



ICAO leader statement for International Civil Aviation Day

For immediate release

Montréal, 6 December 2020 – Seven December each year is recognized around the world as *International Civil Aviation Day*.

The anniversary this year will be remembered as a pivotal point in the history of the global civil aviation sector, given that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented loss of jobs and revenue, and of the air connectivity that underpins sustainable development and many humanitarian efforts worldwide.

At this unique moment in the history of international aviation, ICAO's Council President Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano, and its Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu, join [United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres](#) in highlighting the important air transport priorities now facing the world.

The theme for International Civil Aviation Day in 2020 is:

“Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development”

A commitment to innovation has always been at the heart of aviation, and it has been instrumental to the continuous performance improvements countries have realized, through ICAO, for aviation safety, security, efficiency, and the economic and environmental sustainability of international operations.

Innovation will also be at the heart of our recovery strategies and partnerships as we build back better post-pandemic, establishing a renewed global network that is greener and more resilient in the face of future pandemic threats, and more dependable in terms of the significant socio-economic benefits which air connectivity delivers to modern societies.

Today, the ICAO Council, including its Council Aviation Recovery Taskforce, continues to encourage innovative and prudent measures to help countries respond to and ultimately recover from COVID-19. This work is being supported by the ICAO Secretariat, which has been innovating its own special adjustments to global aviation standards to keep vital operations possible, and establishing dedicated pandemic resources and monitoring tools to keep countries effective and coordinated in their air transport responses.

Together these actions are keeping crucial air cargo supply chains functioning when the world needs them most, facilitating the provision of vital humanitarian and repatriation air services to bring families back together, helping to protect passengers and air crew each and every day, and are being heavily relied upon to move vaccines and other perishable and high-value goods.

Looking forward to a post-pandemic world, innovation will be at the very heart of the new era in aviation which is now dawning, and to the advances in autonomous aircraft, renewable power and propulsion sources, sub-orbital flight, artificial intelligence, additive manufacturing, big data, blockchain, and many other exciting developments which are changing the face of flight as we know it.

Success in such efforts has always relied on a worldwide commitment to the standardization, harmonization, and cooperation which countries and industry achieve together at ICAO. These duties and capabilities are more important than ever today, as we confront together the dual challenges of controlling COVID-19, and mitigating the incredibly severe socio-economic effects it has led to by restricting air connectivity for both developed and developing societies.



Resources for Editors

[ICAO's COVID-19 portal](#)

[ICAO and Innovation](#)

[Statements of the United Nations Secretary-General](#)

[ICAO's and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created by governments in 1944 to support their diplomacy on international air transport matters. Since that time, countries have adopted over 12,000 standards and practices through ICAO which help to align their national regulations relevant to aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, enabling a truly global network to be realized. ICAO forums also provide opportunities for advice and advocacy to be shared with government decision-makers by industry groups, civil society NGOs, and other officially-recognized air transport stakeholders.

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