



**OPENING ADDRESS BY THE ICAO SECRETARY GENERAL
INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO),
MR. RAYMOND BENJAMIN,
TO THE 1ST REGIONAL AVIATION SECURITY COORDINATION FORUM**

ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS

(Bangkok – 1 and 2 July 2013)

It is a very special honour for me to be here with you for the first Regional Aviation Security Coordination Forum of the Asia and Pacific Regions.

I would like to first express my gratitude and thank sincerely the Government of Thailand for hosting the 50th DGCA Conference thus an opportunity to convene the inaugural meeting of Regional Aviation Security Coordination Forum.

Secondly, I would like to congratulate the Asia Pacific Region for demonstrating its strong leadership in aviation security.

The high growth, whilst positive, coupled with the enduring security risks, presents us all with significant challenges in the realm of aviation security. It is with much pride that I see the Asia Pacific Region being proactive in taking on those challenges in a harmonized manner and to see a significant number of leaders here to exchange their views, share their experience, to identify and address those common issues and to adopt a unified strategy.

The two themes, *Partnerships* and *Emerging Issues* seem highly appropriate to guide our future work. *Partnerships* is at the heart of our Global Aviation Security Strategies and, as already mentioned, *Emerging Issues*, a pertinent discussion point for a region experiencing ever-increasing passenger and cargo traffic.

As you are aware, ICAO has taken decisive action to provide States with frameworks to work together. These include, the ICAO Comprehensive Aviation Security Strategy, the Declaration on Aviation Security, the Joint Statement of Regional Aviation Security Conferences, including those convened in New Delhi and Kuala Lumpur, the outcomes of the High-level Conference on Aviation Security and, specific to the APAC Region, the Eight Priority Areas such as Engagement with Partners, Air Cargo

Security, increased engagement with the Pacific sub-region and of course, the establishment of the Regional Aviation Security Coordination Forum.

The establishment of the Cooperative Aviation Security Programme for the Asia Pacific Region, known as CASP-AP, nearly ten years ago is a perfect demonstration of the Asia Pacific Region's innovative and leading approach to aviation security. The CASP-AP is an ideal complement to ICAO's aviation security standard-setting, auditing and assistance efforts.

The Programme's achievements have been significant in addressing deficiencies and providing assistance to the needy States. Recognizing the importance of cooperation in the aviation security, Member States in the Middle East region recently established a similar Programme. The CASP-AP serves as an excellent model for this new CASP.

The scope and scale of aviation security challenges together with heavy pressures on our scarce resources underscore the importance of creating dynamic partnerships. We must be innovative in identifying opportunities to build on each other's expertise.

I know that the States and administrations in the Asia Pacific region have been proactive in utilizing partnerships in capacity building and enhancing aviation security, including in the use of technology.

Quoting a few examples:

ICAO and Australia, using a partnership approach, have already delivered a number of national programme workshops resulting in the development and review of 15 national programmes in the Pacific region.

Also in the Pacific, Australia, New Zealand, USA and ICAO are collaborating on quality control capacity building that will see customized and targeted capacity building and more efficient use of each agency's resources – a critical consideration in a climate of limited resources.

Similarly, ICAO and Hong-Kong's AVSECO partnered on the delivery of a crisis management course and ICAO and CASP-AP jointly delivered a Screener Certification Workshop.

I commend you for your initiative and encourage intensified efforts to build synergies by working together.

I draw your attention in particular to air cargo. This region is the host of five of the top ten cargo hubs in the world and the region leading cargo growth. Cargo security and facilitation are critical issues. We must be proactive in addressing in a harmonized and balanced manner the tactical implications arising from the amendments to Annex 17 that become applicable in just a few days, on 15 July.

I commend those States and administrations that have already embraced this partnership work with our Customs colleagues at the national level and call on those who are considering this to use the opportunity presented by this Forum to draw on the expertise in this room, including those aviation security partners such as TIACA, ACI, IATA and AAPA.

The next triennium will see ICAO's Strategic Objectives reflect the Organization's increased commitment to Facilitation at the global level. This Forum is an ideal opportunity for States and Administrations to enhance security by embracing the role that Facilitation takes in improving aviation security and border integrity.

Without a doubt, this region is the most diverse in the world in terms of aviation security capacity. This is strength as well as an opportunity. It is the ideal foundation for a harmonised approach to enhancing global aviation security. Through collaborative efforts, and under ICAO's leadership, States and administrations with mature and forward-looking security regimes can share their expertise with other States.

It is also an opportunity for those States or administrations that are starting with a 'blank sheet of paper' on some of the emerging issues, such as supply chain security, to build robust systems from the beginning by learning from other's experience.

To that end, I wish you the best of luck with the first meeting of Regional Aviation Security Coordination Forum and very much look forward to hearing of the Forum's outcomes. Once again I congratulate the Asia Pacific Region for its leadership and I commend your States and administrations for their commitment to this collaborative and interoperable approach to aviation security.
