



**Keynote address by  
the Council President of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,  
to the 28th General Assembly of the Arab Civil Aviation Organization**

*(Rabat, Morocco, 3 July 2024)*

*Son Excellence Monsieur Le Ministre du Transport et de la Logistique du Royaume du Maroc, Mohammed Abdeljalil;*

*His Excellency Minister of Public Works and Transportation of Lebanon and President of the General Assembly of ACAO, Ali Hamieh;*

*His Excellency Chairperson of the Executive Council of ACAO, Captain Haitham Misto;*

*Dear Director General of ACAO, Abdennebi Manar;*

*Your Excellencies, Ministers and Dear Directors General;*

It is my great honour to speak to you today on the occasion of the 28th General Assembly of the Arab Civil Aviation Organization, in the beautiful city of Rabat in the Kingdom of Morocco, to underscore the importance of the close and effective cooperation between our Organizations.

The relationship between ACAO and ICAO is excellent, and the working relations between ACAO and the ICAO Regional Offices, in particular the Cairo and Paris Offices, has been continuously improving.

The joint efforts of ACAO and ICAO in organizing seminars, workshops and training courses have led to improved SARP implementation in Arab States across all ICAO's Strategic Objectives.

Similar successes have resulted from your joint activities through the implementation of regional projects such as the MENA Regional Safety Oversight Organization and the MENA AIG Regional Coordination Mechanism.

This year, ICAO is celebrating its 80th anniversary. This celebration offers the opportunity to reflect on the important achievements over the last eight decades, critical to the current economic, social development of our world.

However, ICAO intends to take this opportunity not to reflect solely on the excellent achievements of the past, but also, and in my view more importantly, to reflect together with all stakeholders on how aviation development will continue to be supported by ICAO over the next decades.

For this reason, on the occasion of the celebrations of the 80th Anniversary of the Chicago Convention, the Council is in the process of approving the 2026-2050 ICAO Strategic Plan. I will not enter into details on the Strategic Plan, but I wish to underline that it will have to pursue the highest global safety and security levels supporting the sustainable development of air transport along three dimensions: Environment, economic and social.

This development will have to be pursued in a manner that No Country is Left Behind. For this reason, the No Country Left Behind initiative will become an integral part of the ICAO Strategic Objective.

Actually, ICAO is already implementing a new approach in this specific regard.

The change of the Technical Cooperation Bureau into Capacity Development and Implementation Support Bureau is definitely not a cosmetic change. It is an Organizational and I would say cultural change. It is a dramatic change whereas technical cooperation, assistance, capacity building and implementation support activities are driven by the One ICAO approach and no longer “in silos”.

Regarding Environment and in particular Climate Change, as you know, a massive leap forward has been achieved at the Third ICAO Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3) in November last year in Dubai, with the adoption of a Global Framework for SAF and LCAF and cleaner energies development and deployment. In particular, I wish to recall the global target to achieve of 5% CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction by 2030.

Now, we must deliver.

Just a few weeks ago the Council has approved a roadmap that will guide ICAO implementation activities, starting with the financial and human resources allocations without which the Global Framework will remain on paper.

Amongst the several activities, the Finvest Hub, which was so well received during CAAF/3 in Dubai, will be an important project establishing a platform to facilitate investment partnerships, particularly in the interest of countries and regions that do not have SAF production.

I am pleased to share that 150 States and organizations are now part of ICAO's Assistance, Capacity Building, and Training programme for SAF, known as ACT-SAF, which provides training, feasibility studies, support for SAF certification and policy development, and implementation of specific SAF projects for States. I am grateful for the many partnering States and organizations that have contributed resources in the past year to ICAO in these efforts, and we look forward to continuing this collaboration with you. We are also actively looking for new partners to broaden the reach and pace of this critically important programme.

The year 2024 also marks the start of the first phase of the ICAO Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), with 126 volunteer States. This is an important milestone in our decarbonization efforts, particularly while we bridge the technological and operational gaps.

As I mentioned a few moments ago, the celebrations of the 80th Anniversary will offer the opportunity to reflect on the challenges that will have to be addressed by air transport over the next decades, starting with the expected increase in passenger air traffic from approximately 4.5 Billion this year to approximately 11.4 Billion in 2050. These seemingly simple figures paint a dramatic picture of the challenges to be faced in achieving aviation decarbonization by 2050.

Additionally, it will grow more in Countries or Regions that have done less so far. This will require concerted efforts, in accordance with the No Country Left Behind strategic objective, so that air transport development continues to enhance safety, security, and capacity. We need to remain focused and not allow ourselves to become complacent.

The systematic introduction of new technologies, and particularly innovation, will support this development while at the same time cybersecurity will become more and more crucial to aviation.

As you know, ICAO is fully committed in this regard.

The adoption of an ICAO Cybersecurity governance will help to implement the cybersecurity roadmap integrating all Secretariat and Panels activities.

The recently concluded ICAO 2024 Innovation Fair brought together the aviation community, innovators, students, and startups to explore the transformative potential of digitalization. They delved into the future of the sector and how collaborative efforts can harness digital technologies to enhance process efficiencies, drive sustainability, and achieve ICAO's Strategic Objectives.

With regard to innovation, I would be remiss if I did not mention that we must prepare ourselves for the extraordinary potential of remotely piloted aircraft systems and advanced air mobility (AAM).

ICAO is supporting our member states on the regulatory, aspects and I wish to underline that the first ever AAM Symposium will take place in Montréal in September. I invite you all to participate.

While these are challenging times for these and many other reasons, I wish to emphasize that, it is in the spirit of cooperation inscribed in the Chicago Convention 80 years ago that we can address these and the many other challenges and opportunities facing us today. ICAO and organizations such as ACAO will have a very important role in meeting these challenges today, and in defining air transport's more sustainable future.

Before I conclude, I would like to emphasize ICAO's deep appreciation for the financial contributions we've received from various Arab Countries in support of the fulfilment of ICAO's roles and responsibilities, the MID and EUR/NAT Region NCLB Strategy and programme, and also other global initiatives and projects including the deployment of iPacks.

In concluding now, ICAO will continue to collaborate productively with ACAO, and to address alongside it both our current challenges and the exciting future of more efficient and sustainable air mobility, which is now emerging.

I am looking forward to your discussions during this meeting today and mostly to our continued collaboration in the years to come.

Thank you.