

# Message from Patricia Espinosa

## Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change

The world is at a critical point in human history. It is a world beset with devastating geopolitical conflict, with resulting energy, food, and economic crises and a global pandemic that is still with us.

Aviation has been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a dramatic decrease in demand for commercial flights. Increasing fuel costs this year have presented further difficulties to the aviation industry.

As nations and industries struggle to deal with the immediacy of these problems, the urgency of tackling climate change now has never been clearer.

During the past 10 months, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has released a trilogy of reports, which contain the most up-to-date science on climate change.

Together, these three reports are a dire warning about the consequences of inaction. The reports confirm that human activities are causing climate change and human influence is making extreme climate events more frequent and severe.

The reports found that human activities have warmed the planet at a rate not seen in the past 2,000 years, putting the world on track to global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius within the next two decades.

Climate change is moving exponentially — and we can no longer afford to move incrementally. To put it simply: if the aviation and other industries do not transform and adopt net-zero carbon policies fast enough, they will not have a future.

Current levels of government ambition to tackle climate change, as indicated in the latest available national climate action plans (or NDCs), are clearly insufficient.

That is why at the UN Climate Change Conference last year, the Glasgow Climate Pact requested countries to revisit and strengthen the 2030 targets in their NDCs by the end of 2022.

But government plans are only part of the equation. Every sector must do their part and, as a substantial greenhouse gas emitter, international aviation has a significant role to play in keeping our climate goals within reach.



The ICAO 2022 Environmental Report is a crucial step that will help governments make informed policy decisions based on sound science.

Through market mechanisms, research and development into new fuels and high efficiency operations in the air and on the ground, the international aviation industry can help nations meet their Paris Agreement goals and give aviation a future.

ICAO has laid the foundation for meaningful climate action over years through the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) and the capacity-building programme for sustainable aviation fuels. When ICAO's 41st Assembly meets in Montreal this September, ICAO member states have the opportunity to make bold commitments and take action, including a long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions.

Given the sense of urgency highlighted by the Glasgow Climate Pact and by the IPCC, I urge ICAO to continue showing leadership for keeping 1.5 degrees Celsius alive by collectively contributing not only to net-zero by 2050 but also to urgently reduce the global emissions gap by 2030.

UN Climate Change stands ready to support your work and I am confident that ICAO will help build a more sustainable future for this sector and for this planet.