



ICAO Secretary General highlights future capacity challenges for European and North Atlantic air transport

For immediate release

Montréal and Paris, 22 March 2019 – ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu discussed a range of pressing air transport priorities earlier this week with the assembled Directors General of Civil Aviation for the 56 ICAO European and North Atlantic (EUR/NAT) Member States.

Convening for the 2019 EUR/NAT DGCA Meeting in ICAO's Paris Regional Office, Dr. Liu welcomed the newly appointed ICAO EUR/NAT Regional Director, Ms. Silvia Gehrler, to her new duties, and provided some important opening perspectives on both global and European air traffic trends. Noting that current global forecasts indicate a doubling of both air passenger and freight traffic volumes by 2035, Dr. Liu strongly underscored that “steadily increasing flight totals will generate significant risks, and air transport growth must be effectively managed to mitigate those risks.”

“This reminds us of the important role of having national development plans and strategies which meaningfully incorporate aviation development priorities, whether for physical infrastructure, system modernization, or human resources development,” Dr. Liu commented. “And it is especially important that these national priorities be aligned with the targets and timelines presented in our ICAO Global Plans for Aviation Safety (GASP), Security (GASeP), and Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency (GANP).” Dr. Liu also underlined that “we should be continuously seeking here to ensure the successful implementation of the ICAO Work Programme, in close coordination with all pertinent regional organizations, and to optimize related synergies and resource allocation.

The ICAO Secretary General went on to highlight that “current gaps between network capacity and demand here in Europe are estimated to be impacting the EUR/NAT States. The majority of this impact is being felt in the general economy which relies so strongly on aviation connectivity, and not by the aviation sector directly.”

Dr. Fang Liu emphasized the importance of the upcoming 40th Assembly, especially in view of the ever changing nature of civil aviation that necessitates ICAO be prepared for changes that will occur, be cognizant of emerging issues and have contingencies in place. Among those emerging issues in global civil aviation, the Secretary General highlighted the increased use of Unmanned Aeronautical Systems (UAS), Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA), Cybersecurity and Trust Framework, Aviation Infrastructure/system financing, Big data analytics for aviation and commercial space transport and higher airspace operations.

To achieve significant, targeted improvements in its work, to benefit global civil aviation and Member States, ICAO will focus on Improved Aviation Safety, Strengthened Regulatory Capacity, Increased Air Navigation Capacity, Reduced Aviation Security Risk, Improved Environmental Performance of Aviation and Strengthened Aviation Professional Skills.

Besides the status report on the EUR/NAT 2017-2019 work programme, Dr. Liu and the attending DGCA's were also updated during their meeting on how to strengthen State safety and security oversight capabilities, as well as a review of some new suggestions aimed at enhancing EUR/NAT Air Traffic Management (ATM) safety.

Dr. Liu concluded by reminding her audience that 2019 is the 75th Anniversary of ICAO and the Chicago Convention which established it, and noted that given the dramatic new developments in

aircraft design and operations now coming to light, ICAO would be using the occasion to look to aviation's exciting future as much as to its storied past.

While attending the EUR/NAT DGCA in Paris, Dr. Liu also met and held discussions with a number of Directors General from the EUR/NAT Region, in addition to high-level representatives from several European regional organizations including Mr. Eamonn Brennan, Director General of Eurocontrol, Mr. Luc Tytgat, Director of Strategy and Safety Management for the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), Ms. Ingrid Cherfils, President of the European Civil Aviation Conference, and Mr. Abdennebi Manar, General Director of the Arab Civil Aviation Organization..



ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu and the new Regional Director for ICAO's European and North Atlantic (EUR/NAT) Regional Office, Ms. Silvia Gehrler, pose with the assembled EUR/NAT Directors General of Civil Aviation and other high-level officials on hand for the 2019 ICAO EUR/NAT DGCA Meeting in Paris, France.

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.

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