



Remarks by the Secretary General
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Raymond Benjamin
to the Singapore Civil Service College

(Singapore, 7 July 2014)

Good morning everyone.

As the Secretary General of ICAO and a long-standing civil servant at both the national and international level, it is my great pleasure to meet with you all here today. If you'll permit me I'll provide you with a brief summary of ICAO's work and priorities before we begin to discuss matters of civil service interest in more detail.

As some of you may be aware, ICAO is a United Nations specialized agency which was created in 1944 upon the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, also known as the Chicago Convention.

ICAO works with the Convention's 191 Member States, in addition to industry observers and other international organizations, to develop international Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for the global air transport sector.

Our Member States must meet these Standards when they develop or amend their national regulations and programmes.

There are currently over 10,000 international Standards and Recommended Practices reflected in the 19 Annexes to the Chicago Convention. It is through these provisions – as well as ICAO's complementary policy, auditing and capacity-building efforts – that the air transport system today is able to operate just under 100,000 daily commercial flights, safely and securely, in every world region.

ICAO Assemblies, held every three years, endorse the work programme and budget of ICAO as well as the triennial Strategic Objectives decided by ICAO's 36 State Governing Council. The 38th Assembly Session, held last October, adopted five Strategic Objectives for ICAO through 2016. These are:

Safety, which is always a fundamental objective;

Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency, which underscores the significant challenges posed by the projected doubling in size of the air transport system by 2030;

Security and Facilitation enhancement, stressing the need to secure but not obstruct the movement of passengers and goods;

The Economic Development of Air Transport, fostering the development of a sound and economically viable civil aviation system;

and lastly **Environmental Protection**, which encompasses our inter-related efforts towards both emissions and noise reduction.

All of these activities help ICAO to keep air services available and dependable in every world region, which in turn supports improved social and economic development by enhancing connectivity between citizens and businesses.

In 2013 alone, our sector carried over 3.1 billion passengers on more than 32 million flights, as well as roughly 50 million tonnes of air cargo representing one-third of the value of all international trade. Looking at our Strategic Objectives in more detail, two of the 38th Assembly's more important endorsements related to **Safety** and **Capacity and Efficiency**, and more specifically to ICAO's recently revised *Global Aviation Safety Plan* and *Global Air Navigation Plan*.

The complementary ICAO *Global Plans* feature extensive industry and Member State agreement and input, thereby providing an unprecedented level of investment certainty with respect to aircraft and air navigation system modernization.

Progress on the *Global Plans* targets will be measured from this point forward, mainly in ICAO's annual *Safety Report* and, beginning this year, an annual *Air Navigation Report*. The 2014 editions of these publications are presently available free of charge on our website.

In early May, ICAO additionally launched a set of web-based online monitoring tools where our stakeholders can now keep track of their incremental progress on specific regional goals.

Better monitoring, analysis and reporting greatly assists our sector in determining strategic priorities, eventually helping to set in motion initiatives like the ICAO Runway Safety Programme and other cooperative ventures.

I would highlight in this context that collaboration with many State and industry groups continues to be instrumental to the tremendous results we are seeing with this work.

Cooperation has also been instrumental in the priorities we've established very recently in conjunction with the International Air Transport Association, or IATA, on the development of a global airline flight tracking capability. IATA represents the world's scheduled airlines at ICAO and these actions have been driven mainly by the unprecedented loss and disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370.

There are many other priority areas we are seeking to address in the *Safety* and *Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency* domains, including commercial spaceflight and the civilian use of remotely-piloted aircraft systems, or drones as they are more commonly referred to, but as our time today is limited let's continue on with our further objectives.

In the area of **Security and Facilitation**, ICAO today is working to achieve greater balance between effective control measures and the assurance of overall system efficiency – whether for passengers or air cargo.

Subsequently, risk-based prioritization, the mutual recognition of equivalent security measures, and other key principles are now strongly supporting all of our *Security and Facilitation* discussions in ICAO.

Our States have also endorsed the proposal that ICAO should build upon its recognized achievements in the global implementation of machine-readable travel documents, in other words the passports and visas that you and I use whenever we travel internationally, and that we should expand this work into a more comprehensive programme covering the complete identity establishment and management chain.

I personally had the opportunity to brief the UN Security Council on this specific area of work earlier this year and ICAO's presentation was very well received.

The Assembly's consensus on these and other *Security and Facilitation* issues means that ICAO and its States will be placing increased emphasis moving forward on assuring uniform and consistent implementation of sustainable aviation security measures worldwide – something I strongly believe should be a top priority.

Turning now to the *Economic Development of Air Transport*, ICAO has been encouraged that a growing number of States are looking to our Organization to take a leading role in modernizing the economic regulatory framework governing air transport liberalization, while safeguarding fair competition.

An important economic priority for air transport will be to maximize efficiency in border and customs clearance operations to promote trade, tourism and economic development.

This ties in closely with our *Security & Facilitation* goals and to the wider concept of enhancing air transport connectivity – which encompasses not only the streamlining of airport clearances, but also the protection of air transport consumer interests.

It is ICAO's position that air transport end-users should be protected and that these protections would benefit from increased regulatory convergence and compatibility.

Our 38th Assembly also recognized that guidance on the impact of taxation and other charges on air transport must be a priority for our Organization. Too often today, aviation-based revenues are re-directed by States to non-aviation programmes through an ever-expanding regime of taxes and levies. ICAO's view is that low-tax approaches deliver more significant and longer-term benefits to States, mainly through increased local employment, expanded global markets and a broader tax base.

In the area of **Environmental Protection**, ICAO and its Member States have been actively engaged on a comprehensive strategy to address CO₂ emissions from international aviation.

A key area of our environmental work relates to mitigation measures including aircraft technology and operational improvements, sustainable alternative fuels, and a market-based measure, or MBM, suitable to international civil aviation operations.

Another area of ICAO environmental work I wish to highlight relates to the development and implementation of our Member States' action plans to reduce CO₂ emissions from international aviation, mainly through assistance and capacity building. To date, plans covering over 80 per cent of international air traffic have been submitted to ICAO.

The development of a global MBM scheme for international aviation was endorsed by our 38th Assembly last October, making aviation the world's first industry sector to do so. ICAO must deliver a proposal by 2016 which is acceptable to all of our States, and which would then be implemented as of 2020.

Another area I would like to bring to your attention, one which is not included in our Strategic Objectives but which is meant to address a further priority for all of aviation moving forward, is the new **Global Aviation Training** Section I have established in ICAO.

Industry and ICAO projections presently reveal that our sector will be facing a significant shortage of skilled aviation professionals in the next 15-20 years, a fact which highlights the urgency with which world States and Regions will need to establish sufficiently expanded and effective training capacity.

ICAO's Global Aviation Training Office is presently identifying sources of State-to-State support which can aid with the development and delivery of effective aviation training courses. The purpose of this coordination is to help needful States address any persistent aviation knowledge or skills gaps they may be experiencing.

ICAO is also working with international organizations, individual Member States and training providers to develop Standardized Training Packages and Aviation Security Training Packages.

And in cooperation with CAE, we have furthermore produced a set of online e-Learning courses addressing air transport statistics, air transport forecasting and air transport economics and regulation.

Other areas where ICAO will be seeking to assist our Member States include:

- the implementation of Human Resources Development Strategies;
- the harmonization of performance and competency levels for aviation professions;
- the harmonization of training requirements built on competency frameworks and standardized job tasks;
- and the assessment of training outcomes through systematic Training Needs Analyses which will evaluate trainee performance before and after course delivery.

In closing today, let me please draw your attention to the fact that on 7 December this year ICAO will be celebrating the 70th anniversary of the signing of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*.

We have been proud during this period to be the primary forum where governments and industry meet on civil aviation matters, but we also clearly recognize that we must continue to adapt our priorities and working methods to the modern needs of both States and air transport operators. Aviation is a critical supporter of global social and economic development, and it is therefore the responsibility of everyone in ICAO to continue to ensure the global air transport system fully meets the needs of citizens, societies and businesses.

I understand that a discussion period will now follow these remarks, and I will be very pleased to consider any questions or comments you may have.
