



## Liberalization of air transport and ICAO compliance key to sustainable development in Africa

For immediate release

**Montréal and Dakar, 19 November 2019** – The crucial importance of the liberalization of air transport in Africa to the achievement of the UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals was stressed by ICAO's most senior officials last week on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the [Yamoussoukro Decision](#)—a convention that supports this objective.

The remarks by the President of the ICAO Council, Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, and the UN agency's Secretary General, Dr. Fang Liu, were delivered at a special combined event in Dakar that also celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC). It was hosted by the Minister of Tourism and Air Transport of Senegal, Mr. Aliou Sarr; and attended by the Minister of Transport of Burundi, Mr. Jean Bosco Ntunzwenimana; the Minister of Transport and Aviation of Sierra Leone, Mr. Kabineh Moinama Kallon; the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport of Togo, Ms. Zouréatou Tchakondo-Kassa-Traoré; and Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, the African Union's (AU) Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy.

Highlighting the importance of aviation development to broader sustainable development in Africa, the President of the ICAO Council pointed to compelling statistics: "Passenger traffic for the African region is expected to grow by 4.3 per cent annually up to 2045, while freight traffic should also expand faster than the world average, at 3.9 per cent annually over the same period", Dr. Aliu declared.

"These increases should see aviation-related employment growth in Africa increasing to roughly 9.8 million jobs by 2036, and its air transport GDP impacts almost tripling to 159 billion USD over the same period. But we must also recognize and act upon the fact that the current status of connectivity on this continent is still sub-optimal, and thus hindering the realization of the aviation benefits now awaiting African societies."

He also encouraged the attending States to pursue the efforts initiated through the 2017 establishment of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), a flagship initiative under the AU's Agenda 2063 which provides for operational freedom and investments in aviation.

"As we've begun to observe together the early contributions and potential of the liberalization priorities inherent in the SAATM's framework, we must not lose sight of the fact that its benefits can only be fully optimized by States when they can assure their continuous compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs)," Dr. Aliu said.

Overall, the President called for increased air connectivity and competitiveness of air transport in Africa through the full implementation of the *Yamoussoukro Decision* and the SAATM; the promotion of socio-economic benefits of tourism and aviation; the fostering of public engagement as a crucial partner through public awareness campaigns and education programmes; the adoption of aviation infrastructure development and related priorities into National Development Plans; the strengthening of AFCAC; increased human resources and skilled aviation professionals and the ratification of the Montreal Convention of 1999, the Cape Town Convention and its Protocol and other instruments governing international air transport.

In her remarks, Secretary General Dr. Liu also conveyed her appreciation for the significant progress

made by Africa in terms of the recognition of international air connectivity as a catalyst of economic, social and cultural development and the resulting liberalization that has been achieved to date. In turn, she recognized the particularly crucial support of Senegal towards this momentum, in particular through its generous hosting of the ICAO Regional Office for Western and Central Africa, the AFCAC Headquarters and other regional aviation entities.

“A key consideration for the African Ministers who adopted the *Yamoussoukro Decision* was that the strict regulatory protections sustaining national carriers at that time were having significantly detrimental effects in terms of aviation safety, affordability, and, not surprisingly in light of these factors, poor air traffic growth in Africa,” Dr. Liu declared, noting that Decision crucially calls for the implementation of ICAO safety standards and recommended practices (SARPs).

Here, the Secretary General stressed the importance of a new gap analysis covering airports, air navigation services, and aircraft fleet capacity and equipment that has been achieved through the ICAO Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan). “Gap analysis outcomes will now provide helpful metrics relevant to the preparation of regional and national aviation Master Plans, while ensuring as well that the ongoing development of aviation infrastructure in Africa fully complies with applicable ICAO SARPs,” Dr. Liu said.

The President of the Council’s remarks underscored ICAO’s contributions and commitments in this regard: “ICAO’s firm commitment to its strategic objectives, as well as its *No Country Left Behind* (NCLB) initiative, is very much applicable to these goals, and African States accredited to our three Regional Offices continue to be high on our agenda with respect to the assistance and support States require to address the pressing need for the establishment of robust civil aviation systems.”

Beyond this, both leaders highlighted the array of relevant results from ICAO’s recently concluded 40th Assembly, at which all 193 member States were able to contribute to the strategic planning for the global civil aviation network as a whole.

Assembly outcomes related to the implementation and development of the new *Global Aviation Safety Oversight System (GASOS)*, the establishment and strengthening of *Regional Safety Oversight Organizations*, the achievement of the goals and objectives of the *Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL)*, the application of the *ICAO Core Principles on Consumer Protection* and the ratification of the *Montreal Convention of 1999*, and the implementation of the *Ministerial Declaration and Framework for a Plan of Action for Air Transport and Tourism Development in Africa* and the *ICAO Long-term Vision for International Air Transport Liberalization* were stressed as being of particular importance, along with enhancements to States’ alignment with ICAO guidance pertaining to aviation taxes and charges.

---



The President of the ICAO Council, Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, and the UN agency's Secretary General, Dr. Fang Liu, delivered remarks at a special event in Dakar that was organized to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), and that coincided with the 20th Anniversary of the Yamoussoukro Decision. Addressing the event, ICAO's leadership highlighted the crucial importance of the liberalization of air transport in Africa to the achievement of the UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

## 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 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)  
[ICAO's No Country Left Behind initiative](#)

## Contacts

### Anthony Philbin

Chief, Communications

[aphilbin@icao.int](mailto:aphilbin@icao.int)

+1 514-954-8220

+1 438-402-8886 (mobile)

Twitter: [@ICAO](#)

### William Raillant-Clark

Communications Officer

[wraillantclark@icao.int](mailto: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/)