



ICAO

High-level Statement:

***Responding Rapidly to Emerging Threats
within Strategic Safety and Security Frameworks***

**by the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Raymond Benjamin,
for a Special Session of the
ASEAN Aviation Summit (AAS) 2015**

(Langkawi, Malaysia, 19 March 2015)

Thank you and good morning everyone.

International civil aviation came face-to-face with two very high-profile emerging safety and security issues in 2014, issues characterized by distinct challenges which ICAO and the global air transport community have been very focused on in recent months.

And while we have benefitted from a number of important lessons learned in the aftermath of the tragic losses of MH370 and MH17 last year, it is nonetheless equally critical to keep these incidents, and the actions we are taking to address them, in proper perspective with respect to our wider strategic planning.

But to begin with today, let's first review what MH370 and MH17 have taught us to this point.

Perhaps first among the lessons learned from these two incidents, and especially MH370, is the recognition that our sector must respond rapidly, even to extremely rare accident events in our network, when there is a question of public trust involved.

Looking at MH370 for instance, you will recall from the media frenzy it generated terms such as "unprecedented" and "mysterious" in relation to its disappearance. In fact, the probability of another flight vanishing as MH370 did is somewhere in the vicinity of a one-in-100-million chance.

And yet as soon as it became apparent that MH370 was no ordinary accident, and that the public's trust in the safety and effectiveness of our network had been called into question, ICAO, ACI, CANSO and IATA rapidly convened a high-level meeting to discuss an appropriate sectoral response.

During those talks it was decided that ICAO would pursue the development of a global framework to support both near- and long-term flight tracking progress through an Ad Hoc Working Group, while our airline colleagues would review more specific near-term responses under an IATA Aircraft Tracking Task Force (ATTF).

The fruit of ICAO's labours was the concept of operations for what we have now termed our Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System, or GADSS.

All of this work was begun in May of 2014, and less than one year later, at ICAO's High Level Safety Conference this past February, over 120 ICAO Member States and 30 international organizations recommended the adoption of the GADSS.

Specifically, these States and industry organizations have endorsed that our global network must implement a 15-minute global flight tracking standard, for normal operations, which will become applicable to commercial fleets as of November 2016.

They have also recommended the implementation of a 1-minute aircraft tracking requirement which would be triggered under distress or abnormal flight conditions. This more precise capability, because it will require new aircraft equipage in many cases, has been agreed to become applicable to new aircraft entering service as of 2021.

The initial 15-minute tracking requirement responds directly to the public expectation that we improve aircraft location finding over remote and oceanic airspace. We also see this as an important first step in terms of laying the foundation for future tracking enhancement.

Importantly, both the 15-minute and 1-minute tracking proposals are performance-based, meaning that airlines are free to use the technologies and services they deem most cost-effective when meeting the new requirements.

Performance-based standards also carry the benefit of not restricting future innovation, so that airlines can continue to seek the latest and best technologies as they upgrade or renew their fleets.

I highlighted a moment ago that all of this work has been achieved less than one year after the disappearance of MH370. Those of you who are more familiar with global aviation governance will recognize that this amount of progress, in just a matter of months, represents a truly significant achievement.

It is not often, for instance, that the many States around ICAO's table are so unanimous in their support of a new development. Just ask anyone involved in the work we've been trying to progress on an aviation MBM.

But what I wish to point out, especially in light of the topic I am addressing today, is that these decisions are not indicative of our sector simply putting out the latest fire it has encountered, or running from one emergency to another.

In this case specifically, ICAO had already formulated performance planning and technology roadmaps that would have realized a global flight tracking capability for aviation. This came after comprehensive consultations with States and industry between 2011 and 2013, a process perhaps best exemplified by our successful Global Air Navigation Industry Symposium in 2011, when over 500 industry participants joined us at ICAO.

We undertook all of this work in connection with the 2013 revision of our *Global Air Navigation Plan*, or GANP. The GANP, together with its companion document the *Global Aviation Safety Plan* (GASP), are ICAO's chief response to the need for long-term strategic planning for global aviation safety and efficiency.

The comprehensive GANP consultations I just described were pursued because projections were already telling us that our sector would once again be doubling in capacity by 2030 – just as it had during two previous 15-year cycles going back to 1977.

ICAO recognized and prioritized the capacity challenges which would be facing our States, and related concerns have been guiding much of our strategic planning ever since. For example separate projections on skilled personnel shortages led directly to my establishment last year of a Global Aviation Training office in ICAO.

I could provide you with many more examples in this regard, but staying focused on the matters at hand I wish only to stress that our responses to MH370, while very rapid, were not made in the absence of strategic considerations.

The loss of public trust over the disappearance of this aircraft, a dynamic fuelled almost exclusively by excessive media speculation, simply accelerated the implementation of one aspect of the strategic performance improvements aviation had already set-out for 2030.

And furthermore, separate work carried out under ICAO's *Flight Data Recovery and Triggered Transmission of Flight Data* Working Groups, convened subsequent to the recommendations contained in the BEA accident report on AF447, had already advanced related planning on items such as accident site locating, Underwater Locator Beacons (ULBs), and Deployable Flight Recorders (DFRs).

This, then, is why we are describing the 15-minute tracking requirement for 2016 as a 'foundation' or 'first-step' with respect to a more comprehensive tracking capability which will eventually be realized.

Separate strategic planning aspects also apply to MH370, but mainly with respect to where we prioritize our Safety-related planning and programmes.

Aviation would of course be very grateful to learn more about what caused the loss of MH370. Accident investigations and the reports they result in, all under the Annex 13 framework, generally provide important recommendations or safety data which help us to prevent future accidents and save lives.

Having analyzed this and other safety data for many years now, and working collaboratively with industry operators to share accident information and results, our sector has identified three high-fatality accident categories which we are now working on collaboratively. These are:

- Runway incursions and excursions.
- Controlled Flight into Terrain, or CFIT.
- And lastly, Loss of Control Inflight (LOCI).

These efforts have seen some clear results. Runway-related fatalities have decreased from 179 in 2010 to just one in 2014. Similarly, we have seen the CFIT fatality rate drop by almost 85 per cent. The number of LOCI accidents, meanwhile, has been cut in half over the same period.

There are many other Safety programmes and priorities outlined in our Global Aviation Safety Plan, including global targets for safety oversight, Safety management System (SMS) and State Safety Programme (SSP) goals, and other targets. All feature progressive improvement timelines through 2030 that have been aligned with our air navigation Capacity and Efficiency planning.

These are not the results or objectives of a sector in crisis. They are the product of determined and strategic planning and collaboration, and that is precisely how we will continue to make aviation even safer in the years ahead.

The second major emerging issue the States at our HLSC resolved agreement on, pertained to the loss of MH17 and the risks to civil aviation arising from conflict zones.

Following the loss of MH17, a senior-level task force set up by ICAO concluded that States and airlines could benefit from greater information sharing on conflict zones and a centralized online resource to facilitate the process. These findings were part of a comprehensive conflict zone risk mitigation work programme presented at the Safety Conference.

The Conference recommended, among a number of related priorities, that a web-based repository should be hosted urgently by ICAO to serve as a single source for up-to-date conflict zone risk information. The goal of this portal would be to facilitate and enhance conflict zone risk assessments by States and operators.

The Council, while considering these recommendations, was guided by two fundamental principles of the Chicago Convention:

- First, that States are responsible for the safety of civil aviation operations in their respective airspace;
- And secondly, that airspace users are ultimately responsible for deciding where they can operate safely.

Furthermore, noting the urgency attached to this matter by our community, the Council approved that an interim version of the conflict zone risk information portal would be made available by ICAO commencing 2 April 2015, for an evaluation period of one year.

I am very pleased to confirm to you today that we will be meeting this target as planned, and that the conflict zone information portal will be clearly visible and accessible from the ICAO public website homepage for visitors with the appropriate clearances.

This decision and process once again points to the air transport sector's commitment to respond rapidly when needed, but always within the limits and respectful of the principles which have long made aviation a force for positive, consensus-driven progress in the world.

Just as with MH370, our sector's united MH17 response is consistent both with near-term need, and longer-term strategic goals.

Looking now to the Security and Facilitation domain more specifically, cyber security coordination and response is one of our more critical emerging issues. As technologies rapidly evolve and become more readily accessible to all, cyber threats simply cannot be ignored.

ICAO is coordinating in this area with ACI, CANSO, IATA and the ICCAIA, based on an agreement we signed late in 2014. Henceforth our organizations will now be more proactive in sharing critical information such as threat identification, risk assessments and cyber security best practices.

We will also be encouraging more substantial coordination at the State level, notably between our respective government and industry stakeholders on all cyber security strategies, policies, and plans.

This is an important new area of aviation security concern, and one which our global community will ensure is met with a strong level of commitment and response.

But we should also acknowledge, once again, that established policies and principles in Annex 17 on *Security* will provide us with a solid foundation to start from, especially so as to ensure the global harmonization aspects which are ICAO's chief responsibility.

Besides these developments on cyber security, ICAO's Aviation Security Panel will be meeting next month and we expect it to bring forward additional new recommendations on conflict zones, the regulatory framework relating to Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS); and various cargo- and supply-chain-related issues.

Real progress in all of these areas, and by this I mean both ICAO's *Safety* and *Security and Facilitation* objectives, will require not only that we determine practical and cost-effective Standards and solutions, but also that Member States and operators have the tools and proficiencies they need to effectively implement what ICAO asks of them.

We absolutely recognize this need, and ICAO is therefore prioritizing related efforts to ensure that we leave *No Country Left Behind* where the significant social and economic benefits of air transport are concerned.

For instance where the new 15-minute tracking requirement is concerned, ICAO is presently coordinating an implementation assistance exercise here in your region. The Asia Pacific was selected for these exercises mainly due to the size of its airspace, and we presently expect a dozen or more world airlines to participate.

ARINC, SITA, INMARSAT and other communications providers are already coming forward with tracking solution packages, and it is our hope that some or all of these companies will participate in our trials. Otherwise the exercise will be completed by late-summer, with its results going on to our Air Navigation Commission and ultimately the ICAO Council, so as to inform what they ultimately adopt by end-November.

As we look ahead, the other global challenges we have in common – air navigation capacity and efficiency, environmental protection and the economic development of air transport – will likewise require a unified approach supported by practical implementation assistance.

For the Asia and Pacific Regions specifically, the overall challenge is by far the consequences of sustained growth in passenger and cargo traffic.

This could well intensify with the coming into force this year, in whole or in part, of the open skies policy amongst ASEAN Member States.

The implications of such traffic growth are multiple and interrelated, as we well know. They point to:

- Increased airspace and airport congestion, with risks to the safety, security and efficiency of air operations.
- Growing environmental pressures.
- The need for massive investments in ground infrastructure and air navigation systems.
- Threats to the long-term viability of some airlines.
- Levels of training and experience for skilled personnel.
- And many others which are likely germane to your local markets and institutions.

During my time in aviation, the Asia-Pacific region has made tremendous progress in many areas, so much so that it is now the largest air transport market in the world.

Your international and domestic passenger traffic market share, for example, grew to 31 per cent in 2014, making it the largest combined market globally. And similarly you were the world's largest air freight market last year – with a 40 per cent share in terms of world Freight Tonne-Kilometres (FTKs).

The commitment and achievements supporting this growth over the last few decades are truly to be commended, and further collaboration and consensus, through ICAO, will continue to be your best path forward.

Ladies and gentlemen, this will likely be my last opportunity to address you as Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization, and in closing today I wish to underline that it has been my great honour to serve ICAO, and the global air transport sector it supports, for so many years now.

I wish you only the greatest success in the years ahead, and trust that your discussions here at the ASEAN Summit over the last two days will make a productive and rewarding contribution to that goal.

Thank you.
