



**Address by the Secretary General
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the 25th AFI Plan and 11th AFI SECFAL Plan Steering Committee meetings
as part of the 7th African Aviation Week**

(Abuja, Nigeria, 17 May 2022)

1. A very warm welcome to the Steering Committee meetings for the AFI Plan and the AFI SECFAL Plan.
2. Today and tomorrow, you'll be reviewing the latest activities undertaken by these two well-established continental initiatives, as well as the results of the important support and activities being provided by our committed partners.
3. We'll commence our work with the AFI Plan, and its current key priorities toward assisting States across a wide range of aviation safety objectives.
4. These include the safety oversight activities, the resolution of Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs), certification requirements for international airports, and implementation of the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) recommendations.
5. A first safety priority includes the establishment or strengthening of Regional Safety Oversight and Accident and Incident Investigation Organizations (RSOOs/RAIOs), and Africa's safety-related training programmes.
6. The progress being made in each of these areas is encouraging.
7. In this regard we will have the opportunity to review the RSOO study which had been called for by the Ezulwini Ministerial Declaration of March 2017.

8. This process has been importantly guided by the AFI Plan Steering Committee, and the study's recommendations, including the strategy and roadmap, have now been validated with our partners and stakeholders and submitted to African governments for consideration and endorsement at the continental level.
9. A second safety priority we will discuss today will be training prioritization and cooperation. In this regard the AFI Plan Secretariat continues to support the Association of African Aviation Training Organizations (AATO).
10. Considering your recent decision regarding the critical challenges that this body has been facing since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, ICAO participated in the 23rd AATO Council Meeting providing guidance on how to reinforce its sustainability.
11. It is my sincere hope that those suggestions will be duly and seriously considered, given the AATO's mission and key role in driving aviation skills development and capacity building in Africa.
12. Regarding the latest initiatives to improve the AFI Plan training prioritization, we will be hearing a status report today from the consultant who was engaged to conduct a study on Aviation Professionals.
13. These details will touch upon the related strategy, roadmap, and development of an aviation professionals' database, and we will be grateful for your consideration and further guidance as this progress continues.
14. Lastly, with regard to the AFI Plan, I am pleased to inform you that cooperation between ICAO and AFCAC on the monitoring of the Abuja safety targets, and implementation of the current AFI Cooperative Inspectorate Scheme (AFI-CIS) projects, is continuing.
15. AFCAC will present its detailed report to you on this progress, and I wish to express appreciation for its solidarity and support with this initiative.
16. Moving on now to the AFI SECFAL Plan, its activities have progressed, albeit on a more limited basis, through recent oversight and capacity-building activities focused on needful States

17. I wish to underscore that we have made significant progress on aviation security oversight capacity in Africa since the inception of the AFI SECFAL Plan in 2015.
18. Twenty of the 31 AFI Region States audited so far under the USAP-CMA have achieved national average Effective Implementation (EI) scores exceeding the 65% GAsEP target.
19. More work still needs to be done, however, with AFI States trailing in the related global sustainability and compliance indicators by roughly 10%, including with respect to Annex 9 security-related provisions. These are especially critical to current recovery and resilience priorities and deserve States' full attention. In this regard, I would draw your attention to three key aspects:
 20. First, The ICAO Council recently adopted Amendment 29 to Annex 9, and this includes a number of important new Standards and Recommended Practices on public health requirements to assist States in aligning their pandemic management and response measures.
 21. The AFI SECFAL Plan should therefore include activities to assist States' efforts to comply with these provisions.
 22. Second, I would like to recognize that we are also making related progress with the delivery of the multilingual FAL-Annex 9 course, with 41 out of 54 AFI States having so far participated, and to the benefit of over 300 of the targeted 500 experts.
 23. Also, with regard to Annex 9, ICAO is very encouraged to note that, starting this year, AFI States have recognized 20 February of each year as the International Day for commemorating air crash victims and their families, as recommended by the Council.
 24. I urge all African governments to take appropriate steps to implement the relevant Standards in Annex 9 – Facilitation, taking into account related ICAO policies and guidelines.
 25. Third, I would like to highlight that a key concern in this regard remains the implementation of the ICAO TRIP Strategy, and membership to the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD) in particular.
 26. A further TRIP concern surrounds the strengthening of border control measures in line with UN Security Council Resolutions relating to terrorist threats.

27. Although the number of AFI States sharing Advance Passenger Information (API) has gradually improved, from just three in 2015 to 14 as of last year, overall limited API and Passenger Name Record (PNR) progress has been recorded despite the concerted efforts of ICAO and its partners.
28. This area and related concerns are a high priority for ICAO, and this should be the case for the AFI SECFAL Plan and States as well. In this regard, I would like to invite you to take the opportunity to participate in the ICAO Symposium and Exhibition on ICAO Traveller Identification Programme (TRIP) will take place in-person from 13 to 15 September 2022 at ICAO Headquarters in Montréal, Canada.
29. Additional progress on these priorities is expected at ICAO's 41st session of the Assembly to be held this September, including States' endorsement that 2023 should be recognized globally as the *Year of the Facilitation Culture*.
30. In concluding, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to stress how encouraged ICAO is to see such increasing practical engagement, expressions of interest, and offers of support to the AFI Plan and AFI SECFAL Plan from States and strategic partners.
31. This partnership and solidarity is at the heart of the tremendous progress which Africa is making today on building its key aviation safety and security capacities, and we can never forget how fundamental these are to the core value offerings of civil aviation as the world's most rapid, and most dependable means of travel and transport.
32. Our work together continues to deliver planning and results which will pay connectivity and growth dividends in Africa for generations to come, and I look forward to reviewing our latest progress and working with you today to help accelerate those benefits.
33. Thank you for your attention.