ICAO stresses importance of government and industry partnership to global cyber resilience

For immediate release

Montréal, 14 April 2021 – In delivering her Opening Remarks to the World Economic Forum (WEF) 'Pathways to a Cyber Resilient Aviation Ecosystem' virtual event earlier today, ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu underscored the importance of the close and effective partnerships now established among States and industry, and the urgency of keeping those partnerships "vibrant and productive."

Dr. Liu explored the key cyber resilience priorities for aviation now being addressed by ICAO, noting that as the air transport sector continues to modernize and digitize, cyber risks still threaten the data, systems, and technological infrastructure of airports, airlines, and air navigation service providers, as well as many other service suppliers.

"This digital penetration will only increase with time," she explained, "especially considering the continuous innovation being seen in communications and applications, and the advent of new airspace users such as drones and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems."

The global harmonization fundamental to both civil aviation and cyber security objectives provides ICAO with a unique position through which States can drive important progress. In 2019 countries took advantage of that position by adopting ICAO's Aviation Cybersecurity Strategy, and also a related ICAO Assembly Resolution under which they've agreed to counter aviation cyber threats while working towards rapid national adoption of the Beijing Convention and Protocol of 2010.

Dr. Liu updated participants on the Action Plan ICAO is pursuing to support government progress with the new Aviation Cybersecurity Strategy and related objectives, and noted that the UN agency is expanding its scope and reviewing and refining the accountability, transparency, and efficiency by which it now addresses cyber security topics through its panels and expert groups.

"Given the extent of these initiatives, and the diversity of stakeholders each involves, ICAO has become an important platform today for a diverse range of subject matter experts, and a key forum for informed, comprehensive cyber security dialogue among States and industry," Dr. Liu stressed.

In addition to assuring solid support for countries as they worked to develop and implement effective cyber security regulations and policies, Dr. Liu noted that further improvements must still be pursued with respect to government information sharing, capacity building, and the realization of robust cyber security culture across the sector and its supply chains.

Digital innovations are considered as critical to delivering on these trust and performance objectives, and it was emphasized that cyber security and resilience would therefore only become more important as aviation's evolution continues.

Resources for Editors

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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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