



ICAO Council President highlights importance of ICAO's role at Singapore's World Civil Aviation Chief Executive's Forum

For immediate release

Montréal and Singapore, 11 April 2019 – Joining air transport and government leaders for one of aviation's pre-eminent leadership gatherings earlier this week, ICAO Council President Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu stressed the historic benefits achieved for air transport and global prosperity by States' adoption of global civil aviation standards, policies, and strategic Global Plans through ICAO, while focusing his key points on why ICAO's role in realizing globally interoperable aviation systems will be critical to the exciting and innovative future of air transport as well.

His views were presented to the high-level participants assembled for the 2019 Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) World Civil Aviation Chief Executive's Forum, an invitation-only event which this year explored the theme of "Advancing Aviation : Building Our Future Together." The ICAO Council President further explored these views during his discussion today with the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong.

"While 2019 is ICAO's 75th Anniversary year, and normally an occasion to appreciate the very storied and accomplished history of the international civil aviation sector, we are also using this occasion to focus our sector's attention on the issues and developments surrounding the revolutionary innovations now emerging globally in terms of new aircraft and operations," Dr. Aliu said. "This includes the millions of smaller drones now being operated toward a variety of new and unexpected purposes around the world today, as well as many other aircraft types which will fly higher, lower, faster, and even much slower than those we manage today."

The ICAO President clarified that, as aviation's standard setter, it is ICAO's role to anticipate, enable, and guide this evolution.

"We must help to foster innovation in all its forms, but at the same time safeguard the basic interoperability that has made air transport such an incredible force for peace, prosperity, and economic growth in the world," he underscored. "And collectively, as aviation leaders, we also have a very critical responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of skilled personnel to manage this increasingly complex technological foundation for 21st century aviation."

Recognizing that exponential growth and rapid digitalization are changing the face of aviation today, Dr. Aliu noted that with respect to the doubling in flight volumes being forecast, the only viable solution will be "a transformative evolution in how we exchange information and manage our airspace in the 21st century Air Traffic Management system."

He delineated how the digitization to support this transformation "touches on many other activities" in air transport, stressing that a key challenge this evolution poses for ICAO is how to find "convergent and global aviation solutions which can practically apply to divergent local challenges and developments."

Increasingly digital systems also carry with them higher cybersecurity risks, and the ICAO President accordingly highlighted that "to assure a strong cyber posture for air transport, our goal isn't to prescribe what firewall someone should use, but rather to establish a comprehensive sectoral architecture which will provide a secure core foundation for sustainable air transport digital interoperability. And key to this objective is the establishment of trusted identities between the

senders and receivers of digital information.”

He noted that ICAO was already researching methods to certify these trusted identities, and that the related solutions would be consistent with ICAO’s historic role in global civil aviation, while also delivering new efficiencies and cost-savings for everyone engaged in digital communications in air transport.

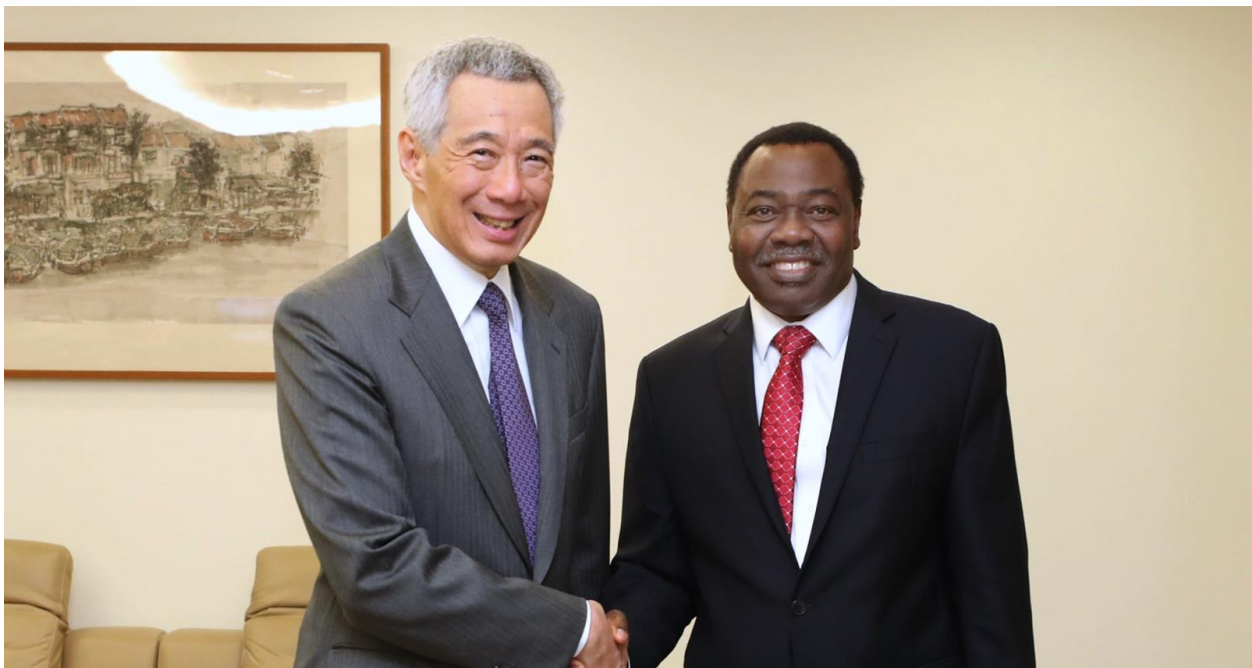
The ICAO Council President added that “what these new technologies and innovations help us to appreciate is that our sector is changing, quite profoundly, and that the onus is upon all of us, as aviation leaders, to ensure this change is properly managed.”

“If we don’t meaningfully engage the many new entrants to aviation, and address the associated risks, it could lead to a degradation in the level of safety which is the hallmark of air transport,” he warned, “and it could also make ours the first generation to not pass along to the next the single, interoperable sky which we have worked so hard to achieve together, and which provides so many global benefits today in terms of connectivity, peace and prosperity.”

Dr. Aliu concluded by drawing the assembled leaders’ attention to ICAO’s World Aviation Forum and Exhibition this coming September, which are focused on the topic of innovation, and highlighted that it would be exploring topics there of interest to both operators and regulators.

He emphasized as well that innovation should not be a priority only for the developed world, and that developing countries stand to benefit significantly as innovations help them to leapfrog many legacy systems and approaches.

“The countless new applications for drones in remote and developing civil societies have been a clear testament to this dynamic,” he said, “and to the fact that none of us can afford to rely on old experiences and practices while the world and our sector are changing so quickly all around us.”



ICAO Council President Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu with the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong. The two leaders found an opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues surrounding Asia and Pacific Region air transport growth, and why investments in education, training, and physical infrastructure will be critical as local States seek to maintain and bolster the very positive foreign trade and other socio-economic and impacts which they presently enjoy due to their aviation

connectivity. President Aliu also remarked on the important role of innovative new technologies in addressing capacity and efficiency concerns, a main point in keynote address to the CAAS Chief Executive's Forum he was in Singapore to attend (Photo courtesy the Singapore Ministry of Communications and Information).

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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