



**Keynote Address
by the Council President
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu,
to the Turkey-Asia Civil Aviation Conference**

(Antalya, Turkey 23-24 April 2018)

*Honourable Ministers
Honourable Member of Parliament
Directors General of Civil Aviation,
Secretary General of D8 countries
Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives on the ICAO Council
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of ICAO, please let me express our deep appreciation to the Government of Turkey for its gracious hosting of this important conference aimed at strengthening civil aviation cooperation between Turkey and Asian Countries.

The Ministry of Transport of Turkey has generously provided us with exceptional facilities here in this beautiful city of Antalya, and with a well thought-out programme that includes discussions which are closely related to, and very supportive of, ICAO's ongoing work.

Against the backdrop of a progressively more efficient regional operating environment, and deepening regulatory liberalization, the organization of this event at this juncture demonstrates Turkey's clear leadership and resolve.

This applies both with respect to the sustainable development of regional air transport, as well as to fostering greater social integration and economic prosperity, at home and abroad.

It also signifies your determined intention to address these challenges through improved cooperation – a true hallmark of sustainable global aviation progress.

A main outcome you will be working toward here over the next two days will be the establishment of a new platform and associated networks to facilitate enhanced regional and global cooperation.

ICAO has a natural leadership role to play in bringing together the parties and players to ensure the success of these efforts, and in aligning their respective objectives and planning with those of our 192 Member States.

Working together through this shared and very strong commitment, we have now firmly established international aviation as the safest and most rapid means of global transport, while greatly improving global recognition of its role as a key driver of sustainable socio-economic development all over the world.

Our sector today is deeply integrated and dynamic, and one characterized by rapid technological change.

This integration relies very strongly on more than 12,000 Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) which States and industry have forged through ICAO over the years.

This highlights that in order to fortify their air transport systems, the most important step which governments can undertake is to strengthen their ICAO compliance.

This is a critical message, and one which I repeat today in every State I visit.

It is at the heart of ICAO's many assistance and capacity building efforts being coordinated globally today under our *No Country Left Behind* initiative, and it is an important one to keep in mind as you establish the foundations here for more meaningful and profitable aviation connectivity between your countries.

With respect to sectoral growth, ICAO's preliminary results tell us that 4.1 billion passengers were carried by air in 2017, a more than seven per cent increase over 2016. The number of departures rose to approximately 37 million globally, with passenger traffic increasing by 7.6 per cent, and freight traffic growing by 9.5 per cent.

ICAO's long-term forecasts reflect our sector's historic trend that traffic and passenger volumes being experienced today will double globally by the mid-2030 timeframe.

This poses significant challenges to States and operators alike as we work together to optimize the socio-economic benefits of this increased traffic, while at the same time safely and efficiently managing more and more aircraft in finite airspace.

The economic importance of ensuring sufficient airport and air navigation capacity, in addition to effective safety and security oversight, is clearly underscored by the fact that aviation currently supports more than 62 million jobs worldwide, while contributing over 2.7 trillion dollars, or 3.5 per cent to global GDP.

These significant and very positive economic impacts are further supported by the fact that over half of the world's international tourists travelled by air last year.

Another noteworthy economic trend we've been following at ICAO is that more than 90 per cent of cross-border Business to Consumer (B2C) e-commerce directly relies on air transport today.

This highlights how many expectations being fostered in modern consumers – whether for access to global products and services or for 'next-day' delivery of the goods they purchase – are wholly dependent on the level of international aviation connectivity we work together to augment, at Conferences exactly such as this.

There is no doubt therefore that your work here is important to a variety of critical economic activities, for Turkey and for States that look to your country as a gateway between Europe and Asia. And there is also no doubt that air transport will continue to be essential to economic growth and prosperity for citizens and businesses for many years to come.

In addition to effective ICAO compliance, the steps which States can take to optimize this growth are three-fold:

In the first place, growth naturally places greater demands on local capacity, so governments must facilitate the needed investments to support the expansion and modernization of their States' airport and air navigation infrastructure.

Unfortunately, less than five per cent of Official Development Assistance globally is currently earmarked for air transport projects, and this grossly undervalues the contributions of international air transport activity to local economies and societies.

Secondly, States must work to integrate their aviation development planning into their overall national development priorities, inclusive of all urban planning aspects respective of airport links to city centres, intermodal connections, simplified visa regimes, and other related factors.

Lastly, States should look to the detailed strategic outlooks in ICAO's established Global Plans for Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency, as well as our new Global Aviation Security Plan.

As you consider the types of cooperation to be pursued among your countries, please recall that safety remains air transport's most fundamental priority, and that improved safety collaboration between States can bring many benefits in terms of cost savings and overall system performance.

ICAO is currently considering how to further strengthen safety oversight through a proposed Global Aviation Safety Oversight System (GASOS).

The GASOS is presently envisioned as a voluntary, standardized assessment and recognition mechanism for safety oversight organizations (SOOs), such as State civil aviation authorities, regional safety oversight organizations (RSOOs), and other competent bodies.

It will seek to enhance the effective implementation of States' safety oversight systems through the delegation or use of safety oversight functions by States to recognized SOOs, without diminishing the States' respective obligations and responsibilities for safety oversight under the Chicago Convention.

We presently expect the objectives for the GASOS to be endorsed this October, at ICAO's 13th Air Navigation Conference, mainly as States today need reliable and flexible alternatives to develop effective safety oversight capacities, including safety management.

And may I also add here that cooperation between States and industry operators will be critical to its long-term success.

Another key safety and efficiency priority for ICAO today regards the need for integration of unmanned and autonomous aircraft and operations in low-altitude and urban environments. These require both new aviation standards and fresh approaches to air traffic management (ATM).

This underscores the need for new types of cooperation and consensus to be realized among non-traditional aircraft operators and the national and municipal governments they must work together with.

We are also coming to terms with how all these players will need to be supported by a diverse and integrated range of communications, navigation and surveillance tools which are ground, air, and space-based.

ICAO, for its part, is presently advising national civil aviation administrations to prepare much sooner than later to support these burgeoning operations. Related topics will be explored in much greater detail this coming 13-14 September, when ICAO convenes its second DRONE ENABLE event in Chengdu, China.

Another key concern for us going forward regards the need for robust cybersecurity measures and cyber resilience by design, in order to safeguard these new and more complex systems.

The insurance sector has placed cyber-crime, IT failure, and database breaches at number 3 on their top 10 lists of global business risks for 2017, and an industry as interconnected as air transport, we cannot not lose sight of the fact that a single cyber incident will likely impact multiple companies and stakeholders, to varying degrees and costs.

This is why ICAO's newly-endorsed Global Aviation Security Plan has already begun to set out cybersecurity targets and recommendations.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, as you embark upon your discussions over the next two day, I wish to emphasize that one of my key intentions as ICAO's Council President is to ensure that all ICAO Member States have the tools and skills they need to become more prosperous and peaceful through sustainable and ICAO compliant civil aviation.

In this regard, I wish to add that I have been greatly encouraged to see that your discussions here will touch upon the importance of training and related human resources capacity-building to the sustainability of your broader objectives.

It is pertinent to note that at the same time as our sector is growing and evolving, its workforce is conversely shrinking due to the inevitable demographics of aging populations, lowering birth rates, and other attrition factors.

As an example our preliminary numbers have revealed that 620,000 pilots will be needed by 2036, to fly the world's 100-seat-and-larger aircraft. However no less than 80 percent of these future aviators will be new pilots not yet flying today. The situation is not much different regarding air traffic controllers, aircraft engineers and other professionals.

It is evident that we will need more and better skilled aviation personnel in the years to come, and that we need to work harder at managing their balanced movement between countries and employers.

We will also need more women filling professional and technical roles all across our network, and that both the private and public sectors need to be more proactive in achieving gender parity in aviation.

The factors driving this priority are diverse, ranging from wholesale retirements in the current generation of aviation professionals, to increasing competition with other industry sectors for the skilled employees air transport requires, to the perception among some of today's youth that air transport is no longer as exciting and challenging as it once may have been.

To continue driving momentum on this issue, late last year ICAO held its first Global Summit for Next Generation Aviation Professionals at its Headquarters in Montreal, attracting many hundreds of participants from the industry and academia, governments and training organizations.

This coming December we will be conducting this event again in Beijing, and it is our great hope that a similar cross section of participants will be joining us there from your States.

Ladies and gentlemen, with such an eminent cross-section of State and industry specialists on hand I am sure that this meeting's objectives will ultimately lead to a very practical and consensus-based way forward to achieve your shared goals.

On that note, may I wish you all a very productive and engaging conference.

Thank you.