



ICAO

**Opening remarks by
the Council President of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,
to the ICAO Security Week 2024
"Shaping the Future of Global Aviation Security"**

(Muscat, Oman, 9 December 2024)

*Dear President of the Civil Aviation Authority of Oman, Your Excellency, Eng. Naif Ali Hamad Al Abri,
Dear Directors General of Civil Aviation,
Dear ICAO Council Representatives,
Dear ICAO Secretary General and Directors;*

As the President of the Council of ICAO, it is therefore my great pleasure to welcome you all here.

I invite you to join me in expressing our sincere gratitude to our gracious hosts, the Civil Aviation Authority of Oman, for their exceptional hospitality and commitment to advancing global aviation security.

Oman is known for its leadership in regional aviation security initiatives, including by chairing the MID-Regional Aviation Security & Facilitation Group. By hosting this event, Oman is also illustrating its dynamic role and key contributions in these areas at the global scale.

Several of us are just flying from Chicago where we have celebrated the 80th anniversary of the Chicago Convention, a testament to the enduring spirit of international cooperation that has guided global aviation since 1944. This convention, signed in the closing months of World War II, represented humanity's aspiration to achieve prosperity and peace by connecting nations by safe, secure, and now sustainable air services. The Convention continues to serve as the foundation of our global air transport system and the primary reason why we are all here today.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of Annex 17 to the Convention, which has served as the fundamental international framework for assuring and enhancing aviation security since 1974.

It is therefore fitting that we witness the transformation of our Global Aviation Security Symposium into a comprehensive Security Week this year. ICAO is deeply grateful for the generous hosting of this event by the Government of Oman, which has enabled it to take place outside ICAO Headquarters for the first time.

Finally, the introduction of the first-ever ministerial segment to this event is an extremely important milestone. It demonstrates that we have succeeded as an international community in elevating political commitment to aviation security to the highest levels.

I wish to highlight that the ministerial segment hosted here is expected to produce a declaration that will guide our preparatory work for the 42nd Assembly in 2025. This declaration, developed through extensive collaboration with the AVSEC Panel and Cybersecurity Panel, and refined through State consultation and Council review, represents our collective vision for the future of aviation security. It will drive the review of our consolidated statement on continuing policies on Aviation Security and strengthen our resolution on cybersecurity.

Additionally, the second edition of the Global Aviation Security Plan will be unveiled this week. It incorporates valuable insights from our internal evaluation and comprehensive State surveys. This new plan will serve as our roadmap for strengthening aviation security worldwide, providing strategic guidance and practical implementation frameworks for our member States.

As we convene here in Muscat, we must acknowledge that our sector faces evolving challenges that require innovative solutions. The integration of new technologies, the rise of cyber threats, and the complexity of the international civil aviation network demand our continued vigilance and adaptation. Our success depends on our ability to stay ahead of emerging threats while facilitating the efficient movement of passengers and cargo.

The Middle East region will play an important role in the global response.

The recent achievements by Middle Eastern states illustrate the strength of their cooperation and their ability to lead, with an impressive 75.92% effective implementation rate of ICAO USAP audited security standards.

I would equally like to highlight that this region leads globally in ICAO AVSEC Instructors and PMC professionals, demonstrating the power of capacity building and regional cooperation. The effectiveness of these collaborative efforts is reflected in the absence of significant security concerns for this region.

Indeed, we have witnessed remarkable progress through the Cooperative Aviation Security Programme for the Middle East. In 2024 alone, 18 capacity-building activities benefited 438 participants across 12 member States. The enhanced coordination between States in capacity building activities has strengthened our collective security framework, and demonstrate your effective commitment to realizing the ambitions of ICAO's "No Country Left Behind" initiative.

The FAL Global Summit in Riyadh, the Regional API/PNR Seminar in Cairo, and numerous other specialized meetings and training sessions that have taken place in the Middle East this year have also highlighted the region's leadership and have been key to enhancing States' understanding and implementation of Advanced Passenger Information systems and Passenger Name Record data requirements.

Taken together, all of this offers us much more than just an opportunity for celebration - it prompts us to reflect on the progress and achievements and it inspires us to be ambitious and confident as we face the opportunities and challenges on the horizon.

The founders of ICAO could hardly have imagined the complexity of today's aviation environment, autonomous systems, cybersecurity challenges, space-based technologies, not to mention the

billions of passengers we transport without incident. Yet in this 80th anniversary year, the principles they established remain as relevant as ever.

Similarly, this week presents an exceptional opportunity to shape the future of aviation security. Through our discussions, shared experiences, and collective commitment, we will strengthen the foundation of global aviation security for generations to come.

I look forward to our productive discussions and thank you all for your dedication.

Thank you.