



Coordinated response critical to recovery of Pacific Island aviation and economies – ICAO SG

For immediate release

Montréal, 13 May 2020 – Stressing the heightened vulnerability of island societies to external shocks, ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu explained to a videoconference of Pacific Islands Directors General this Monday that the same cooperation through ICAO which originally connected their States to the world will be integral to their air transport recoveries post COVID-19.

“As we’ve learned after decades of global air connectivity generating significant new sources of tourism and trade revenue among Pacific Island economies, we all need each other to be prosperous and sustainable,” Dr. Liu said.

“For your recoveries to be truly successful, your goal should be to assure not only your State’s local recovery, but also the recoveries of your neighbours and their neighbours.”

The videoconference for the Pacific Islands Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCAs) was organized by ICAO Asia-Pacific Regional Director Mr. Arun Mishra. It specifically targeted Pacific Island States in consideration of air transport’s irreplaceable role in addressing the unique challenges they face, whether with respect to limited natural resources, narrow-based economies, and extended distance from major markets. The videoconference was well attended by the DGs of Pacific States, representatives from International Organizations such as EASA, PASO, ACI, CANSO, IATA, IFATCA along with partner Member States United States and Singapore.

Dr. Liu also cautioned against countries taking go-it-alone approaches to their recoveries, noting that “if a common set of goals is not established among all the stakeholders being negatively impacted by COVID-19, the strength we normally derive from our diversity could quickly devolve into unhelpful duplication and inefficiencies.”

She further underscored that “jump-starting the aviation engines of Pacific Island economies will need to be part of a broader recovery consensus by governments, and therefore subject to highest-level political buy-in.”

On this point, she encouraged the Directors General “to continue their efforts in highlighting to your respective national ministries that a return to full air transport connectivity is critical to successful COVID-19 recoveries,” and reviewed ICAO’s own efforts to ensure a regionally and globally coordinated air connectivity recovery.

“As you will have seen from the recent State Letters and news releases ICAO has issued, we’ve been very active throughout the COVID-19 period on numerous fronts relating to public health, operational safety measures, maintaining critical air cargo supply chains globally, the expediting of humanitarian and repatriation flights, and other urgent priorities,” Dr. Liu said.

“ICAO and other UN organizations are critical to an effective global response during times of global crisis, and we’re doing everything in our capacity today to accelerate the recovery of your air transport sectors.”



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.

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