



ICAO Council President: aviation investments needed in strategic infrastructure, institutional capacity building, and next generation aviation professionals

For immediate release

Montréal and Dubai, 29 January 2019 – In his keynote address to the Global Aviation Investment Summit in Dubai yesterday, the President of the ICAO Council, Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, reminded the many dignitaries and participants in attendance that “aviation is essential to States as they seek to access regional and global markets, and these connections in turn enhance consumer benefits and choices, create jobs, and significantly stimulate tourism and trade.”

Last year, some 4.3 billion passengers and 58 million tonnes of freight were carried by global commercial operators, on 38 million flights. President Aliu underscored that “with this massive volume of operations, and noting air transport’s important access and connectivity benefits, it is not difficult to appreciate why our sector is responsible today for providing meaningful employment and sustainable careers to over 65 million men and women worldwide, while contributing more than 2.7 trillion dollars to global GDP.”

He also highlighted that both air passenger traffic and air freight traffic globally should more than double by 2035, and that “the countries which make the needed investments required now in national and regional infrastructure, capacity, and technologies, will also be the ones which will benefit the most in the coming decades from aviation’s rapidly accelerating global connectivity.”

Dr. Aliu stressed the importance of developing and implementing national and regional aviation infrastructure programmes and plans in full cooperation with the investment stakeholder community, noting as well that State planning must also have strategic infrastructure targets and performance ambitions that are guided by and consistent with ICAO’s Global Plans.

“This facilitates compliance with the ICAO standards and recommended practices which underpin the safe, secure, and sustainable development of the international civil aviation network,” he commented.

In terms of suggested solutions, he stressed that States must determine strategic infrastructure targets by conducting national and regional gap-analyses between forecasted demand and current capacity. Dr. Aliu further noted that business case analyses should also be conducted to accurately delineate all requirements, reduce investor risk, and evaluate projected returns, and that this in turn requires the establishment of institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks, together with monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Finally, he made a very strong recommendation that primary focus should be placed by all concerned on investments earmarked toward educating and training the next generation of aviation professionals.

“Infrastructure development absolutely requires aligned financial investments and enhancements in human capacity development, which are completely co-dependent. There is no point in upgrading technologies and facilities to the latest performance specifications if the personnel are not on hand to professionally operate them or provide appropriate oversight,” Dr. Aliu remarked.

“Additionally, States should take pragmatic measures to build a transparent, stable and predictable investment climate to support aviation development, for example, by engaging multi-stakeholders, diversifying funding sources, and fully considering all options relating to private investment, business reform, private finance initiatives, public-private partnerships (PPPs) and incentive schemes as appropriate.”

His remarks reflected ICAO’s concerns regarding the limited volume of international public finance and assistance currently earmarked or available for aviation infrastructure projects, despite air transport’s cross-cutting nature and multiple links to other economic sectors.

“It is critical that we, as an industry sector, advocate together for major aviation infrastructure projects to be included in the lists of prioritized opportunities relating to international public finance and assistance for development,” Dr. Aliu said. “ICAO is strengthening its dialogue to achieve the common understanding of all players, assess and respond to related business imperatives, and seek increases in all forms of international public finance and assistance for development, including official development assistance (ODA) and South-South cooperation.”

ICAO plays a key role in fostering effective partnerships between donors, investors and States and facilitating the mobilization of resources. Under its *No Country Left Behind* (NCLB) initiative, the UN aviation agency also identifies and provides assistance to those States in need.

“Together, we should emphasize that investments are not the same as costs,” Dr. Aliu remarked in his conclusion. “An investment in aviation is not only a commitment to the safe, secure and efficient management of air transport operations, but also to national and regional economic growth and profitability, and ultimately to the international connectivity that is so critical to fostering peace and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world.”

While in Dubai for the Summit, Dr. Aliu held discussions on local civil aviation development and ICAO cooperation matters with His Excellency Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansoori, UAE Minister of Economy, and with H.E Sheikh Salman Al Sabah, the President and Chairman of Kuwait’s Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

President Aliu also had an opportunity to visit the Sheik Mohamed Ben Rashed Space Centre in Dubai, and later he received a joint presentation on the city’s Autonomous Air Taxi project from the Dubai Road Transport Agency (RTA) and UAE CAA. He was received on this occasion by H.E. Mattar Al Tayer, Director-General and Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of the RTA.

Dr. Aliu was accompanied during his visits and presentations by Captain Aysha Mohammed Al Hamili, Representative of the UAE on the ICAO Council, and by Mr. Mohamed Khalifa Rahma, ICAO’s Middle East Regional Director.



In his keynote address to the Global Aviation Investment Summit in Dubai yesterday, the President of the ICAO Council, Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, reminded the many dignitaries and participants in attendance that "aviation is essential to States as they seek to access regional and global markets, and these connections in turn enhance consumer benefits and choices, create jobs, and significantly stimulate tourism and trade."

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

Contacts

Anthony Philbin

Chief, Communications
aphilbin@icao.int
+1 514-954-8220
+1 438-402-8886 (mobile)
Twitter: [@ICAO](#)

William Raillant-Clark

Communications Officer
wraillantclark@icao.int
+1 514-954-6705
+1 514-409-0705 (mobile)
Twitter: [@wraillantclark](#)
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/raillantclark/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/raillantclark/)