



ICAO Secretary General reiterates commitment to Pacific States following bilateral with Vanuatu Prime Minister

For immediate release

Montréal, 5 April 2018 – Following her bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, Mr. Charlot Salwai, ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu reiterated the UN aviation agency's full support for Vanuatu and other Pacific Island States as they continue to work toward the ambitious safety and air navigation targets agreed to earlier this year [through the Beijing Declaration](#).

At the meeting, which was also attended by Vanuatu's Minister of Transport, Mr Jothan Napat, and ICAO's Asia Pacific Regional Director, Mr. Arun Mishra, the two leaders agreed on the crucial importance of ICAO-compliant air connectivity to the immediate prosperity and long-term economic development of Vanuatu.

Dr. Liu also emphasized the urgency for the State to prioritize the aviation sector in its national investment planning, noting that "by ensuring effective safety and security oversight of local aviation, in unison with much needed aviation infrastructure development, your Island State would see very positive tourism impacts emerging to support even further and very sustainable economic development here."

Mr. Salwai recognized that his country's civil aviation regulatory oversight required strengthening, and that doing so would serve as a critical step towards enhancing the development of air services and tourism in Vanuatu. He therefore committed to prioritize the capacity building needed in this regard and to review the role of civil aviation in the State's additional sustainable development objectives.

International air connectivity is particularly critical to Small Island Developing States, but throughout the Pacific Ocean many are challenged by their geographic isolation and a prevailing lack of financial and human resources. The result is that civil aviation authorities in States like Vanuatu can struggle to attract and retain sufficiently qualified technical experts, which presents an especially significant barrier to the development of ICAO-compliant civil aviation in these countries.

In addition to her bilateral talks, Dr. Liu also visited the Civil Aviation Authority of Vanuatu and the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) to better understand the specifics of these issues. She noted in doing so that ICAO could enhance its assistance, in particular through the agency's "[No Country Left Behind](#)" initiative and via its Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) programme.

To encourage greater momentum on human resource development in Vanuatu, the Secretary General concluded her mission by addressing the students of Malapoa College in Port Vila, Vanuatu. Emphasizing the tremendous scope and variety of rewarding aviation career opportunities now emerging due to the forecast strong growth in international air traffic, Dr. Liu highlighted the critical importance of youth engagement and women's participation to the sustainability of the global aviation network, and to the achievement of the United Nations' *Agenda 2030* Sustainable Development Goals.



The Secretary General of ICAO, Dr. Fang Liu, and the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, Mr. Charlot Salwai. International air connectivity is particularly critical to small island developing states, but throughout the Pacific Ocean many are challenged by their geographic isolation and a prevailing lack of financial and human resources.

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 192 Member States.

[ICAO's Asia Pacific Regional Office](#)

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

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