



**Closing remarks by the
Secretary General of ICAO
Dr. Fang Liu,
to the 2017 ICAO Global Aviation cooperation Symposium**

(Athens Greece – 13 October 2017)

Good afternoon everyone.

1. During this Symposium we've benefitted from insightful and wide-ranging discussions on some very interesting topics.
2. We have also heard many encouraging proposals regarding the many challenges confronting the international air transport sector today.
3. Throughout these discussions, I have been very encouraged that our panelists and participants displayed such a mature appreciation for what cooperation has meant to the global development of civil aviation.
4. And the same holds true for how important the efficiency and effectiveness of our current and future collaborations will be to tomorrow's aviation successes.
5. One of the recurring themes which I picked up on, and which will need to be explored further, regards the value of innovation and research into new and creative solutions.
6. And by 'innovation' in this context, we are not only referring to technological progress, but also to how we approach the processes, procedures, operations and partnerships which are so essential to sustainable air transport at the international level.
7. Additional key points concerned the value of data, analysis, and the better-informed decisions these help us to make regarding ICAO's strategic objectives for air transport, mainly through performance and results-driven implementation.

8. Finally, in all of our panels, the intrinsic value of cooperation in air transport was clearly underscored, as was the fact that it impacts every stakeholder in our very broad and inclusive global community.
9. Building trust, and fostering a stronger aviation culture, will be key goals to remain conscious of as we continue down this path, together.
10. The first GACS symposium, in 2014, raised awareness on the need for improved dialogue and openness regarding the needs and contributions of States, Air Navigation Service Providers, Security and Safety entities, and other aviation stakeholders.
11. And with this second event, aided by the hospitality and technical guidance of our excellent hosts from the Hellenic Authorities, the thoughts and insights of our speakers have made it clear that we must ensure the sustainability of future Global Aviation Cooperation Symposia for many years to come.
12. Before we bid you all farewell, please permit me to express our deep thanks to:
 - The Honorable Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Mr. Christos Spirtzis;
 - The Governor of the Hellenic Civil Aviation Authority, Mr. Konstantinos Lintzerakos;
 - And to the Chairman of the Board of Athens International Airport, Mr. Loukas Papazoglou, for the very generous hospitality and resources which that facility provided us.
13. I also wish to thank all of our participants who took the time to engage in our discussions and provide such valuable inputs.
14. Aviation today is at a crossroads in many respects, with new aircraft and new approaches to airspace making us take a fresh look at much of what we do.
15. It is also being increasingly recognized for its many and quite varied contributions to the socio-economic priorities of States, including their achievement of at least 15 of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

16. This brings challenges to be sure, but also a new spirit of excitement and innovation in air transport which I, for one, am very grateful to be a part of.
17. ICAO has been adjusting and responding to these needs, with new approaches to how we monitor, assess and ultimately assist our States and industry partners.
18. It has also led us to adopt new management approaches to assure these responses are as efficient and cost-effective as possible.
19. Throughout all of these changes and evolutions, one constant remains true: cooperation will forever be key to how we share and manage our single and common sky, toward the peace and prosperity of societies and economies everywhere.
20. On that note, ladies and gentlemen, let me please wish you all safe travels on your returns home, and thank you once again for helping us to make this 2017 GACS here in Athens such a resounding and enjoyable success.

Thank you.