



**Video opening message by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the 2024 EURNAT DGCA Meeting
23 April 2024, Toulouse, France**

1. This year is a landmark one for the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). We are celebrating the 80th anniversary of ICAO and of the signing of the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation. This year also marks the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of the Air Navigation Commission and the 75th Anniversary of the adoption of Annex 9 - *Facilitation* to the Convention.
2. As these milestone events represent a unique opportunity to highlight the various socio-economic benefits and significant historic accomplishments realized through international civil aviation, I would like to invite you to consider your own high-visibility acknowledgements of ICAO's 80th Anniversary, including through national or regional campaigns, or through other collaborative initiatives, suitable to your local resources and opportunities.
3. We would appreciate your State to notify ICAO of your plans for 80th Anniversary activities as these become confirmed. ICAO will be pleased to highlight your efforts and outcomes.
4. Today, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to share some thoughts with you, although I regret not being able to join you in person.
5. I would like to focus on the theme of transformation.

6. Aviation technologies and operations are transforming at an unprecedented pace, as are many of the related social and commercial considerations. These transformations include advancements in aircraft design, sustainable aviation fuels, air traffic management systems, and the integration of new entrants such as drones and urban air mobility vehicles. Within ICAO, we too must transform to ensure that we are well positioned to continue to lead the safe, secure, and sustainable development of air transport.
7. Reflecting on that, I would like to remind you of the rapidly approaching Fourteenth ICAO Air Navigation Conference, with the theme "Performance Improvement Driving Sustainability."
8. Our goal is to reach a consensus on how to address the rapid evolution in aviation operations and technologies, while tackling global environmental challenges. This consensus will focus on the timely and safe implementation of new technologies, as well as strategies for improving air navigation system performance. By collaborating and finding common ground, we can ensure that the industry advances in a sustainable and efficient manner.
9. The comprehensive agenda will also include discussions on the evolving role of the ICAO Assembly's Technical Commission, strategies for updating and aligning our global plans, and the prioritization of key initiatives for the next ICAO 2026-2028 Business Plan, based on a new long term ICAO Strategic Plan.
10. You are well aware of the decision taken at the ICAO 41st Assembly in 2022 on the Long-Term Global Aspirational Goal on CO₂ emissions from international civil aviation.
11. In this context, I would like to underscore the crucial agreement on scaling up production and use of Sustainable Aviation and Lower Carbon Fuels reached by our Member States at the 3rd ICAO Conference on Aviation Alternative Fuels, or CAAF/3, held in Dubai last year. Many of you were in attendance.
12. This was a tremendously important step in the journey, as these fuels promise huge CO₂ emissions cuts to reach decarbonization by 2050.

13. The 231st Session of the ICAO Council has since approved the CAAF/3 Report. It requested a roadmap for implementing the Framework, consideration of re-alignment and eventual re-prioritization of the related ICAO work, and the re-allocation of resources accordingly.
14. In operationalizing some of the framework's building blocks, I am pleased to note extensive support from Europe for SAF development and deployment.
15. To date, we have more than 150 Assistance, Capacity-building and Training for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ACT-SAF) programme Partner States and Organizations.
16. Through this initiative, we are actively leveraging contributions from Austria, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the European Union to facilitate on-site training, conduct SAF feasibility studies, and produce business implementation reports. As you come together today, our team is diligently coordinating with additional European States to initiate more projects that promise to further enhance our collective capabilities.
17. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank European States for their contributions to ICAO's ACT-CORSIA programme.
18. The State Action Plans initiative has seen remarkable participation from the EUR-NAT area. Of the 147 submitted plans, 49 are from the EUR-NAT area, and most of them are fully quantified. This provides a robust framework for monitoring and enhancing our regional environmental efforts.
19. Furthermore, under CORSIA, all ICAO Member States have engaged in monitoring, reporting, and verifying CO2 emissions from international flights.
20. The number of States that have volunteered to participate in CORSIA increases yearly, with 126 States doing so in 2024.
21. Among those, 46 States are from the EUR-NAT Area, again showing a strong commitment within this area.

22. I would also like to highlight that CORSIA entered its first phase in January of this year. ICAO will continue to work with all States to ensure that they have all the necessary means for successful implementation.
23. As we move forward with our climate change priorities now, I would like to invite you to the upcoming ICAO Symposium on Non-CO2 Aviation Emissions, which will be held in Montreal from 16 to 18 September, and to the Annual ICAO LTAG Stocktaking a month later, from 7 to 10 October. We are also exploring the possibility of organizing Regional Seminars to further engage with our stakeholders on these critical issues.
24. Having discussed our critical work in addressing climate change, I would now like to turn our attention to another crucial aspect of ICAO's mission – our role in setting global standards. ICAO recognizes that the true measure of our global influence lies in the widespread and effective implementation of our standards, strategies, and guidance materials by regulators worldwide.
25. We know that a technically sound standard, that cannot be effectively implemented by all States, presents significant challenges to a harmonized and interoperable air transportation system.
26. These are some of the reasons why ICAO is working to enhance the delivery of implementation support services and products, and better plan and integrate the related requirements into every stage of a new or amended standard's development.
27. Enhancing the delivery of implementation support will increase our agility and allow us to be much more responsive in integrating new entrants and cutting-edge innovations.
28. Delivering international standards more effectively and efficiently will allow our Member States to benefit more quickly from innovations in operations and technologies that promise to transform our sector.
29. By 2027, our goal is for ICAO to have transformed into a modern, digital, adaptive and collaborative organization demonstrating operational excellence. We envision an organization that is results driven, focussed on its people with a transparent, accountable, efficient and values drive culture that applies an innovative approach in collaboration with key partners and other stakeholders, to deliver an enhanced service for Member States to meet the evolving needs of global aviation.

30. ICAO's transformation will deliver the following benefits for Member States:
- a) Streamlined ICAO policy and standards:** Aligning policy-making, auditing, monitoring, and support for implementation.
 - b) Enhanced safety and security oversight:** Implementing effective global programs to monitor oversight systems.
 - c) Harmonized international aviation framework:** Gradually developing consistent policies, plans, standards, and legal structures.
 - d) Improved Member State collaboration:** Leading and facilitating communication, coordination, cooperation, and agreements among States.
 - e) Accelerated support for States:** Offering enhanced and prioritized implementation assistance.
 - f) Increased program transparency:** Providing clearer insight into current and future ICAO initiatives and offerings.
 - g) Engaged participation in ICAO processes:** Streamlining involvement to be more inclusive and participatory.
 - h) Empowered ICAO Secretariat:** Cultivating a motivated team dedicated to our service-oriented mission.
 - i) Responsive prioritization:** Adapting quickly to meet the needs and expectations of the sector.
 - j) Exemplary governance:** Ensuring contributions are used efficiently and effectively for the aviation industry's advancement.
31. The first year of the Transformational Objective was focused on foundational activity.
32. I wish to acknowledge the valuable guidance and support received from our Member States, especially those that have contributed voluntary contributions of funds and secondees. Among

EURNAT States, I would like to highlight contributions from Austria, the United Kingdom, and the NORDICAO Delegation to ICAO.

33. For me, the highlights of this first year have been the development, approval and launch of our ambitious People Strategy, and the progress in Digital Transformation, particularly through the decision to partner with UNDP on a new Enterprise Resource Planning system, or ERP.
34. I would like to highlight that ICAO's upcoming long-term strategic plan is being crafted with the current needs and future expectations of our diverse stakeholders in mind. It will also carefully consider an analysis of the potential opportunities and challenges that the aviation system may encounter in the future.
35. The plan will build on the excellent progress achieved under our Transformational Objective, which is being realized through the implementation of results-based management, making ICAO truly Fit for Future.
36. It will serve as a guiding document that outlines the organization's mission, vision, values, goals and strategies to achieve them. The timing for this new long-term Strategic Plan is right. This is especially true as we celebrate the 80th anniversary of ICAO at the end of this year, with the theme "safe skies, sustainable future".
37. As I conclude, I wish to once again express my gratitude to our EURNAT Member States for your unwavering commitment to our Organization and to the sustainable development, growth, and transformation of civil aviation.
38. I wish you a successful and productive meeting.
39. Thank you.