



CLOSING ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL
AVIATION ORGANIZATION
ICAO Facilitation Regional Forum
Yaoundé, Cameroon
4 March 2025

1. It is my honour and a privilege to address this closing session of the ICAO Facilitation Regional Forum.
2. I wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Government of Cameroon for its generous hosting of this event and the warm welcome and hospitality it has provided. I equally wish to express our thanks to our valued Speakers and Moderators, who have so generously shared their expertise with all of us.
3. The valuable insights of representatives from States, international organizations, industry, and other stakeholders contributed significantly to the success of this forum.
4. Together, we have examined key facilitation priorities.
5. We explored entry procedures, public health measures, capacity building and implementation, preventing human trafficking, and passenger data systems. Our focused workshops on aircraft accident victim assistance and accessibility were especially insightful.
6. As a result, we have strengthened our understanding of Annex 9 and how its implementation supports inclusive, efficient, and sustainable air transport.

7. The insights shared here in Yaoundé on regional implementation challenges and opportunities are nothing short of essential as aviation continues to evolve and grow, especially in underserved regions.
8. That is why ICAO remains committed to supporting Member States through targeted training, capacity building, and collaboration with international partners.
9. ICAO's role was, in fact, a significant focus for our discussions, especially in response to the need to streamline processes and respond to emerging challenges.
10. We also highlighted the importance of coordination not just with ICAO but also between aviation authorities, airports, airlines, and government agencies. The experiences shared by the National Air Transport Facilitation Committees demonstrated effective approaches to building and maintaining these collaborative relationships.
11. In examining border control, we identified opportunities to enhance clearance procedures while strengthening international cooperation to improve the passenger experience. Similarly, the public health discussions emphasized the importance of aviation and health authority collaboration. These discussions incorporated key lessons from COVID-19 to enhance operational resilience.
12. As a result, we recognized that globally interoperable border control measures are essential for aviation to respond effectively to future health crises while maintaining efficient travel processes.
13. Our accident victim assistance workshop highlighted the importance of practical training and exercises in emergency response. Participants examined implementation approaches from the perspectives of States, oversight authorities, and operators.

14. Finally, our subsequent workshop examined the challenges persons with disabilities face throughout the passenger journey.

15. We looked at how ICAO's Strategy on Accessibility provides a foundation for building an inclusive air transport system, and our discussions will help inform the development of standards that serve all passengers effectively.

16. On that note, let me assure you that the crucially important perspectives shared at this regional event will directly shape our global work. These regional insights will contribute to both the ICAO Facilitation Symposium in Qatar this April, where we'll explore digital innovations and enhanced passenger processing solutions, and the 42nd ICAO Assembly in September.

17. I encourage your continued engagement at these events.

18. I thank our hosts, speakers, moderators, and all participants for your valuable contributions, and wish you all safe travels.

Thank you.