



**Address by  
the President of the ICAO Council,  
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,  
to the 38th Session of the ICAO Legal Committee**

*(Virtual, 22 March 2022)*

*Good morning ladies and gentlemen,*

It is my great pleasure today to extend a very warm welcome to the Delegates and Observers who have joined us for this 38th Session of the ICAO Legal Committee. While I would have preferred to greet you in person in Montréal, hosting this Committee in a virtual setting with such wide participation from Member States and Observers is a true testament to the importance of this organ to the Organization.

I wish to highlight that this year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the ICAO Legal Committee by the First Session of the ICAO Assembly in 1947.

Since its inception, the Legal Committee has made a significant contribution to the development and codification of international air law. The Committee has prepared drafts of twenty-four international air law instruments, as well as prepared studies on specific topics relating to international air law. Moreover, it has overseen the development of guidance material thereby supporting ICAO Member States and International Organizations in the implementation of treaties and ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices.

Over the years, the ICAO Legal Committee has always been at the forefront of new developments in the field of international air law and during this Session, the Committee will address new and emerging issues that are of vital interest to the aviation community.

A number of treaties considered by the Legal Committee, particularly those related to international aviation security, are among the most widely accepted treaties by the international community. In this regard, I am pleased that since the last Session of the Legal Committee, the Montréal Protocol of 2014, which deals with issues relating to unruly and disruptive passengers, entered into force in January 2020.

As legal representatives of your Governments, I commend your efforts as well as the important contributions you have made to the items in your work programme over the past two years, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the virtual format of this Session, I understand that the Committee's Agenda is more condensed. Nevertheless, I wish to emphasize the importance for the Organization of the items that are on the Committee's Work Programme and on this Session's Agenda.

These include the review of the ICAO Rules for the Settlement of Differences, consideration of the adequacy of international air law instruments in addressing cyber threats and other acts or offences of concern to the international aviation community and promotion of the ratification of international air law instruments, to name a few.

With regard to the latter, I strongly recommend that Delegations urge their respective authorities to hasten the ratification process for international air law treaties adopted under the auspices of ICAO.

In particular, I recommend that all States which have not already done so, consider ratifying most urgently the two Protocols amending Articles 50 (a) and 56 of the Chicago Convention. These Protocols were adopted at the 39th Session of the Assembly in October 2016 and provide for an increase in the sizes of the ICAO Council and the Air Navigation Commission, respectively.

Additionally, I wish to draw your attention to the Council's expectation for the Committee to review processes and procedures for States to fulfil their obligations under Article 12 of the Chicago Convention in connection with the dispute under Article 84 currently before the Council.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have a full Agenda before you. Yet I am certain that this committee will demonstrate the same degree of thoroughness in fulfilling its work as it has done for the past 75 years. ICAO Member States and the Council have high expectations on the outcome of your deliberations, and following this meeting the Council will consider your results and decide on the future course of work. Your activities will also be reported to the 41st Session of the Assembly this fall.

Madame Chairperson, before this Committee begins its important work, I believe it worth mentioning that not only are you the first woman to preside over the Legal Committee, but you are also the first person to chair a meeting of the Legal Committee in a virtual format. I therefore take this opportunity to thank you for your dedication and strong leadership since the beginning of your tenure.

In closing, I wish you, Madame Chairperson, and the rest of your colleagues present with us here today, every success and wish to assure you of the Council's full support in the fulfilment of your tasks.

Thank you.

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