



**Closing Remarks  
by the Secretary General  
of the International Civil Aviation Organization  
Dr. Fang Liu  
to the Third ICAO World Aviation**

*(Abuja, Nigeria, 22 November 2017)*

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Panelists and honoured guests, Ladies  
and gentlemen,*

1. It has been my great honour during these last two days to participate with you here at this third edition of ICAO's World Aviation Forum (IWAF).
2. I think all of us will be leaving Abuja with a much deeper appreciation of the transformational power of aviation to improve the lives of people everywhere, and by any measure that serves to establish the great success we've helped realize at this year's event.
3. Since the inauguration of the first IWAF in 2015, ICAO has been working with great determination to establish a solid global consensus on the urgent need for governments to maximize the benefits of aviation.
4. We initiated these World Aviation Forums immediately after the adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that same year, and since that time we have been proud to continuously raise awareness of aviation's fundamental importance to the SDGs' attainment.
5. From an overall standpoint, this work has been in line with our shared acknowledgment of aviation's significant contributions to supporting businesses, creating jobs, and generating numerous and sustainable socio-economic benefits through increased trade and tourism.
6. But we have also taken note that worldwide awareness of aviation's benefits, its cross-cutting attributes, and its multiple links to other economic sectors, hasn't been translating into the levels of investment necessary to sustain and optimize our sector's profound socio-economic potential.

7. Over the last two days, we have addressed the challenges of financing and of creating an enabling environment that will support aviation infrastructure development, at all levels.
8. This was very much in line with our efforts to augment global partnerships in support of the *No Country Left Behind* (NCLB) initiative, and ICAO greatly appreciates the time and thoughtful viewpoints you have shared with us.
9. As some of you have underlined, a credible means of planning and implementation are urgently required to manage future air transport traffic growth safely, securely and efficiently.
10. I cannot stress strongly enough how important this planning is to the benefits you expect to be generated and captured by your States.
11. As we have heard throughout this event, continued development in aviation infrastructure capacity and technological innovation is critical to our desired outcomes.
12. This in turn requires substantial modernization investments over the long term, and an expansion of aviation capacity in all States consistent with ICAO's growth forecasts and Global Plans.
13. I would therefore call on all governments which have not already done so to analyze their current capacities and expectations, and to urgently establish national and/or regional aviation infrastructure programmes and plans respective of those aims.
14. These should optimally be produced in cooperation with all relevant international and regional organizations, our industry colleagues, the donor community, as well as with multi-lateral development banks and other financial institutions.
15. And they should also feature strategic infrastructure targets that are consistent with the ICAO's Global Plans, as well, of course, with your identified national and regional, and municipal needs.
16. ICAO, for its part, has listened intently to your related concerns at this 2017 IWAF, and we will be responding to them promptly.
17. In the first place we will re-double our efforts to enhance and develop tools, analyses and services to support governments in identifying their aviation deficiencies and infrastructure gaps.

18. This support will include helping you to prepare business cases for major aviation projects, with clearly defined returns, and by visualizing disaggregated aviation data with mapping solutions.
19. I would also like to highlight that ICAO is the recognized custodial agency for global indicators supporting SDG target 9.1, which track the establishment of resilient and sustainable infrastructure.
20. These indicators help States to take a data-driven approach to their infrastructure planning challenges, and to effectively monitor and evaluate their implementation progress.
21. We have also heard some further views here on how increased aviation connectivity often leads to additional re-investment in aviation.
22. This creates a healthy cycle of aviation development and economic prosperity, but only in those countries and regions which set out suitable planning and investment commitments.
23. A second call I would therefore like to make is for States to align and integrate their aviation infrastructure programmes based on a balanced development approach, one which includes multi-modal transport and related urban planning initiatives.
24. These in turn must be linked with national and/or regional development plans and strategies.
25. Finally, all related efforts need to be harmonized with the relevant international economic and financial frameworks, and supported by economic cooperation and international assistance for development which is appropriate to your local needs.
26. ICAO, meanwhile, will continue to foster effective partnerships between donors, investors, and States, and to strengthen our common understanding on infrastructure requirements and expectations while responding to business imperatives.
27. We will also continue to work with other UN and international development agencies to better ensure that international public finance and assistance for development, including official development assistance (ODA) and South-South cooperation, are better sensitized to air transport's crucial contributions to sustainable development.

28. The honorable Ministers and distinguished speakers with us here at IWAF/3 have also reaffirmed that strong, long-term partnerships, between all relevant parties, are essential to mainstream the priorities of the aviation sector.
29. This principle applies to every ICAO Member State, and across all ICAO Regions, but I would also suggest that it is especially relevant here in Africa.
30. For all of the reasons I have just summarized, the new *Declaration* and *Plan of Action for Aviation Infrastructure Development in Africa* which have been adopted here should help to bring a renewed sense of urgency and effectiveness to our international cooperation.
31. I welcome in particular the commitment made by African States and Regional Economic Communities to ensure the inclusion of better-defined aviation projects in the Program for Infrastructure Development for Africa (PIDA).
32. Additionally of note was their renewed focus toward African economic cooperation and international assistance platforms.
33. To strongly support the implementation of the *Plan of Action*, ICAO will enhance its cooperation with African States, in line with the African Union's *Agenda 2063* and consistent with the priorities of our *No Country Left Behind* initiative.
34. I have also been pleased to see the strong consensus reflected in the IWAF *Concluding Communiqué*, on the need for more sustainable international civil aviation.
35. Ladies and gentlemen, this 2017 World Aviation Forum has once again provided us with an invaluable opportunity to shape the future of global air transport together, and to ensure that it remains a safe, secure, efficient and reliable driver of sustainable peace and prosperity, wherever aircraft fly.
36. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Government and the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for hosting this very first IWAF held in an ICAO Region, and to re-express ICAO's deep appreciation to the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Planning and Coordinating Agency of the AU's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), for being such generous and effective partners on this year's event.

37. On that note, may I extend a very big thank you again to all, for your participation, enthusiasm, and most of all for your partnership on ICAO's many global priorities.
38. I look forward to your participation at the next IWAF in the Fall of 2018, and wish you all safe travels home.