



Emissions offsetting and innovation priorities set stage for 40th ICAO Assembly

For immediate release

Montréal, 24 September 2019 – Over 2,600 Ministers and high-ranking government officials gathered at the Montréal Headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) today, for the launch of the UN aviation agency's 40th Assembly.

The triennial event was officially opened by ICAO's Council President, Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, who was joined on the occasion by the Premier of Québec Mr. Francois Legault, the Mayor of the City of Montréal Madame Valerie Plante, and the Deputy Minister of Transport for Canada, Mr. Michael Keenan.

In his opening remarks to the assembled world air transport leaders, including States, NGOs, and regional and industry air transport associations, President Aliu stressed the need for resilient support of the CORSIA emissions offsetting framework which States adopted at the 2016 ICAO Assembly, highlighting that it could assure a more transparent and harmonized global approach and with guaranteed results for the planet's climate.

"It is important for us to remember that CORSIA was adopted at the last Assembly after very difficult negotiations and to avoid a cumbersome patchwork of national measures for operators such as taxes which can impede global connectivity. It would therefore be counterproductive to aviation and climate change progress if we fail at this Assembly to assure CORSIA's continuing launch as a truly global offsetting scheme for international flight emissions," he underscored.

ICAO Secretary General, Dr. Fang Liu, reminded the Assembly that it would be endorsing a new three-year work programme for ICAO, and establishing the new global consensus on the priorities civil aviation will pursue through the UN aviation agency.

"It will be our shared objective here over the coming days to ensure that ICAO continues to serve as the global forum for multilateral progress on international civil aviation, and that it be provided with a results-based budget to succeed at that mission," she remarked. "We are proud to share with you that this year's Assembly has seen a record number participants registered, as well as a record number of working and information papers processed."

As 2019 marks the 75th Anniversary of ICAO, with the commemoration focusing on the future of flight. ICAO set the stage for the 40th Assembly with a special edition of its World Aviation Forum focused on innovation, and with an associated Innovation Fair where more than 50 companies representing new urban mobility and other aviation innovation entrants displayed wide ranging new ideas for new aircraft types and operations.

Referring to the exciting new ideas and capabilities appreciated in these pre-events by the Assembly's participants, Council President Aliu stressed in his Assembly opening remarks how "this prioritization on new R&D recognizes the rapidly expanding capacity of the incredible new aircraft now being conceptualized, designed, and produced to fulfill new services and roles for civil societies."

He also noted how the World Aviation Forum participants explored not only these potentials in depth, but also "how innovation must be a guiding priority for civil aviation regulators as well, notably as

they engage with these new entrants to assist and not impede the incredible evolution in flight now taking place. I was particularly encouraged at the Innovation Fair to witness how today's aviation innovators are placing a very high priority on realizing emissions-free green aviation solutions."

Recalling that air transport traffic growth continues to be healthy in all world regions, President Aliu drew attention to how "collectively, as aviation leaders, we have a very critical responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of skilled personnel to manage the increasingly complex technological foundation for 21st century aviation."

He also recognized how ICAO's improved focus on assistance and capacity-building under *No Country Left Behind* has paid important safety and security dividends for ICAO Member States since it was established five years ago, stressing how air transport in Africa had zero fatalities in 2016 and 2017, and that the continent saw its average yearly accident rate decrease by 40 per cent from the previous three-year period.

Delegates to the 2019 event elected Mr. Nari Williams-Singh, the Director General of Civil Aviation of Jamaica, as President of the 40th Session of the Assembly.

Mr. Williams-Singh will be helping to manage the event's efficient decision-making on topics with global ramifications, including new revisions to ICAO's Global Plans for Aviation Safety, Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency, and Security, endorsements on new ICAO environmental trends and forecasts, agreement that ICAO should continue to promote the important socio-economic benefits of air transport and related objectives for new infrastructure development, and even the introduction of VR technologies for new aviation training methods.

The Assembly will also provide ICAO's Member States with the opportunity to elect the Organization's new 36-State Governing Council for the 2019-2022 period.

President Aliu ended off his remarks by noting that "This Assembly will be one for bold decisions, and a time to refine our vision for how air transport can be of even greater service to States and regions, businesses and travellers, in the exciting years ahead. I would encourage you to progress this work mindful of the global expectations now and always upon us, and in the spirit of the preamble to the Chicago Convention."

"This is in order that international civil aviation can continue to help create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world, and to promote global security, peace, and prosperity," he concluded.



The 40th ICAO Assembly was opened on 24 September 2019 by the President of the ICAO Council, Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu; the Secretary General of ICAO, Dr. Fang Liu; the Premier of Quebec, Mr. François Legault; the Deputy Minister of Transport for Canada, Mr. Michael Keenan (far left), and the Mayor of Montréal, Ms. Valérie Plante (far right.)

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 193 Member States.

[ICAO's 40th Assembly](#)

[ICAO75 eHANG Drone Light Show video tribute, presented at 40th Assembly opening ceremonies](#)

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