



## *ICAO highlights infrastructure development and economic policy priorities at IATA Wings of Change event in Brazil*

*For immediate release*

**Montréal, 5 April 2017** – ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu delivered a strong message on the importance of States' commitments for infrastructure development to address looming capacity shortfalls and optimize air transport benefits, when she presented a keynote address this week at the 2017 IATA Wings of Change event in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The airline operator gathering was taking place concurrently with the International Brazil Air Show, which Dr. Liu opened one day earlier, and brought together leaders of the air transport industry in ICAO's South American (SAM) Region.

"Over the last few years, South America has witnessed enhanced air connectivity, expanded passenger and cargo markets, more competitive fare structures, increased destinations for travellers, and positive socio-economic contributions from the industry," Dr. Liu highlighted. "If we ask ourselves how we might further optimize these benefits, and sustain this projected growth, improved compliance with ICAO's global standards is the first and most obvious response, but this is followed very closely by the need for modernized air transport facilities and infrastructure."

Dr. Liu stressed to the aviation leaders that while Brazil's recent airport development example has been a positive one, many other facilities across the region were not prepared to handle the currently-projected traffic growth.

"The implication of not being more proactive on aviation development will be cascading downturns in national tourism and trade performance," she stressed. "This situation is by no means exclusive to South America, but with global flight and passenger volumes projected to double, in just 15 years' time, the longer States wait to invest, the more significant their negative socio-economic impacts will be."

The ICAO Secretary General also highlighted the importance of air transport integration in South America. "ICAO has adopted a long-term vision to help facilitate and encourage liberalized air transport in States," she stated, calling for harmonization of consumer protection regulation and competition laws and policies to strengthen regional air transport integration.

While on mission in Brazil, Dr. Liu held an extensive round of discussions with high-ranking Brazilian officials relating to ICAO's global Standards and the importance of aviation development, infrastructure investment and global connectivity to the State's sustainable socio-economic prosperity. She also participated in the inauguration of Brazil's first-ever Women in Aviation chapter, addressed the Executive Committee of the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (LACAC), visited a number of Brazil's civil aviation installations, and provided remarks to the closing session of an ICAO Regional Seminar on current aviation environmental protection priorities.

The high-ranking government officials met during her visit included Brazil's Chief of Staff of the Presidency of the Republic, Mr. Eliseu Padilha, its Minister of Foreign Relations, Mr. Aloysio Nunes, Minister of Transport, Ports and Civil Aviation, Mr. Maurício Quintella, Minister of Tourism, Mr. Marx Beltrão, the President of Brazil's National Civil Aviation Agency (ANAC), Mr. José Ricardo Botelho, and other officials from Brazil's Airspace Control Department and Air Navigation Authority.

In her meeting with Brazil Chief of Staff of the Presidency Mr. Eliseu Padilha, Dr. Liu expressed ICAO's satisfaction with the aviation sector strategies and enhancements which Brazil has lately undertaken, in particular its plan for the development of regional airports to connect remote areas and expand their tourism and economic development potential.

She encouraged Brazil to share its best practices in this area with neighbouring States, and thanked Brazil for its renewed commitments to support ICAO regional cooperation and capacity-building programmes in South America, as guided by its local Regional Office in Lima.

Other Ministerial discussions centred around the economic aspects of Brazil's status as an aircraft manufacturing hub and its key contributions to green aviation biofuel development, the recent United Nations Security Council Resolution encouraging States to work with and through ICAO to better protect civil aviation against acts of terrorism, current ICAO Global Plan targets for aviation Safety and Air Navigation, including Performance-based Navigation (PBN), and the importance of Brazil's participation in the newly-agreed Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA). She was also grateful to receive updates on the many initiatives Brazil is pursuing to enhance international tourism more generally.

Other officials met with in Brazil included the United States FAA Deputy Administrator, Ms. Victoria Wassmer; the Administrator of ANAC Argentina, Eng. Juan Pedro Irigoien, and the President of Argentina's Accident and Incident Investigation Board, Ms. Pamela Suarez; the President of LACAC and Director General of Civil Aviation of Colombia, Mr. Alfredo Bocanegra Varón, and the Director General of Civil Aeronautics of Guatemala, Mr. Carlos Velasquez Monge, to exchange views on issues of common interest.



ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu spoke to the importance of South American air transport infrastructure and economic policy development last week while opening the 2017 IATA Wings of Change event in Rio de Janeiro.

## Resources for Editors

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**About ICAO**

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.

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