



**Closing Remarks by the ICAO Secretary General  
to the 59<sup>th</sup> Asia and Pacific DGCA Conference**

18 October 2024, Cebu, Philippines

920 words / ~7.5 minutes

1. It is my privilege to conclude the 59th Conference of Directors General of Civil Aviation for the Asia and Pacific Region. Over the last five days, we addressed the most pressing issues facing our industry.
2. Reflecting the well-chosen theme for this event, our discussions and commitments have indeed focused on shaping the future of aviation to be sustainable, resilient, and inclusive.
3. I was pleased to see over 250 delegates from our Member States and international organizations participate in this vitally important work.
4. Since its inception in Manila in 1960, this marks the fourth time the Philippines has hosted this conference, and this edition has been exceptionally productive.
5. I want to invite you to join me in thanking Captain Manuel Antonio Tamayo, Director-General of Civil Aviation Authority Philippines, for his excellent chairmanship of this conference. Together, we have covered approximately 80 discussion papers and 50 information papers across nine agenda items, demonstrating the breadth and depth of your engagement.
6. We were also privileged to have The Honourable Jaime Bautista, Secretary of Transportation, of the Government of Philippines, set the tone for these constructive discussions.
7. Throughout our sessions, we have acknowledged the incredible diversity of our Asia-Pacific region - in population, aviation scale, national economies, geographic characteristics, and dependence on air transport for economic growth. This diversity is both our strength and our challenge.
8. Sustainability—and sustainable development—was the first priority under this event’s theme, and with good reason.

9. We recognized that innovation and investment in sustainable air transport were key to ensuring that aviation can continue to expand its role as a catalyst for prosperity here in Asia Pacific.
10. Our focus on the crucial role of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) in meeting ICAO's net-zero carbon emissions goal by 2050 was particularly useful. We called for collaboration to ensure SAF affordability and competitiveness. We also invited government support to promote SAF production.
11. During our discussions, we recognized the significance of the formal opening of the ICAO Pacific Liaison Office in Fiji this August. This initiative aims to support Pacific Island nations in addressing the distinct sustainable development and implementation requirements faced by many States in the Pacific region.
12. Turning to resilience, we highlighted critical areas for improvement in safety and security across the APAC region. To address this, we encouraged timely preparation for auditing activities. We also urged the prompt resolution of the significant concerns that have emerged from these audits.
13. We reaffirmed the need for effective implementation of National Aviation Safety Plans (NASPs), developed in alignment with the Global Aviation Safety Plan and the regional Roadmap. We encouraged Member States to develop these plans and align them with national development strategies. Additionally, ICAO committed to providing support and guidance throughout this process.
14. We identified several challenges, including low participation in technical meetings, postponement of audits, and difficulties in funding technical assistance missions. We have expressed optimism that the new Pacific Liaison Office will help address these issues and create a model for the rest of the region.
15. We addressed significant air navigation challenges, noting the slow progress on Beijing Declaration commitments, insufficient resources, and the slow development of National Air Navigation Plans.
16. On inclusivity, which is critical to ensuring progress towards our regional and global objectives, we built upon the momentum of the Second APAC Ministerial Conference held in New Delhi this September. We have reinforced the commitments made in the Delhi Declaration, which sets a new course for our regional aviation cooperation, by addressing critical industry challenges and promoting air transport priorities including gender equality.

17. Other top priorities we addressed at this conference included Global Navigation Satellite System Radio Frequency Interference, turbulence encounters as a global operational safety risk, and the promotion of positive safety culture within our aviation ecosystem. We also received an overview of the Safety Fund (SAFE), with a renewed call for continued donor contributions to support States in need of assistance.
18. Looking to the future, we endorsed the first ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Training Symposium, scheduled for July 2025 in Singapore. This event will provide an international forum for exchanging best practices in human resources development and aviation training.
19. I am delighted that Japan has agreed to host the 60th DGCA Conference, which will take place in Sendai in July 2025. The conference theme will be "The sustainable skies of the Asia-Pacific region," focusing on increasing economic prosperity and social well-being through air transportation. We are grateful for this generosity and look forward to continuing our important work there.
20. The theme of the 60<sup>th</sup> Conference will be a fitting tribute to the 80th anniversary of the Chicago Convention, mainly as it reflects the priorities indicated in ICAO's new long-term Strategic Plan for 2026 through 2050. It is worth reiterating that this ambitious plan focuses on zero fatalities, net-zero carbon emissions, and positioning aviation as catalyst for sustainable development worldwide.
21. Before finishing, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude again to the Government of the Philippines and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines for their exceptional hospitality and the flawless organization of this conference. I also wish to express my thanks to the ICAO Secretariat team for their tireless efforts. Your contributions have made our stay in beautiful Cebu both productive and memorable.
22. I look forward to our continued cooperation and to seeing many of you again in Sendai next year. Until then, I wish you all safe travels and continued success in your endeavours to advance aviation in the Asia-Pacific region.
23. Thank you all.