



**Presentation by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the Asia Pacific Summit for Aviation Safety (AP-SAS) 2024**

(Beijing, China, 13 August 2024)

1. Distinguished Minister Li Xiaopeng, Dr. Hassan Shahidi, Mr. Han Kok Juan, esteemed air transport leaders, and fellow architects of global aviation's future.
2. Thank you for your warm welcome and insightful opening remarks. They set a fitting tone for the critical discussions that lie ahead.
3. As we convene here at the Asia Pacific Summit for Aviation Safety, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment in the evolution of air transport. The landscape before us is one of unprecedented complexity, marked by rapid technological advancement, shifting geopolitical dynamics, and the imperative of sustainable development.
4. In this era of transformation, ICAO's role as the global forum for international civil aviation has never been more critical. As the Secretary General of ICAO, I stand before you as a partner in our collective mission to shape a safer, more efficient, and more sustainable future for global air transport.
5. The theme of this summit – "A Human-Focused Approach to Aviation Safety" – speaks to a fundamental truth that underpins all our efforts. As we push the boundaries of technology and strive for ever-higher levels of performance, we must never lose sight of the human element at the core of our industry.

6. This human-centric approach is not merely a philosophical stance. It is a strategic imperative that will define our ability to navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. From the integration of unmanned aircraft systems to the pursuit of net-zero carbon emissions, from enhancing cybersecurity to optimizing airspace management – every advancement we make must be rooted in a deep understanding of human factors and performance.
7. As the United Nations specialized agency for aviation, ICAO serves as the global nexus where governments, industry leaders, and international organizations converge to shape the regulatory framework of international air transport.
8. While our focus is on planning and standard setting, our mandate extends much further.
9. We are the architects of a harmonized global aviation ecosystem. Through our work, we help ensure that a flight departing from Singapore and landing in São Paulo adheres to the same rigorous safety, security, and operational standards throughout its journey.
10. This harmonization is the foundation for the modern miracle of global air connectivity. It facilitates the seamless movement of people and goods across borders, driving economic growth and cultural exchange on an unprecedented scale.
11. This framework actively being developed by ICAO addresses the realities of today’s aviation landscape while proactively adapting to the evolving needs of tomorrow.
12. Our current focus includes the safe integration of new technologies like Advanced Air Mobility, and expanding core aviation operations to serve the developing economies effectively.
13. As we embrace these changes, our commitment to safety, security, and sustainability remains uncompromising. And throughout this evolution, we keep the human element at the core of our efforts. Our vision is clear: an innovative, inclusive, and sustainable global aviation ecosystem that continues to connect people and drive progress worldwide.
14. Since our founding in 1944, ICAO has been at the forefront of aviation development. We've seen the industry evolve from propeller-driven aircraft to supersonic jets, from paper flight plans to digital air

traffic management systems. Throughout these changes, our core mission has remained constant: to serve as the global forum of states for international civil aviation.

15. Our work encompasses a wide range of activities. The international Standards and Recommended Practices that I mentioned earlier, known as SARPs, are used by our 193 Member States to ensure that their local civil aviation operations and regulations conform to global norms. These standards cover everything from safety and security to environmental protection and economic sustainability.
16. We also conduct audits to monitor states' aviation safety and security oversight capabilities. When gaps are identified, we work with States to develop targeted implementation support programs and projects. This is part of our commitment to ensure that no country is left behind in the development of safe, secure and efficient air transport systems.
17. As we stand here today, aviation faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities. We're witnessing the rise of new technologies like unmanned aircraft systems and the pressing need to address climate change. We're seeing a post-pandemic resurgence in air travel, coupled with evolving security threats. And through it all, we're striving to ensure that the benefits of aviation are shared equitably across the globe.
18. These challenges might seem daunting but I'm here to tell you that I'm optimistic about our future. Why? Because at ICAO, we have a clear vision and a robust plan to turn that vision into reality.
19. Let me share with you three key points that I want you to take away from our discussion today:
 - a) Human performance is at the core of aviation safety. As we embrace new technologies and tackle global challenges, we must never lose sight of the human element.
 - b) ICAO's new long-term strategic plan provides a roadmap for the future of aviation, with safety and sustainability at its heart.
 - c) Collaboration is crucial. The future of aviation depends on governments, industry, and international organizations working together towards common goals.
20. Let's dive deeper into each of these points. First, the human element in aviation safety.

21. As our aviation system has grown more complex, we've come to realize that safety isn't just about individual performance. It's about how humans interact with each other and with technology within a complex system. That's why ICAO published its Manual on Human Performance for Regulators in 2021, emphasizing a systemic approach to human factors.
22. This approach recognizes that the outcome of the aviation system's performance is not simply the sum of individual human performances. Instead, it's the result of countless interactions between humans and various elements of the system. These relationships are dynamic and often influenced by numerous variables, making them far more complex than simple cause-and-effect scenarios.
23. This systemic approach to safety is what the international civil aviation community is striving for, and it's the mission that has been entrusted to ICAO. Our goal is to create systems that positively influence human performance, enhancing safety across the board.
24. Let me give you a few concrete examples of how this plays out in practice:
25. Let's consider Advanced Air Mobility. This emerging sector presents us with an extraordinary opportunity to develop and build an entirely new system from the ground up. ICAO is taking a collaborative approach, systematically analyzing the needs of users such as air traffic management, operators, and communities. By putting human factors at the center of this analysis, we can create a system that's not just technologically advanced, but also optimized for safe human operation.
26. Another example is the inclusion of human factors in manufacturing and maintenance. The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) recently issued a certification memorandum stressing the importance of considering human factors in aircraft and system safety assessments for large aeroplanes. This recognition of the human element in the design and maintenance of aircraft is crucial for enhancing overall system safety.
27. Automation is yet another area where a systemic approach to human factors is essential. As we increasingly automate cockpit functions and air traffic management, we must carefully consider how humans interact with these automated systems. ICAO has published Circular 361, the Personnel Training and Licensing Panel Automation Study Report, which identifies 17 key findings related to automation and human performance. We're now working to address these findings, ensuring that as we embrace automation, we do so in a way that enhances rather than compromises safety.

28. This focus on human factors isn't just coming from ICAO. We're seeing encouraging developments around the world. For instance, in May 2024, the United States introduced legislative changes to establish a Human Factors Task Force. This task force will work to identify the most significant human factors and their relative contribution to aviation safety risks. Initiatives like these can serve as inspiration for similar efforts worldwide.
29. I'm therefore very grateful to our host, China, for putting human factors at the core of this year's Asia Pacific Summit for Aviation Safety. It's a recognition of the critical importance of this issue to the future of aviation safety.
30. This brings me to my second key point: ICAO's new long-term strategic plan. As we celebrate our 80th anniversary, we're looking ahead to the next quarter-century and beyond. Our vision is clear: we want to create a safe, secure, and sustainable international civil aviation system that connects the world for the benefit of all nations and people.
31. This vision is supported by three aspirational goals:
 - a) Zero fatalities in international aviation from accidents and acts of unlawful interference.
 - b) Net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 for international aviation operations.
 - c) Aviation serving as an integral part of a thriving, connected, accessible, inclusive, and affordable transport system.
32. These ambitious goals reflect the high standards necessary to navigate future challenges.
33. To achieve these goals, we've outlined six strategic objectives. Three of these focus on outcomes:
 - a) Ensuring every flight is safe and secure
 - b) Making growth environmentally sustainable
 - c) Delivering reliable, accessible, and seamless mobility for all
34. The other three objectives relate to how we'll facilitate progress:
 - a) Leaving no country behind

- b) Addressing all challenges through our legal framework
 - c) Delivering economic prosperity and societal well-being
35. Let's look at each of these in more detail.
36. Safety and security remain our fundamental priorities. We aim to ensure continuous protection from all safety risks and security threats, with the ultimate goal of zero fatalities from aviation accidents or incidents. But we recognize that safety isn't something that can be directly implemented. Instead, it develops from a culture of safety established by the people working in various key areas. Developing this culture and the competencies of these individuals is what leads to safety excellence.
37. Environmental sustainability is another crucial objective. We acknowledge the imperative of achieving net-zero carbon emissions, but we go further – explicitly stating that air transportation capacity must also grow to meet increasing global demand. We're also addressing the challenge of aircraft noise, recognizing that many airport operating restrictions stem from noise complaints. Our goal emphasizes minimizing both emissions and noise while allowing for industry growth.
38. Our mobility objective encompasses three crucial aspects: reliability, accessibility, and seamlessness. We want a system you can count on to get people and goods anywhere they need to go in a timely manner, even accounting for high demand and disruptions. We want air travel to be accessible to all, with efficient and predictable access to travel services. And we want the journey to be seamless, with well-understood immigration and customs procedures, and stress-free transitions through airports.
39. To support these outcome-focused objectives, we're committed to leaving no country behind. We're reordering our activities to emphasize support for Member States in implementing SARPs, adopting a One ICAO approach where regional offices, headquarters, and industry partners collaborate. We recognize that while no two states are identical, many face similar challenges. Our goal is to assist you in prioritizing and planning your capacity development and implementation work effectively.
40. We're also working to ensure our legal framework remains relevant and responsive to current and emerging challenges. As an international treaty-based organization, we must continually advance and adapt International Air Law to meet the needs of an ever-evolving aviation sector.

41. Finally, we're focused on ensuring that air transport delivers economic prosperity and societal well-being for all. We recognize that international civil aviation's value can be measured for each Member State in terms of increased prosperity and well-being. At the same time, we need to balance the work to deliver all six strategic goals within the capacity of each Member State.
42. These aren't just lofty ideals. They're concrete objectives that we're working to measure and achieve. For instance, we're developing metrics to track fatality rates per million flights and global CO2 emissions per revenue kilometre flown. We're also looking at ways to measure aviation's contribution to economic prosperity and social well-being in each of our member states.
43. But - and this is crucial - ICAO doesn't implement these outcomes directly. Our role is to set the standards, provide the framework, and support our member states in implementation. It's the states themselves, along with industry partners, who bring these standards to life.
44. This collaborative approach leads me to my third and final key point: the importance of partnership and cooperation. The challenges we face are too complex and too global for any one organization or country to solve alone. That's why ICAO serves as a platform for cooperation, bringing together governments, industry, and other stakeholders to find common solutions.
45. We're taking concrete steps to strengthen this cooperation. We're reordering our activities to emphasize support for member states in implementing standards and recommended practices. We are adopting a "One ICAO" approach, where our headquarters, regional offices, and industry partners work together seamlessly to support our Member States.
46. We're also focusing on capacity building, recognizing that different States have different needs and resources. Our iPACKs (implementation packages) program, for instance, combines training and expert support to help States build their aviation capabilities.
47. We're rolling out targeted programs like the Safety Implementation Support Road Map in the Asia Pacific region. This initiative aims to boost scores in our Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), which assesses how effectively States have implemented ICAO's critical safety oversight standards. Our goal is to increase these Effective Implementation scores by 10% over three years.

48. In the Asia Pacific region specifically, we've recently begun to roll out this Safety Implementation Support Road Map program. We're working with individual States to develop 3-year plans tailored to enhance their USOAP Effective Implementation scores.
49. Additionally, we're planning a series of capacity-building events to support this effort. This includes a workshop on the development of National Aviation Safety Plans, scheduled for December 2024, which will further aid States in strengthening their safety oversight capabilities.
50. To propel us towards the goals in the our long-term strategic plan, we've also identified four high-priority enablers that will serve as the backbone of our efforts.
51. First, our Continuous Organizational Improvement initiative, which is already transforming ICAO from within. For the past 18 months, we've been reimagining our processes and structures, and the results are remarkable. We're committed to continuing this evolution and pursuit of excellence well into the future.
52. Second, our Innovation Strategy. Mandated by the 41st Assembly, this forward-thinking approach is revolutionizing how we prioritize the work of our technical panels and study groups. In an industry as dynamic as ours, staying ahead of the curve is essential.
53. Third, our Gender Equality Programme and talent attraction initiatives. We recognize that the future of aviation depends on diverse perspectives and fresh ideas. We're actively seeking out the bright minds that will shape the next generation of aviation.
54. Finally, we're focusing on Partnerships, Resource Mobilization, and Budget Sustainability. In today's interconnected world, collaboration is key. We're forging strong partnerships, optimizing our resources, and ensuring our financial stability to support our ambitious agenda. A prime example of this is our FINVEST Hub for Sustainable Aviation Fuel developments. This innovative platform showcases ICAO's unique ability to lead in financial coordination and partnership efforts, driving forward crucial sustainability initiatives in our industry.
55. As we look to the future, it's crucial to remember that aviation is more than an industry - it's a force for global progress. It connects people and cultures, drives economic growth, and fosters international

understanding. Each of you - government officials, industry leaders, and aviation professionals - plays a vital role in shaping this future.

56. Your involvement is essential to transform our vision into reality. By working together, placing human performance at the center of our efforts, and staying true to our shared commitment to safety, security, and sustainability, we can ensure aviation continues to serve humanity for generations to come. Together, we can turn our collective aspirations into meaningful progress, further elevating global aviation's positive impact on the world.
57. In conclusion, I want to emphasize once again the three key points I hope you'll take away from our discussion today:
 - a) Human performance is at the core of aviation safety. As we embrace new technologies and tackle global challenges, we must never lose sight of the human element.
 - b) ICAO's new long-term strategic plan provides a roadmap for the future of aviation, with safety and sustainability at its heart.
 - c) Collaboration is crucial. The future of aviation depends on governments, industry, and international organizations working together towards common goals.
58. These principles will guide us as we work to create a global aviation system that is safer, more efficient, and more sustainable than ever before. A system that truly serves all nations and all people, leaving no one behind.
59. The challenges ahead are significant, but so are the opportunities. With your support, with our shared commitment to excellence, and with the power of international cooperation, I have no doubt that we can meet these head-on.

Thank you.