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ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu addresses the opening session of ICAO's 2016 AFI Aviation Week in Malabo.

ICAO SECRETARY GENERAL: PARTNERSHIP AND INVESTMENT CRUCIAL TO SUSTAINABLE AVIATION DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

MONTRÉAL AND MALABO, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, 5 JULY 2016 – Significant contributions towards safe and secure air transport and the prosperity and sustainability of African communities could be achieved if sufficient investment is made towards the development of Africa's civil aviation capacities, including infrastructure and skilled human resources, remarked ICAO's Secretary General during the Third ICAO Africa and Indian Ocean (AFI) Aviation Week in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, which concluded last week.

"I am a firm believer in partnerships, and Africa is one of aviation's greatest examples today of what cooperation and commitment can deliver in terms of concrete civil aviation progress," Dr. Liu highlighted. "ICAO has been working very hard to foster this type of cooperation in every world region, and we are tremendously grateful that these comprehensive AFI Week events have now established themselves as an essential instrument for Africa-wide civil aviation progress."

The 2016 AFI Aviation Week was hosted by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, at the African Union Conference Center in Malabo. The wide ranging series of events convened included: the Third Africa-Indian Ocean (AFI) Aviation Safety and Security Symposium; the Second Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) for Africa Meeting; the Seventeenth Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan) Steering Committee Meeting; and the Third Comprehensive Regional

Implementation Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL Plan) Steering Committee Meeting.

A key agenda item saw the many senior officials in attendance taking stock of the progress and status of regional safety targets, set by the African Ministers of Transport in 2012. Respective participants also reviewed the status of implementation of ongoing initiatives and plans guiding effective cooperation on aviation safety, security and human resources development, discussed the related outcomes from recent African high-level meetings and Declarations, and heard proposals on how the specific work programmes under each area could be further improved in light of latest data and developments.

“The successful implementation of current Safety and Security priorities are directly linked to States having the necessary human resources at their disposal, inclusive of the required qualifications, competencies and experience to address their responsibilities,” Dr. Liu noted. “These issues are particularly crucial for African States which are now experiencing significant traffic growth, whether due to increased international or domestic operations.”

Dr. Liu recognized some key States which have been important early contributors and champions regarding the ICAO Human Resources Development Fund, and she also took time to highlight how valuable ICAO’s many partnerships on the African continent have been to the achievement of practical and sustainable civil aviation development, commenting that “in supporting African States to meet their obligations under the Chicago Convention, the African Union Commission and the AU specialized agency, the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), as well as Regional Economic Communities, are sparing no effort as we continue to jointly assist national governments in meeting global and regional targets in line with ICAO’s Strategic Objectives. Their support and collaboration are greatly appreciated.”

The AFI Aviation Week setting also provided ICAO with an opportunity to congratulate representatives of several States present, for their improved level of compliance with ICAO’s Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). “We are seeing an increasing number of States with ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Effective Implementation rates over 60 percent, and a diminishing number of outstanding Significant Safety Concerns. These are indeed very positive trends, but they must continue to be improved upon,” Dr Liu said.

Since taking office, Secretary General Liu has been advocating tirelessly with ICAO Member States, UN system agencies, the donor community, and all relevant stakeholders, on aviation’s relationship to successful sustainable development planning and the attainment of the United Nations *Agenda 2030* Sustainable Development Goals. “Effectively resourced and administered civil aviation systems in States are essential to establishing air transport’s global connectivity, which in turn serves as a key catalyst for sustainable economic and social development,” she commented, adding that a fundamental prerequisite for gaining access to air transport’s global connectivity and opening up access to international markets and trade flows is a safe and secure air transport system through effectively implementing SARPs and policies.

As part of the events, the Steering Committees of the AFI Plan and AFI SECFAL Plan adopted a project-based approach to implementation of these plans and endorsed the outcomes of the Third AFI Week Symposia for the enhancement of aviation safety as well as security and facilitation in Africa.

During Dr. Liu's courtesy call to President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, the Head of State of Equatorial Guinea pledged to make a financial contribution of \$200,000 to the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) for the African civil aviation sector.

Side meetings were held with various States on on-going ICAO assistance activities aimed at improving safety and security oversight. The occasion was also used to release the Second Edition of the Annual Safety Report of the RASG-AFI; signing of the project document for membership of the African Flight Procedure Programmes (AFPP) by two States aimed at fostering PBN implementation; and of an ICAO Technical Cooperation Bureau project agreement on safety and security assistance with Equatorial Guinea.

ICAO's 2016 AFI Aviation Week attracted over 200 participants from 35 States and 25 international and regional organizations.

Resources for editors

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.

[Third ICAO Africa and Indian Ocean \(AFI\) Aviation Week](#)

[ICAO's and Aviation's Contributions to the UN SDGs](#)

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