



ICAO encourages greater international openness and cooperation in aid of more efficient Air Traffic Flow Management

For immediate release

Singapore, 20 November 2017 – ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu told ICAO Member States today that in order for them to safely and efficiently manage forecast growth, and optimize the social and economic benefits of increased international routes and flights, they need to become more open to sharing flight data in support of new Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM) approaches.

“To manage future growth we must become better at what we already do, and in the finite airspace we already control,” Dr. Liu emphasized during her opening remarks to ICAO’s ATFM Global Symposium in Singapore, which was attended by nearly 300 participants from 24 ICAO Member States and international organizations. “For some States this will involve sovereignty concerns, as all partners involved in an ATFM framework must be willing to fully commit to and support a more open and collaborative international flight information environment,” Dr. Liu remarked.

Dr. Liu’s points were echoed in the introduction she received from Mr Kevin Shum, Director-General of the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore, who encouraged the attending governments “to build momentum and work towards introducing a global harmonized ATFM system.” Mr. Shum also remarked that “the success of our industry depends on your spirit of openness and continued participation in the sharing of ideas, knowledge and experience.”

ATFM, which takes advantage of air transport Collaborative Decision Making (CDM) frameworks, optimizes the existing capacities of the air traffic management system through the more precise coordination of take-offs and landings at both departure and destination airports, and through the dynamic routing of flights around constrained airspaces.

“This advance and real-time coordination helps to avoid aircraft reaching their destinations and being placed into costly holding patterns, as well as permitting ATM professionals in general to be much more responsive when dealing with meteorological or other unexpected events,” Dr. Liu commented.

Underscoring further that the speed and efficiency by which modern commercial aircraft can move passengers and cargo globally is the core value offering of international aviation, she stressed that these very qualities are being threatened today by how quickly air transport operations are expanding.

Highlighting to her high-level audience that air traffic flights and passenger volumes globally tend to double every 15 years, Dr. Liu placed emphasis on the fact that “in many mature air transport markets we no longer have the luxury of simply adding new airports and slots to accommodate further traffic growth. Competition for airspace is also accelerating, with new unmanned and commercial space-related services seeking to carve out their own niches for the expanding operations in those areas.”

Dr. Liu also reiterated ICAO’s key points on why it’s important that governments acknowledge how air transport traffic growth impacts modern societies and economies, and that the aviation system today moves more than 10 million passengers daily on over 100,000 flights.

She noted how ICAO serves as a nexus for global cooperation toward optimizing aviation’s growth and socio-economic potential, and that it is of utmost importance that airlines, air navigation service

providers, and airport operators collaborate more intensively and remain collectively diligent in managing airspace capacities and traffic demand.

“Sectoral growth cannot be permitted to negatively impact our key strategic performance targets, and existing levels of aviation safety, efficiency, and environmental protection must continue to improve, even as we expand,” she added.

While visiting Singapore, Dr. Liu also held bilateral discussions on global and regional priorities with Mr. Khaw Boon Wan, the State’s Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Transport, and with Mr Loh Ngai Seng, Singapore’s Permanent Secretary in its Ministry of Transport.



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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 192 Member States.

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