



**Remarks by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
on the launch of the global innovation competition
at the 2022 ICAO Innovation Fair**

Distinguished Delegates, Good afternoon,

1. Over the past decades, international civil aviation has overcome important challenges, while consistently reconfirming its capability to withstand major shocks and disruptions.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic, and the collapse of global mobility it caused, have certainly put this reputation to the test. However, aviation has once again proven its worth by showcasing its essential contributions to the coordinated global response, and by accelerating global recovery.
3. We have heard a lot about aviation innovation and resilience at this event, just as we will throughout the Assembly.
4. I would suggest that we must be mindful throughout these discussions and decisions, that a truly resilient future for international civil aviation will demand a workforce with the skills, commitment, and vision necessary to realize it.
5. What we know with certainty about this workforce, is that its best and brightest will be in very high demand from every industry sector in the world.
6. This means that we have to be not only aware of the personnel needs we will have to address, but also be significantly proactive in generating interest and excitement in world youth in order to effectively attract them.

7. ICAO is committed to doing its part to inspire this Next Generation of Aviation Professionals, and as part of these efforts, I am honoured today to introduce a new ICAO youth competition on innovation.
8. I wish to extend an open invitation to all students globally to sign up and participate, with a special call going out to young women and girls in every region.
9. By being as inclusive as possible with this invitation, we expect to enrich and diversify the insights and solutions reflected by the competition entries, and hopefully to draw greater global attention to the benefits and importance of STEM education access and resources.
10. Accordingly, we have established several diverse categories for participants to focus their innovations on, including:
 - Creating a more resilient aviation ecosystem for 2050.
 - New concepts and tools supporting one or more of the five ICAO Strategic Objectives; and
 - support to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 9 on building resilient infrastructure, and promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, while fostering innovation.
11. ICAO will be announcing the winning participants during the next edition of the Innovation Fair, planned for the first quarter of 2024.
12. In the meantime, we will showcase and promote our contestants and their submissions in order to inspire even more youth, and the aviation community as a whole.
13. This initiative is fully aligned with ICAO's current vision and ambitions, and that is why myself and the Council President will be participating in the jury which will review the contest submissions.
14. More information on the contest is available on the 'Innovation in ICAO' area of our ICAO website, and I call on all States and ICAO partners to help promote this exciting and inclusive initiative.
15. Thank you.