



**Opening remarks by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the Twelfth meeting of the
Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan-America (RASG-PA/12)
and the 20th Plenary Meeting of the Planning and Implementation Regional Group
for the CAR/SAM Regions (GREPECAS/20)**

(Salvador, Brazil, 15 Nov 2022)

1. Bienvenidos y bienvenidas everyone.
2. I wish to begin today by expressing our collective thanks and grateful recognition to Brazil and DECEA, for their generous hosting of this week's RASG-PA and GREPECAS meetings.
3. These are the first in-person back-to-back meetings of these important regional groups we've ever conducted, and the first time that RASG-PA and GREPECAS officials will have the opportunity to meet and engage with each other, face-to-face.
4. I suggest we appreciate this inaugural joint session as another good example of the global aviation recovery in action, just as we should applaud how the Americas are now achieving the highest rate of air traffic recovery anywhere in the world.
5. Total air operations in the region have now surpassed even your pre-pandemic, 2019 performance, providing yet another very clear and concrete testament to the effectiveness and value of the excellent international cooperation you have established.
6. It was important for ICAO to arrange this joint session to help highlight the importance of the RASG-PA and GREPECAS establishing more joint planning and activities.
7. This approach acknowledges first and foremost the very thin line between operational safety and air navigation capacity and efficiency, a factor which is further reflected in the new 2023-2025 (fourth)

edition of the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and the 7th Edition of ICAO's Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).

8. Per its adoption at our Assembly last month, the GANP now includes dedicated safety KPIs, namely: Number of aircraft accidents; Number of runway incursions and excursions; and Number of airprox/TCAS alert, loss of separation, near midair collisions, and midair collisions. In addition, cyber resilience of safety critical systems is now a key priority in the GANP.
9. We should also appreciate, how the excellent progress being made in the establishment of State Safety Programmes in the Caribbean and South America Regions, benefits in part from the very effective alignment of the CAR/SAM Regional Air Navigation Plan and the GANP, and build on this success on the basis of your established strengths for horizontal safety cooperation through regional mechanisms such as ACSA, the SRVSOP, and CASSOS.
10. Going forward we should focus on **three key priorities** as we enhance still further the synergies between safety and efficiency.
11. These include **initiatives to strengthen operational safety surveillance authorities**, the increased adoption of **Airport Collaborative Decision Making (A-CDM)** to improve en-route and sectoral planning, and **increased air traffic and airspace optimization**.
12. A key factor in all of these objectives and processes will be innovation, and the fast-tracking of new technologies which support the accelerated digitalization and sustainability of air services.
13. Much more automation must be achieved to support the interoperability of data and systems and provide the backbone we require for true System-wide Information Management (SWIM).
14. With everything now focused on air transport innovation, including not only resilience and digitalization, but also UAS, RPAS, Urban Air Mobility, supersonic and suborbital operations, and our overall decarbonization objectives, the role of smarter standards and model regulations has never been more relevant.
15. Our 41st Assembly was focused around the themes of innovation and resilience, and it's reassuring to see how related priorities and objectives are informing so much of the progress your Regions are now pursuing.

16. In the same regard, ICAO's new Council endorsed Business Plan, supported by the Assembly approved regular budget, includes a transformational objective that is fundamentally about transforming the Secretariat to enable ICAO to deliver an enhanced service to its Member States. The Transformational Objective has the goal to transform ICAO into a modern, digital, adaptive and collaborative organization demonstrating operational excellence. The vision is for ICAO to become a more results driven organization focused on its people with a transparent, accountable, efficient and values driven culture that applies an innovative and agile approach, in collaboration with key partners and other stakeholders, to deliver an enhanced service for Member States. The Transformational Objective will be implemented under 3 pillars: People & Culture; Digital and Operational transformations.
17. The Assembly also clearly underscored the importance of aligned planning and implementation for operational safety and air navigation, and ICAO has been encouraged by the project management approach which the RASG-PA and GREPECAS have established to identify and resolve deficiencies, and achieve new efficiencies.
18. I wish to congratulate the Dominican Republic and Brazil for their effective co-Chairing of GREPECAS at present, and applaud as well the current industry co-Chairs of the RASG-PA for their effective organization and leadership.
19. And I would also appreciate here the tremendous work being done by ICAO's Regional Offices in Mexico City and Lima to support and guide your efforts.
20. My special recognition goes out to our Regional Director Mr. Melvin Cintron, who will be retiring soon, both for his outstanding achievements as the NACC Director these past eight years, and for his many contributions for the current integration and success of these two regional groups.
21. The successes we achieve in making this sector more efficient, resilient, and sustainable will be fundamental to strengthening the trust of global populations and businesses in the value and necessity of international air connectivity, and ICAO is very grateful for your commitment to that outcome.
22. I wish you all a very productive and engaging programme ahead.
23. Thank you.