



**Remarks by the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Dr. Fang Liu,
to the Panel Session on
“Destination Russia – Shifting Trends Towards Domestic and Incoming Tourism”
hosted by the
St. Petersburg International Economic Forum**

(St. Petersburg, Russia, 1-3 June 2017)

Distinguished Panelists,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. ICAO very much supports the viewpoint being expressed at this Forum that tourism has a tremendous and positive multiplier impact on local and regional economies.
2. And with the Russian Federation being the third largest domestic air transport market globally, and presently the 15 largest ICAO Member State in terms of the operations performed by its national carriers, certainly you have a very robust foundation from which to pursue further tourism growth and sustainable prosperity for Russian cities and regions.
3. As Secretary General of an international organization, I would like to address this issue more from a global perspective. It should be noted that travel & tourism’s contributions to world GDP outpaced the global economy growth rate for the sixth consecutive year in 2016, rising to an average of 10.2 per cent of the global economy or a total of 7.6 trillion dollars. The sector now supports the employment of 292 million people, or one out of every ten jobs on the planet.
4. With respect to the central role which aviation plays in this process, it’s important to recognize that some 53 per cent of tourists travelled by air to reach their international destinations last year. Air transport therefore plays a larger role in terms of tourism potential than all other modes of transport combined.

5. Looking to Russian Federation more specifically, it generally records over 30 million international tourism arrivals annually, a number which will most certainly go up given the expected tourism volumes for the upcoming FIFA Confederations Cup, and even more so for the FIFA World Cup in 2018.
6. With aviation's contributions to overall tourism activity well-appreciated, it is important that States everywhere recognize how economically important it is to their development and prosperity to set out a strong foundation for safe, secure and efficient air transport operations.
7. This foundation is already well-established in the Russian Federation, but it can do more today to optimize air transport market access and liberalization, and to increase the efficiency of its air navigation services and passenger facilitation and security procedures.
8. I see this Panel as an excellent opportunity to highlight these important air transport contributions to a successful tourism policy making, but it is also a chance for us to ask ourselves what more can be done – in 2017 specifically – to maximize the socio-economic benefits which tourism growth can dependably assure for States and Regions.
9. From an air transport standpoint especially, the projected growth of our sector globally presents both key opportunities and some significant challenges.
10. As some of you may be aware, aviation is presently poised to double its global flight volumes during the next two decades. Simply put, the 3.3 billion travellers our network moves today will grow to well over 6 billion in the not too distant future.
11. This represents an incredible opportunity for all States and Regions in terms of growing their domestic tourism markets, but it also points to the need for concrete near-term commitments. This is the case whether we are discussing investments in the airport and air navigation infrastructure, or for the passenger screening and facilitation systems and procedures needed to safely, securely and efficiently support these increased tourist volumes.
12. This is a message I take to every corner of the world today in my role as ICAO Secretary General, in addition to stressing to municipal, national regional leaders everywhere how important it is that they incorporate aviation development priorities into their national and municipal development plans, inclusive of intermodal connectivity at airports and other measures.

13. For the full benefits of global air connectivity to materialize, we must work together to remove impediments to market access and liberalization, optimize aviation's sustainable prosperity benefits for your citizens and businesses, and ultimately realize a smarter and more efficient travel and tourism experience.

14. We all have much to gain from cooperating toward these ends, and ICAO is already pursuing a wide range of programmes and initiatives addressing all of these concerns. Amongst these initiatives is the ICAO No Country Left Behind initiative which seeks to better identify and coordinate the assistance and support which is so essential to the harmonized global implementation of ICAO Standards, especially in developing States. We look forward to the Russian Federation's continued partnership and engagement in our goals through ICAO, and to our work aiding both your domestic and international tourism objectives, well into the future.

15. Thank you.