



ICAO Secretary General stresses synergies of aviation and digital connectivity at ninth China Civil Aviation Development Forum

For immediate release

Montréal and Beijing, 29 May 2017 – The Secretary General of ICAO, Dr. Fang Liu, highlighted the important synergies and challenges arising from international aviation and digital connectivity during her presentation to the 2017 China Civil Aviation Development Forum.

Hosted by the Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) on 25 and 26 May, the 2017 Forum's first session focused on *"New Opportunities for Aviation Development in the Internet Era"*. Dr. Liu used the opportunity to remark upon the mutually reinforcing aspects of aviation's unique capability to physically connect and unite us, as well as the internet era's new and profound digital connectivity impacts on human culture and communications.

"A major challenge for all of us is the incredible growth of e-commerce," Dr. Liu began. "ICAO's data has shown that the air cargo share of items purchased online is projected to grow to a remarkable 91% by 2025. These numbers support how many of the expectations now instilled in modern consumers, whether for access to global products or for next-day delivery, are wholly dependent on international air transport to move the goods they purchase online rapidly and reliably."

Another important consideration which Dr. Liu elaborated was the expanding middle class in the Asia-Pacific's emerging economies, which is producing many new first-time flyers and making the region home to the world's largest urban population.

"These urbanization trends point to the need for greater integration of aviation and airport development and broader urban planning objectives," she highlighted. "Effective multi-modal solutions for example help to support faster-paced economic development, optimizing the use of infrastructure in otherwise low traffic airports, and promoting the economic potential of the less-developed areas to achieve more balanced regional growth. It was for this reason that ICAO made great efforts to incorporate civil aviation into the 'New Urban Agenda' adopted last October by the UN Habitat III Conference, and we are now fostering joint activities with UN Habitat to forge more productive synergies linking aviation and urban development."

Using ICAO data to underline that today's 2.2 billion Asia-Pacific air travellers will more than double to over 5 billion in just the next two decades, Dr. Liu pointed out that new global aviation innovations such as integrated System Wide Information Management (SWIM), Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM), and Airport Collaborative Decision Making (ACDM) should deliver tremendous overall safety, efficiency and emissions reductions gains in the years ahead, while permitting private sector airlines and airports to further streamline operations and enhance their profitability.

Regarding new multi-airport approaches now being considered by various ICAO regions globally, which seek to boost technological synergies and commercial innovation through enhanced air transport and internet connectivity, Dr. Liu also noted that ICAO had been encouraged by China's innovative efforts to evolve the Jing-Jin-Ji Region into an international city cluster and multi-airport system.

"This represents a unique and practical example which should provide helpful experience for other states while fostering a new type of engine for socio-economic growth," she commented.

During her mission, Dr. Liu and the Regional Director of ICAO's Asia Pacific Regional Office, accompanied by the Chief of the ICAO Regional Sub-office in Beijing, met with the CAAC Administrator Mr. Feng Zhenglin. They exchanged a wide range of views relating to the emerging aviation issues in both China as well as the APAC region more generally.

Dr. Liu also met with a delegation from Singapore in Beijing led by the Director General of its Civil Aviation Authority, Mr. Kevin Shum, as well as a delegation from the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) led by its President, Ms. Ingrid Cherfils.



ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu addressing participants to the 2017 China Civil Aviation Development Forum. Dr. Liu used the opportunity to remark upon the mutually reinforcing aspects of aviation's unique capability to physically connect and unite us, as well as the internet era's new and profound digital connectivity impacts on human culture and communications.

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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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