



**Opening address by
the Council President of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,
to the 20th TRIP Symposium**

(Montréal, Canada, 4 November 2025)

*Distinguished guests,
Esteemed friends and colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this 20th ICAO TRIP Symposium and Exhibition.

Twenty years ago, ICAO decided to harmonize identity management, and make borders safer and travel easier while ensuring security for every traveller.

This decision has demonstrated remarkable foresight setting a new vision for ICAO for decades to come.

The recently adopted ICAO Strategic Plan 2026-2050 responds to our forecast that passenger traffic will triple over the next 25 years.

The 42nd ICAO Assembly, concluded just one month ago, has endorsed and reinforced the vision of the Strategic Plan.

The Assembly gave ICAO a clear mandate to deliver air transport, for everyone, everywhere, with zero fatalities and net zero carbon emissions, by 2050.

Enhancing Facilitation will be crucial.

Significant, binding Resolutions were passed by the Assembly to enhance the inclusivity and accessibility of flying.

Our work at this Symposium on “Building the Next Generation of Seamless Travel” will be of key importance to progress.

We will build on the many examples of success achieved together, including from the painful lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was aviation’s greatest ever crisis.

Borders are now becoming smarter, identities more secure, and travel is becoming more seamless.

But there is a long way to go before the best of what we have built becomes consistent and largely implemented across the international flight network.

Strategy: This will require ensuring all countries progress through the pillars of the ICAO TRIP

- Evidence of Identity
- Document Issuance and Control
- Machine Readable Travel Documents
- Inspection Systems and Tools
- and Interoperable Applications.

The digital revolution is well underway, and with it, automation and global interoperability have become essential.

ICAO specifications for Machine Readable Travel Documents in Doc 9303 remain at the centre of this transformation and our strategies.

The ICAO framework ensures passports, visas, and many other types of proof of identification work everywhere. This includes many domestic and non-border related settings.

We will keep building by ensuring secure civil registration and robust enrolment processes, backed by biometric tools, to uphold trust.

Every travel credential—physical or digital—must be secure.

Only then can we achieve truly seamless travel worldwide.

Our progress towards this goal is very clear.

No fewer than 165 of ICAO's 193 Member States now issue electronic Machine-Readable Travel Documents.

Over one billion are in circulation.

The ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) enables States and other stakeholders to validate these documents, providing the holder with irrefutable proof of who they are, regardless of where they may find themselves on the planet.

This is truly remarkable.

It is why we are encouraging the active use of the directory to validate documents.

Meanwhile, the ICAO Digital Travel Credential (DTC) has arrived.

Protected by cryptographic means, it brings us even closer to contactless, seamless, and secure travel.

We have more tools, too.

If advanced solutions are not yet feasible, States can now expand digital checks through the ICAO Data-structure for Barcodes, or IDB.

It opens the door for all to join in.

No State has been left behind.

All of these tools also help increase automation worldwide.

Automated Border Control, e-Gates, and kiosks all rely on trusted credentials and biometrics.

This so-called “passive” authentication is the foundation of secure and efficient border clearance.

Finally, let me underscore the critical importance of improving data exchange.

ICAO is deeply committed to supporting States with the implementation of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) systems.

In line with the UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme and the objectives of Annex 9, Amendment 28 to Annex 9 has set a global baseline for risk-based border management.

ICAO stands ready to help every State reach this goal.

We have a significant opportunity here to leap forward on all of these priorities.

Together, you will have the opportunity to learn, to share, and to contribute to the transformation of traveller identity, and of flight.

Everyone deserves secure proof of their identity, and everyone deserves the freedom to fly. That’s why billions of people are counting on the work we do at the ICAO TRIP Symposium.

Let us use this opportunity well.

With that, I declare the Twentieth ICAO TRIP Symposium and Exhibition open.

Thank you.