



**Intervention by  
the Secretary General of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),  
Dr. Fang Liu,  
to the High-level Dialogue of the  
Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation**

*(Beijing, China, 14 May 2017)*

1. Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I'm honoured to be able to provide some insights today on the important role which aviation development and connectivity will be playing in the successful realization of the 'Belt and Road' initiative.
2. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) continuously advocates for increased socio-economic connectivity in States all over the world.
3. Connectivity is an essential value offering of international air transport, and over the long and consensus-driven history of our sector we have been witness time and again to its role in fostering peace and prosperity among the nations and peoples of the world.
4. China's Belt and Road initiative is of particular significance when the world is facing unique and unstable economic and political factors, and there has been big demand for greater regional cooperation, integration and connectivity. The sheer scale that the Belt and Road initiative proposes would bring unprecedented and very positive transformation to the global economy, and it may probably become the world's largest ever platform for regional collaboration and transnational connectivity
5. The transportation focus of the Belt and Road initiative over the past several years had been on improving maritime and rail links. There were some civil aviation construction projects, not many. I wish to bring civil aviation further into the picture and highlight the direct relationship which exists between investments in aviation development, and returns in terms of sustainable socio-economic prosperity.

6. States which make commitments to support fully ICAO-compliant air transport operations, as well as modernized airport and air navigation infrastructure, will inevitably:
  - Grow their tourism and trade revenues.
  - Open up new markets and supply routes for local producers.
  - Expand their tax bases in aid of long-term planning certainty.
  - And develop a solid foundation from which to ensure sustainable socio-economic prosperity, well into the future.
7. Indeed, the civil aviation sector has rapidly grown to become a cornerstone of the global economy, ensuring the transport of 3.5 billion passengers per year and one third of the world trade by value.
8. Our network is projected to double its volume of flights and passengers by 2030. This growth holds tremendous economic potential which will support all of the States in achieving the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
9. The call to action I propose today is therefore very simple: invest more in aviation development, to develop the belt and road initiative with even more and comprehensive dimensions; align your air transport policy objectives with those of your national development plans.
10. Doing so will be essential to the overall Belt and Road objectives, and to the achievement of UN Agenda 2030.
11. ICAO is presently formalizing agreements with China which will help to develop platforms and projects to assist states along Belt and Road initiative to implement ICAO standards in order to have full access to the global air transport network and full benefits to the social-economic progress, consistent with ICAO's No Country Left Behind objectives. I am very enthusiastic about the progress we will achieve together in the collaborative Belt and Road journey now before us. ICAO stands ready, to ensure that air transport's unique and significant benefits can bring newfound prosperity for the entire mankind.
12. Thank you.