



**ICAO 39th Assembly
Executive Committee Session
Montreal, 29 September 2016**

**Address by
Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

H.E. Mr. Dato' Sri Azharuddin Abdul Rahman, Chair of the Executive Committee,
Dr. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu, President of the ICAO Council,
Dr. Fang Liu, Secretary General of ICAO,
Honorable Committee members,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to join you for your discussion on Environmental Protection, which has enormous relevance for the goals that the international community as a whole has set under the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. President, I thank you for your kind invitation that allows me to stress the importance of the contribution that ICAO can make under your able leadership in addressing emissions from the international aviation. I also would like to thank all delegations and the staff of the secretariat for their hard work and dedication to this issue.

Last year's SDGs and Paris Agreement marked a historic turning point towards a more sustainable world. These agreements hold the potential to transform growth and development to a new model that is both low-emission and highly resilient. It is a transformation that will benefit the wellbeing of everyone on the planet for generations to come.

Now is the moment for international aviation, which enables mobility and powers economic activity, to agree on how it can contribute to this global and ambitious transformation.

The Paris Agreement sends a strong and clear signal. Global emissions must peak as soon as possible, and rapidly decline to achieve climate neutrality in the second half of this century. Science says we must do this to meet the goal of limiting global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius. This is what all nations agreed in Paris.

We are witnessing the international solidarity of 2015 continue into 2016. The implementation of commitments undertaken last year by big and small nations is widely supported by enterprise and investors, by states and cities. Now is your turn to help achieve our common global goals.

At the UN Secretary-General's event in New York last week, many governments joined commitment for transformation towards a better and more sustainable world. At that occasion, during one day only, 31 countries ratified the Paris Agreement, bringing the total number of countries that have now ratified to 61, which represents around 48% of global greenhouse gas emissions. It is now clearly possible that the Paris Agreement will enter into force by COP 22 in Marrakech in November.

Colleagues, the climate footprint of international aviation is growing. It is comparable to the climate footprint of a country like Germany, and emissions of this industry are set to increase as populations swell and prosperity proliferates. ICAO's aspirational target to stabilize emissions at 2020 levels is a good start. But your ambition needs to be increased and extended in line with the Paris Agreement goal.

Every country and every sector of the economy must increase ambition. The initial contributions made in the run-up to Paris are not sufficient to achieve the goals articulated in the Paris agreement. I see several areas where ICAO can increase aviation ambition and show that this global industry is ready to lead our transformative change.

The first is to immediately foster implementation of measures and tools that reduce international aviation's carbon footprint. Without these tools, it is impossible for the sector as a whole to build a better future. Without urgent action, the cost of inaction remains. This translates into physical risk, which is why many airports – your partners – are themselves moving to climate neutral operations.

Another measure you can take is to strengthen your mid-term goal and establish a long-term aspirational goal for international aviation. This is already in the work programme

of the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection, and I am highly optimistic that ICAO action will be fully in line with the Paris Agreement.

ICAO can also set the tone and encourage a virtuous cycle of ambition between domestic and international levels. Many countries are already regulating the climate footprint of domestic aviation, which can significantly benefit Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement. Approaches range from emission trading to offsetting to sustainable alternative fuels. ICAO support for these approaches is indispensable.

But perhaps the most important thing that ICAO can do to transform international aviation is agree on a market-based approach to reducing emissions.

The draft market-based approach embodied in the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation, also called CORSIA, can achieve emission reductions effectively and cost-effectively.

I invite international aviation and ICAO to implement CORSIA and slot it into the growing number of market-driven climate response measures around the world. I also encourage all ICAO member states to voluntarily participate to cover the highest possible global emissions.

This offers a great opportunity to strike the balance between human mobility needs and the scientific imperative to reduce emissions at a speed and scale that stabilizes our climate system. A stable climate system is the critical path to a secure, sustainable, healthy and prosperous world for all.

Today, we see investors considering climate in their portfolios and turning to green bonds. Businesses are seeking sustainable supply chains and offering low-emission, climate-responsible products. Cities and regional governments are investing in resilience, turning to clean energy and partnering to deliver the benefits of climate-smart economic policy to citizens. There is opportunity for everyone in the transformation governments agreed to with the Paris Agreement and SDGs.

This is an opportunity aviation can capitalize on. You have long been a transformational leader. The spirit of exploring new approaches, trying new things and taking bold action has driven aviation from its very start.

Action by all aviation stakeholders is within your grasp today. I am confident that you will take the action needed to help international aviation shape the transformation that puts the world on the path to a sustainable, climate-safe future and ensures the wellbeing of all.

Thank you and I look forward to a successful outcome of the ICAO Assembly, an outcome that can be part of the progress we will report at COP 22 in Morocco.

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