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ICAO Secretary General, Dr. Fang Liu, opens the third ICAO Air Transport Symposium. Over three hundred participants from 68 countries, 14 international organizations and a wide range of groups participated in the ICAO event.

## COMPETITION ISSUES TOP AGENDA AT LANDMARK AIR TRANSPORT EVENT

**MONTRÉAL, 5 April 2016** – States and aviation industry groups addressed a wide range of competition and regulatory issues for international air transport this week at a high-level symposium at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

“Air transport has become an essential component of our global society”, highlighted ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu, during her opening remarks to ICAO’s third International Air Transport Symposium, “and aviation is a crucial driver of economic, social and cultural development worldwide, supporting roughly 60 million jobs globally and generating more than 2.4 trillion dollars in economic activity.”

The Symposium provided a unique opportunity for high-level experts from governments, airlines, airports, air navigation services providers and academic institutions to further define the practical balance needed between competitive market expectations and regulatory responsibility, while fostering convergence in competition policies. This included: the need for deeper understanding and greater consensus on States’ varying competition policies and their principles of fair competition; greater transparency in addressing competition issues, including on State aids and subsidies; the expectation from every corner for liberalization to support global connectivity enabling States and regions to effectively access global markets and trade flows, and the difficulties inherent in determining aviation-specific liberalization safeguards.

Recognizing the challenges related to finding a commonly acceptable definition of “fair competition” or “level playing field”, participants called for ICAO’s leadership in support of air transport liberalization,

including the development of international agreements, as well greater dialogue and exchange of information to facilitate a more common understanding of competition priorities and implications for operators and authorities.

“As the operating environment becomes more market-driven, competition among airlines and airports will further intensify,” stressed Secretary General Liu. “How to ensure a sound and orderly operating environment, and fair and equal opportunity for all carriers are major challenges facing regulators, and as we pursue the liberalization of air transport, we should also work together towards the development of greater global regulatory convergence on competition issues.”

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Resources for editors: [ICAO's economic development work](#)  
[Information on Competition](#)  
[ICAO Compendium of Competition](#)  
[Air Transport Policy and Regulation](#)  
[ICAO's Aviation Development and No Country Left Behind initiatives](#)

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