



DGCA-MID/7 meeting

(Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 20 May 2024)

Closing Remarks by the ICAO Secretary General

Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar

1. I am very pleased by the emergence of consensus on our shared key priorities at this DGCA meeting.
2. This is a result of your collaborative spirit and the conducive environment provided by our very hospitable and generous host.
3. Please allow me to express my gratitude to H.E. Abdulaziz bin Abdullah Al-Duailej, President of the General Authority of Civil Aviation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and to all of the members of his staff for the courtesies extended to the group gathered here for this meeting. I am certain I can speak on behalf of each and every one of us when I say that we all sincerely appreciate the warm welcome and support we have received throughout this event.
4. As we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Chicago Convention, our agenda covered a wide variety of priorities across ICAO's strategic objectives and priority focus areas.
5. During this meeting, we provided you with a progress report on our work to improve the ways we help you achieve your goals, including briefings on ICAO activities and plans related to Results Based Management and Innovation.
6. We noted the importance and benefits of ratifying international air law treaties. I encourage those States that have not already done so to become parties to the international air law treaties they have not yet ratified.
7. The sustainable development of our sector was a major focus of this meeting, reflecting the importance of air transport to global prosperity and societal well-being, as highlighted in the preamble to the Chicago Convention. It also reflected the climate emergency we face.

8. Discussions covered the long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, or LTAG, and the initiatives being led by ICAO to achieve it. In particular, we covered the development of sustainable aviation fuels and the implementation of the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA)
9. We welcomed the meeting's reaffirmation of the role of Sustainable Aviation Fuels, Lower Carbon Aviation Fuels, and other cleaner energy sources as the major contributors to achieving the LTAG, and its emphasis on the fact that net zero carbon in aviation requires close cooperation between States, industry and civil society.
10. I would like to join the President of the Council in congratulating this Region for the initiative to develop the MID Region Air Transport Strategic Plan 2025 -2040, which was endorsed by this meeting.
11. Aviation safety and air navigation, were also a major focus of your discussions. With respect to Aviation Safety, the meeting was apprised of the progress made in achieving the targets of GASP 2023-2025, as well as the progress made related to the development of GASP 2026-2028. In the area of air navigation, it was highlighted that there are operational improvements that can benefit the environment in the near term but the level of their implementation has not yet reached the expected level. We need to work all together in a collaborative manner to implement these operational improvements and prepare ourselves for the future developments. In this respect, you have been apprised of the main changes which will be reflected in the 8th Edition of the GANP, which will be discussed at the 14th Air Navigation Conference this summer in order to be presented to A42 for endorsement.
12. We noted the main outcomes of the MIDANPIRG/21 & RASG-MID/11 meetings including a report on the progress achieved towards safety and air navigation priorities and targets in this Region.
13. I am glad to note that safety is improving in the MID Region and that the average level of USOAP EI in the region stood at 76.4%, which is above the global average and also meeting the GASP Target for 2024.
14. I would like also to take this opportunity to reiterate my congratulations to Oman for the excellent results achieved through the latest USOAP CMA activities and the remarkable increase in their EI.
15. You also addressed the subject of sustainability of the MID Region Flight Procedure Programme (MID FPP). I salute your decision to explore possible options for the continuation of the programme with a different business model, focusing only capacity-building activities, despite the financial challenges faced by the programme.

16. It is reassuring that ICAO efforts to assure the progression of regional activities and achievements have been fruitful. The ICAO MID Regional Office has been supporting the rapid and coordinated response of the air navigation system to crises, contingencies, and other situations requiring urgent assistance to States.
17. I commend the spirit of cooperation and respect for safety prioritization exemplified by the rapid addressing of several ATM operational challenges through the MID Contingency Coordination Teams (CCTs), and the support provided to States for the development and update of their ATM Contingency Plans.
18. Regarding aviation security and facilitation, we covered the latest developments, including the new 2nd Edition of the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP), including an update on the outcomes and activities of the Regional Group for Security and Facilitation (MID-RASFG) and the status of the MID SECFAL targets, and the 50th Anniversary of Annex 17.
19. As at 31 December 2023, the average level of USAP EI of the CEs in the MID region stood at 76%. The audit results showed also that 50% of audited MID States have achieved the target of 80% EI, and that 29% of audited MID States achieved the target of over 90% EI.
20. I am confident with the spirit of cooperation in the Region, in particular with the support of the MID Regional Office and the Civil Aviation Security Programme (CASP)-MID, you will achieve further progress. This will be showcased during the global ICAO Security Week 2024 which will be held from 9 to 12 December 2024, with high-level Ministerial segment on 11 December, and hosted by the Civil Aviation Authority of Oman in Muscat
21. The highlight for facilitation is the 75th Anniversary of Annex 9 and the consequential ICAO Council designation of 2024 as the Year of Facilitation.
22. ICAO, States and industry are encouraged and requested to organize events or activities to mark the year, promote the importance of facilitation amongst their stakeholders and build facilitation capacities. In this regard, I would like to welcome the FAL2024 Global Summit that is taking place here in Riyadh during the coming 2 days.
23. In addition to these developments relating to ICAO's core Strategic Objectives, this meeting provided a significant opportunity to highlight the importance of the holistic, needs-based, and results-oriented approach for implementation support that is now being undertaken.

24. We are continuously striving to diversify our portfolio of products and services, especially to assure full alignment with current and emerging implementation needs of MID Region Member States. I look forward to further expanding the Organization's implementation support activities to ensure effective, innovative and cost-efficient solutions.
25. I also wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the various voluntary contributions provided by States and Organizations for the benefit of the Region. ICAO's resource mobilization activities will continue its outreach efforts to ensure the Organization's key activities are adequately funded for the benefit of MID Member States, including the ICAO transformational objective and implementation support activities.
26. Strengthening international cooperation, knowledge sharing, and partnerships, is the foundation of this work, as it is with all of ICAO's work. None of this would have been possible without the participation and active engagement in the discussion of the States and International Organizations attending this meeting.
27. Once again, I express our sincere thanks to our generous hosts for their warm hospitality and care. I also like to thank my colleagues at the ICAO MID Regional Office, who have also played a key role in assuring the smooth organization and productive outcomes of this high-level meeting.
28. As we move forward, let us continue to work together in the spirit of collaboration and partnership to achieve our shared goals for safe, secure, and sustainable global air transport. Thank you.