



**Keynote remarks
by the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar,
to the 160th ECAC DGCA**

(23 May 2023, Paris, France)

1. It is my great pleasure to address you today for this 160th Meeting of ECAC Directors General of Civil Aviation.
2. Since last year, the air transport sector has achieved some major milestones in terms of traffic recovery and reconnecting the world, and underpinning all of this activity has been a tremendous new international consensus on aviation sustainability.
3. With the adoption by 184 States of the Long term Global Aspirational Goal (LTAG) at ICAO's 41st Assembly last October, and the earlier commitment to NetZero2050 by the world's major industry groups, there has been a major mobilization across this sector.
4. But in addition, important near-term CO₂ emissions reduction solutions, such as Sustainable Alternative Fuels (SAF), are engaging some new and very enthusiastic partners for aviation, and most notably from the global finance and energy sectors.
5. I have every confidence that the multilateral momentum being generated will help provide countries with everything they'll need to optimize their SAF production and distribution potential, and preparing to take best advantage of this energy revolution in aviation, is **a first and very important priority** I would raise with your States today.
6. ICAO has already placed numerous tools and resources at countries' disposal to do so, and our Assistance, Capacity-building and Training for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ACT-SAF) programme is specifically designed and delivered to help you get started on your sustainable fuel journey.

7. I would also further emphasize that our third Conference on Aviation Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3) will be taking place in Dubai this November, and encourage all ECAC States to participate very actively there, and help ICAO to drive increased capacity, partnership, and ambition in this area.
8. Innovation, including green innovation, is **a second key priority** I would raise with you today.
9. An entirely new era of air transport is rapidly taking shape right before our eyes at the moment, and with it comes new solutions, as well as new paradigms and new challenges, all of which we need to address together in a coordinated and collaborative manner.
10. In particular, we are seeing rapid progress in the areas of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), in addition to Advanced Air Mobility (AAM).
11. ICAO is actively participating in these areas, and I would invite you and your teams to join us in defining a safe and beneficial integration of these new entrants at the 2023 ICAO DRONE ENABLE Symposium in December this year.
12. In addition, we are now in the preparatory stages of the first Advanced Air Mobility Symposium in September next year, and both events will be taking place at our Headquarters in Montréal.
13. As we survey the post-pandemic air transport situation, we can see that air traffic levels in Europe are fast approaching their pre-pandemic highs, with some States progressing quite rapidly in this respect, and a few States recording growth above 2019 levels.
14. While the World Health Organization (WHO) has now declared an end to the COVID-19 emergency phase, **a third priority** I would raise with you today is for States and the aviation community to remain engaged and results-driven toward strengthening our global health crisis preparedness and management frameworks.
15. As we continue to pursue that objective, however, we should also not forget to celebrate and build upon the significant results already achieved through our collective global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

16. I wish to thank once again the ECAC States which participated in the leadership of that global effort through the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force, and encourage all ECAC States to continue to drive strong collaboration among all related national and regional stakeholders.
17. While this past year has brought good news for international aviation, on several fronts, we are still facing many challenges globally and regionally.
18. These have included a number of cyber attacks, including here in the European region, and this is another important area where we need to join forces to cost-effectively enhance our individual and collective resilience.
19. A last development I must regrettably raise with you is the ongoing aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation.
20. This violation of the UN Charter was roundly condemned by the United Nations and ICAO Assembly, and I would underscore that in a world of increasing unpredictability, it remains the solemn duty of each and every one of us to pursue and showcase the incredible progress that can be achieved when countries respect each other's peace, territorial integrity and sovereignty, and cooperate together to their mutual benefit under international rules based agreements such as the Chicago Convention.
21. We are seeing what cooperation can achieve through the regional coordination being undertaken to provide technical support to Ukraine's civil aviation sector.
22. ICAO is committed to supporting these coordination efforts, which minimize duplication and maximize the benefits for Ukraine. Following such coordination with States and Donors, ICAO is now ready to deliver aviation training to Ukraine.
23. In addition, I have made contacts with UNDP and the World Bank to help identify support to Ukraine for the development of a National Aviation Recovery Plan, in collaboration with partners.
24. We will be here to help Ukraine build back better as soon as conditions permit, and in the meantime to help avoid the loss of competencies for Ukraine's civil aviation professionals.

25. Another excellent example of regional collaboration at work has been the intensified collaboration between ECAC and ICAO's EUR/NAT Regional Office over the last year, and which is supporting progress by States in areas such as Environmental Protection and Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families.
26. Since he took over his functions one year ago, our Regional Director Mr. Nicolas Rallo has been committed to strengthening our collaborations with all partners.
27. He is also here to listen and to better understand your specific challenges and opportunities, and has conducted several official visits to ECAC States which have paved the way for enhanced collaboration.
28. Ladies and gentlemen, in concluding today I'd like to stress how much we're looking forward to your contributions to the upcoming ICAO EUR/NAT DGCA meeting, which will be conducted on 20 June, back to back with a visit to the Paris Air Show, which has kindly been organized by the DGCA of France.
29. This year, the EURNAT DGCA meeting will address key strategic topics, including Sustainability, Resilience, Cooperation in Implementation Support, Gender Equality, and the Ratification of International Air Law Treaties.
30. I also would like to express my gratitude to our Regional Office's Host State France for its strengthened collaboration and significant support for the upcoming renovation works of these premises, which are co-owned by France and ICAO.
31. I commend your States and the ECAC for the leadership and progress being demonstrated in numerous areas, and for your significant contributions to ICAO and its current global priorities.
32. I wish to give you my personal reassurance today that ICAO is committed to transforming itself to more efficiently support improved global performance in all our Strategic Objectives, and wish everyone very productive discussions.
33. Thank you.