



Address by the Secretary General  
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
Dr. Fang Liu,  
to the fifth Principal-level Meeting  
of the Global Counter-terrorism Coordination Compact Entities

(28 August 2020)

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

1. As we are well aware, the COVID-19 global pandemic has had enormous negative impacts on global aviation.
2. It has posed unprecedented challenges not only to tourism, trade, and the interconnected world we all rely on, but also our joint and concerted efforts to counter terrorism and organized crime.
3. ICAO has been actively distributing counter terrorism- and aviation- related updates during the pandemic, and serving as a key facilitator among States and applicable organizations. A key priority in this regard is air transport facilitation, which relates to identity management, travel documents, and the efficient management of border control processes, as well as the expedited clearance of aircraft, passengers, and crew, and all aspects of baggage and cargo screening and processing.
4. Security and Facilitation objectives and coordination are highly inter-related.
5. Accordingly, ICAO has been strongly emphasizing the importance of States maintaining effective National Facilitation Committees and National Facilitation Programmes during the pandemic, supported by results-driven cross-sectoral collaboration with National Civil Aviation Security Committees and other appropriate stakeholders.
6. ICAO has also established special COVID-19 Security and Facilitation information and monitoring platforms, and has issued related guidelines and implementation resources which are vital to controlling pandemic-related response risks.

7. The resident ICAO Council has also been active during the pandemic, with substantial support from our Secretariat, and the Council's special task force on COVID-19 recovery produced both a comprehensive Report and special restart 'Take-off' Guidelines.
8. Presently these are being employed by most countries and regions to keep their sectoral recoveries in air transport aligned and harmonized, including with respect to security and facilitation responses.
9. The guidelines also urge States to strengthen their security oversight systems to ensure the consistency and effectiveness of response measures.
10. While so much of our attention is now focused on COVID-19, ICAO has also been continuing to push for progress on enhanced border security and the development of new Passenger Name Record (PNR) data standards in line with Security Council resolution 2396.
11. In June, this work achieved an important milestone when our Council adopted Amendment 28 to Annex 9 of the Chicago Convention, establishing an international framework for the transfer and exchange of PNR data.
12. This Amendment becomes applicable in February of next year, and will help achieve benefits relating to improved Counter-Terrorist Travel Programme implementation, in addition to enhanced document security through updates to the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD).
13. Despite how this pandemic has temporarily disconnected so much of the world, ICAO continues to encourage and empower States to cooperate at the regional and sub-regional levels.
14. We also regularly draw governments' attention to the fact that the establishment of effective identification management processes is strongly supportive of UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.9, which concerns the protection of human rights through enhanced social, economic, political, and legal inclusion.
15. In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to stress that ICAO will continue to demonstrate its leadership and commitment in all matters pertaining to global aviation security policy, regulation, standardization, quality control, audits, assistance, and training.

16. Looking forward I am deeply optimistic that with new methods of working together, and stronger coalitions, we can strengthen still further the Global Counter-Terrorism capacities and resources of States, and realize a more peaceful and prosperous world for us all.
17. Thank you.