



## **ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION**

### **PLENARY**

#### **Agenda Item 8: Statements by delegations of Member States**

#### **STATEMENT BY UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

(Presented by United Arab Emirates)

Your Excellency, President of the Assembly, Your Excellency Sciacchitano ICAO Council President, distinguished state representatives & delegates, families, and friends. After over two years of worldwide restrictions and limitations that have prevented us from gathering together, I would like to warmly and enthusiastically welcome each of you to the 41st Session of the International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly. **A special thanks to our host city, Montreal, and the Canadian government for graciously accommodating our gathering in this beautiful community again.**

**On behalf of the United Arab Emirates, a state that this year celebrates its golden jubilee of becoming an ICAO member, I humbly and gratefully offer the following opening remarks.**

It is befitting that once again our esteemed Assembly is convened as the world comes out of the shadows cast by the COVID pandemic and into the promise of a bright new day. We have lived through what history may well demonstrate to be the worst global crisis of our time. Yet extraordinary times have yielded extraordinary moments, and these past two-and-a-half years have demonstrated how our nations have stood aligned while staring directly into the teeth of this pandemic, shoulder-to-shoulder, and hand-in-hand.

The UAE has emerged from the pandemic bruised but far from broken. The resilience of our people and our authorities have helped turn a dire situation into a story of hope and healing. Of course, our recovery would never have been possible without the collaboration and cooperation of support international organizations such as the ICAO.

Directly because of the efforts of our people and our partners, we have been able to launch two new additional national carriers in the immediate aftermath of this international crisis, a demanding process that required starting the certification during the worst of the pandemic. Just another testament to the strength of our people to carry on despite facing unimaginable challenges.

Like the rest of the world, we went into lockdown at the end of March 2020 and suspended all international flights. But because of the diligence displayed by our leaders in cautiously and sensibly containing the virus, we were also one of the very first countries to reopen its borders for international passengers and, by the end of the year, we witnessed a 200% increase in air traffic as compared to the middle of the year. This gradual, controlled resumption of international flights, in conjunction with the intelligent handling of the

virus spread, helped boost the confidence that international travellers had in our country and our airlines, and allowed us to declare the UAE open to tourists.

The pandemic has also allowed us the occasion to look inward and evaluate the effectiveness and overall efficiencies of our operations. Because of this unprecedented and unplanned opportunity, we have adopted and instituted unique and exceptional practices and techniques to ensure continuity of services in the event of another unforeseen crisis, while maintaining the safe operation of our aircraft, airports and navigation infrastructure. We are seeing immediate results of this effort as our national carriers have been vital in the global transportation and distribution of vaccines and medical aids.

Our efforts in combating this pandemic and our cooperation with both national and international health authorities have resulted in the UAE being recognized as one of the most accomplished countries, with population over nine million, in rates of fully vaccinated people.

Beyond the efforts focused specifically on our own recovery, the UAE continued to supplement the training programs available to other countries in need, and provided technical assistance in the areas of aviation safety, security and sustainability.

The aviation agenda of the United Arab Emirates prioritizes regional and international collaboration with a full commitment to implement the ICAO's initiatives such as "*No Country Left Behind*." To this end, the UAE has assisted a large number of ICAO member states by providing specialized civil aviation related training courses to over 10,000 aviation professionals in addition to the technical assistance we have provided to many member states with the aim of elevating the standard of civil aviation operations within our aviation community. And, of course, we remain committed to coordinate and consult with the ICAO and other member states to provide our services and expertise in any capacity that would enhance the international civil aviation sector and benefit the ICAO.

We have also continued our country's "ICAO READY" initiative, with the goal to provide technical assistance to ICAO member states who require assistance to improve their compliance levels with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). Since we started this initiative, we have assisted more than 25 countries.

While we certainly emphasize international cooperation and collaboration as it relates to safety and security, we also continue to push our environmental agenda in order to make strides towards our overall objective of making airline travel more sustainable. The UAE has reached important milestones in Aviation Environment during the years 2021 and 2022, both regionally and globally. We continue to lead through our effective and continuous contributions to the Committee of Aviation Environment Protection (CAEP) with direct support coming from over 30 industry experts and leading teams such as the Lower Carbon Aviation Fuels (LCAF) task force within the Long-Term Aspirational Goal (LTAG) initiative. In March 2021, the UAE National Committee for LCAF and Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) was established to perform all the necessary studies required in order to institute a National Policy and Strategy for aviation fuel as well as to balance our environmental and economic needs.

The UAE was also one of the first countries who joined the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) pilot phase in 2016, and we continue to support its work addressing CO2 emissions from international aviation. And, in collaboration with World Economic Forum, in March 2022, the UAE funded a project to study the opportunity for utilizing power-to-liquid technologies in aviation. This study provided a robust analysis on the economic benefits, and the associated value chain requirements to achieve the UAE's aggressive climate ambitions.

As our government has indicated, we are committed to be carbon net zero by 2050 and will have the full support and cooperation of the newly created UAE Aviation Net Zero Task Force at our disposal.

To encourage and recognize innovation and sustainability efforts globally, the Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Aviation Award has been established and will award a monetary prize of US \$1 million to those around the world who have made the most significant and environmentally friendly contributions to the aviation industry. This triennial award reflects UAE's commitment to promote environmental aviation and the support to ICAO's "*No Country Left Behind*" initiative.

It has been a great privilege to stand before you here today and reflect upon the advances our country has made, and the achievements we have accomplished in collaboration with the ICAO and our international partners. We affirm our future commitment to fully support the ICA and stand aligned with our member states and our international collaborators. We are proud to continue to play a role in keeping air travel safe, efficient, and sustainable and we will continue to deliver on our promises to the aviation community.

Finally, it is my great honour to inform you that the Arab Civil Aviation Organization has nominated the UAE for the Council Part III elections, and therefore we would like to ask all our member state delegations for your much-valued consideration at this Assembly. We certainly recognize how significant it would be to have the support of our valued member states and we would greatly appreciate your support during this election.

Thank you for your time.

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