globally today, IFALPA continues to be a critical stakeholder in the development and evolution of international air transport at the service of the world's societies and businesses.

ICAO is very proud to be hosting this 77th IFALPA Conference at such a critical point for our sector, and in addition to appreciating again everything which IFALPA has accomplished over these past 75 years, I would conclude these remarks today by looking forward with great enthusiasm to its many future contributions in the exciting years ahead.

Thank you for your attention.