



Synergies of aviation development and tourism growth highlighted during UNWTO Assembly address by ICAO Secretary General

For immediate release

Montréal, 18 September 2017 – ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu highlighted the prominent synergies between States' levels of aviation development and their ability to optimize the economic benefits of travel and tourism during her address to the Plenary of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 22nd General Assembly, held this year in Chengdu, China. The event was attended by more than 1,300 participants from over 130 countries, including more than 70 ministers and vice-ministers.

“Some 1.2 billion tourists are travelling across international borders each year, and over half of these are arriving at their destinations in commercial aircraft,” Dr. Liu stressed. “Air transport connectivity is a key component of tourism development, and we especially cannot lose sight of how important these trends are to the sustainable development aspirations of least developed, landlocked, and small island developing States.”

The United Nations is presently fully engaged across all of its agencies in providing assistance and capacity building to countries in aid of their efforts to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) it adopted under the visionary *Agenda 2030*.

ICAO and the UNWTO have been highlighting the synergies between tourism and aviation development since the last World Tourism General Assembly where the “Medellín Statement on Tourism and Air Transport for Development” was adopted.

Dr. Liu noted that ICAO has mapped out the fundamental contributions which safe, secure and affordable air transport operations provide toward the achievement of 15 of the 17 UN SDGs, and that the UN aviation agency has been hard at work for several years now helping governments to build the partnerships and business cases to advance their aviation infrastructure and other development needs.

“We help governments to better understand how their effective compliance with ICAO safety, security and other standards establishes the key foundation permitting increased local operations,” Dr. Liu remarked. She went on to further stress that policies of aviation and tourism must be closely aligned in States.

“It’s important for us to encourage governments to more closely weigh the benefits of tourism and air transport investment on an equal basis with other development options. States can benefit tremendously by coordinating their aviation development planning in their national development plans, and by streamlining their traveller border security and facilitation processes through updated and coordinated ICAO-compliant approaches.”



ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu highlighted the prominent synergies between States' levels of aviation development and their ability to optimize the economic benefits of travel and tourism during her introductory address yesterday to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 22nd General Assembly, held this year in Chengdu, China.

Resources for Editors

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.

[ICAO's No Country Left Behind initiative](#)

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