



FORTY-SECOND PLENARY (TRIENNIAL) SESSION

OPEN SESSION

(Strasbourg, 9-10 July 2024)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Forty-second Plenary (Triennial) Session

1. The President of ECAC, Mr Alessio Quaranta, in his role as chair of the meeting, formally declared the 42nd Plenary Session of ECAC open and, welcomed all participants to the meeting.

2. The chair then made some opening remarks, in which he emphasised his pleasure at the opportunity to meet so many States and organisations in person, the previous Triennial Session having been held online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The full text of his remarks is at **Attachment 3**.

President of ICAO Council

3. The chair then invited the President of the ICAO Council, Mr Salvatore Sciacchitano, to address the Session.

4. Mr Sciacchitano noted his pleasure in addressing the Session, noting that he had often participated in previous triennial meetings in his previous role as Executive Secretary of ECAC. He noted organisational reforms in ICAO intended to support its priority areas of work, which included climate change, advanced air mobility. He mentioned ICAO's work on support for air accident victims and thanked the Netherlands for hosting the coming symposium on the subject. The full text of his remarks is at **Attachment 3**. In addition to these scripted remarks, Mr Sciacchitano outlined plans for the more efficient running of the 42nd ICAO Assembly, notably on the matter of reducing the number of topics to make the event more manageable.

5. The chair thanked Mr Sciacchitano for his remarks, emphasising the importance of the cooperation between ECAC and ICAO, and the contributions of ECAC Member States to ICAO activities both in terms of sharing of expertise and financial support.

Director General for Mobility and Transport, European Commission

6. The chair then invited Ms Magda Kopczynska, Director General, DG MOVE at the European Commission to address the Session.

7. Ms Kopczynska emphasised the shared history and cooperation of the EU and ECAC, and emphasised the need for European unity, especially in the context of ICAO events, and that this needed to work together with cooperation with other regions. She noted the EU's likely future priorities, including decarbonisation, resilience and preparedness. The full text of her remarks is at **Attachment 3**.

8. The chair thanked Ms Kopczynska, recalling the close and fruitful cooperation established by ECAC with the European Commission for many years.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda

Paper presented: WP/1

9. The chair invited the meeting to adopt the draft agenda of the Plenary Session, and explained the various practical arrangements. There being no comment, the chair concluded that the agenda as issued on 18 March 2024 was approved.

Agenda item 3: Presentation of ECAC President's triennial report

Paper presented: IP/11

10. The chair introduced this agenda item. Speaking in his role as President of ECAC, he emphasised his happiness in giving this report, drawing attention to his report at **IP/11**. He noted the great strain that had been placed on the aviation system by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and on the support that other European organisations and ECAC had given to Ukraine's aviation infrastructure. He noted the expansion of ECAC capacity building activities organised for the benefit of ECAC Member States, and work on the legal status of ECAC. He noted the importance of international cooperation, and the importance of ECAC's external engagement, during the triennium, including the cooperation with ECAC's sister regional organisations and with ICAO.

Agenda item 4: Presentation of Focal Point reports

Papers presented: IP/2, IP/3, IP/4, IP/5, IP/6, IP/7, IP/8, IP/9, IP/10, IP/12

Presentations given: PWPT/1, PWPT/2, PWPT/3, PWPT/4, PWPT/5, PWPT/6

11. The chair invited each Focal Point to give a short presentation on the achievements during the present triennium in their respective area of responsibility.

12. The chair, in the absence of the Focal Point for Safety, delivered the focal point report on safety. Thanking Mr Piotr Samson (former DGCA Poland) for his work as focal point during the triennium, he drew attention to **IP/3**, which contained an account of achievements related to the promotion of European positions on safety in global forums, and on the very valuable work of the Group of Experts on Air Accident and Incident Investigation. He commented on the cooperation with other European organisations in preparation for the coming ICAO 14th Air Navigation Conference.

13. The chair then invited Mr Gunnar Ljungberg, DGCA Sweden and Focal Point for Security, to give the report on aviation security activities. Mr Ljungberg noted the revitalisation of many security activities following the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted activities in support of ECAC's security objectives, as set out in **IP/4**. He noted the changes to the structure of security groups, aimed at supporting activities more efficiently, especially relating to threat response and security technology.

14. Mr Ljungberg commented on the work supporting a risk-based approach to aviation, and the importance of ECAC Doc 30, Part II (Security), which had been updated at various times during the triennium, in harmonising aviation security responses. He noted the reorganisation of technology groups to bring more flexibility to the Common Evaluation Process (CEP) for security equipment, and to enable broader engagement of ECAC Member States in the CEP, while thanking the five Contributing Authorities (France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain and United Kingdom) in particular, and noting the expansion of the activities of the CEP.

15. Turning to the ECAC audit and capacity building programmes, Mr Ljungberg noted the revival and expansion of the activities, based on high demand from ECAC Member States. Finally, he drew attention to the activities delivered by CASE II Project which are detailed in **IP/12**. The Project had recovered well from the delays caused by the pandemic, to the benefit of more than 3000 participants in 80 beneficiary States, during the triennium, mostly delivered through in-country bilateral training.

16. The chair then invited Mr David Benito, DGCA Spain and Focal Point for Facilitation, to deliver his report. Mr Benito noted the achievements that were detailed in **IP/5**, covering immigration matters, support for passengers with reduced mobility, and state assistance to families of victims of air accidents. He set out the key topics covered by the various facilitation groups, including on assistance dogs and on the impact of the European Entry and Exit System on aviation. noting that these topics continued to evolve. ECAC Doc 30, Part I (Facilitation), had been updated during the triennium, and the new ECAC Quality Assessment Programme for assistance to passengers with reduced mobility had been launched, following a successful pilot. A number of facilitation events had taken place, including the two workshops jointly run with the ICAO EUR-NAT regional office.

17. The chair then, in the absence of Ms Rannia Leontaridi, DGCA United Kingdom and Focal Point for environment, presented **IP/2** on ECAC's work in the environmental domain. Noting the major steps that had been taken at the global level, including the agreement of a Long-Term Aspirational Goal for aviation, followed by a quantified goal for CO₂ emissions reductions from the use of Sustainable Alternative Fuels, he commented that progress had also been made closer to home through, for instance, the ECAC capacity building programme for environment.

18. The chair noted the coordination of European positions at the many global events, that had been the driving force behind the promotion of European positions internationally. Commenting on the progress made on promoting harmonisation in Europe, he emphasised the importance of the first ECAC Guidance on Sustainable Alternative Fuels, the work of AIRMOD and the harmonised work being done with EASA on the common section for State Action Plans. Finally, he noted the activities of the capacity building programme for environment, and other related activities including the annual editions of the ECAC Forum.

19. The chair then handed over to Mr Damien Cazé, DGCA France and Focal Point for economic matters to present **IP/6**. Mr Cazé noted that the theme of post-COVID recovery had been important in this domain, with the knock-on effects of the pandemic continuing with disruption to the labour market in aviation. He noted the roles of the ECAC Forum and the ECAC/EU Dialogue with industry in raising these issues with a wider high-level audience. He drew attention to the merging of the work programmes of the Economic Working Group and the Network of Chief Economists to reduce overlap. He described the key topics considered by the economic groups, including the impact of the invasion of Ukraine, the closure of work on the Paris Agreement of 1956, and the continuing development of the liberalisation toolkit. He concluded that the programme would continue to deliver benefits for ECAC Member States and others.

20. The chair then presented **IP/9** on ECAC's activities related to Diversity and Inclusion. He noted the work of Ms Elisabeth Landrichter (former DGCA Austria) as Focal Point for Diversity and Inclusion, a position created less than one year ago. He commented that this work had not been foreseen in the 2022-2024 work programme, but had grown in importance, supported by the establishment of the Network on Diversity and Inclusion and the ECAC Charter on the subject adopted by all ECAC Member States the previous year.

21. Ms Mirjana Čizmarov, DGCA Serbia and Focal Point for Unmanned Aircraft Systems presented her report in **IP/7**. She noted the objective to promote strategic debate on UAS, and the sharing of experience and good practice among Member States, and that a light-touch approach had been taken to this work in order to avoid duplication of other agencies' work. The Point of Contact Network for UAS had typically met twice a year during the triennium to discuss key topics. Experts had also developed papers, for instance for the 41st ICAO Assembly, on matters such as flight rules for the safe operation of UAS.

22. The Executive Secretary of ECAC, Ms Patricia Reverdy then presented the report on legal matters contained in **IP/8**. She noted the work of the Legal Task Force, which had been very active in preparing inputs to the ICAO Legal Committee, and in providing advice to ECAC on proposed agreements and new procedures. The Legal Task Force also provided support to Member States on matters including on the legal status of ECAC, ahead of a Diplomatic Conference in 2025.

23. The chair then presented **IP/10** on ECAC's Communication activities, which had become more organised and strategic during the period. He mentioned the updating of the ECAC Communication Strategy, and the addition of this area of activity to ECAC's work even though it had not been included in the 2022-2024 work programme. He noted the many outputs of the Network of Communication Specialists contained within the information paper, including guidance material, which also supported other domains of activity.

24. The chair thanked all Focal Points for their report and their contribution to ECAC and the implementation of the 2022-2024 work programme.

25. In his role as the chair of JAA TO Foundation Board, Mr Charles Pace (DGCA Malta) explained the role of the board, to give oversight to the work of JAA TO. He noted that the training provided by JAA TO was driven by policy drawn up in different international organisations, and encouraged participation in the courses drawn up for Directors General. He then invited Ms Paula Vieira de Almeida of JAA TO to give details of the activities of the organisation: she pointed out in particular the courses developed exclusively for Member State, and the high-level training for Directors General, the next edition of which would be held in April 2025. She looked forward to meeting ECAC participants at the special meeting of Directors General in September.

Agenda item 5: Debate

26. Ms Reverdy introduced the agenda item on the debate, which was split into two sessions. She clarified the format for each session as being a moderated panel discussion preceded by opening remarks from each participant. She confirmed the topics of the sessions as being attractiveness of the aviation sector and connectivity and liberalisation, noting their significance in terms of both current issues and future considerations for the aviation sector. Meeting participants were encouraged to provide their inputs to the debate in an open manner and to provide constructive and challenging questions in order to fully explore these topics.

Session 1: Attractiveness of aviation as an industry sector

27. Moderator Maksim Et'Hemaj (DGCA Albania) introduced the panellists for the discussion on attractiveness of the aviation sector and opened the first session. He noted that as the aviation sector had been seeking to recover after the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, clear issues had emerged in some places relating to a shortage of

qualified staff. In turn, this had resulted in service delivery problems, at the same time as demand for these had increased.

28. The Secretary of LACAC, Mr Jaime Binder, shared the analogy of the aviation sector as a complex ecosystem, with a wide variety of stakeholders working within a constantly evolving and changing environment. He noted that it was recognised that aviation requires workers with diverse technological (or specialist) knowledge. However, Mr Binder also warned that cognitive bias could develop among such specialists, in which they forgot to see the holistic ecosystem and begin to view all aviation sector matters through their single domain. As a result, Mr Binder advised of the importance of aviation sector stakeholders listening to the representations – “voices” – they heard from their customers and workers, and responding appropriately to what they were told. Examples of heeding these voices included the recognition of consumers’ desire for affordable and environmentally sustainable aviation. Mr Binder noted that there were different voices in different regions that should also be considered. In Latin America and the Caribbean for example, there was a clear desire for more liberalisation and open markets to ensure more access for more people to air transport, at competitive prices. Other voices included those calling for better air transport services, including less delays and less disruption to the passenger journey.

29. Mr Henri Van Faassen (DGCA Netherlands) discussed the trends in the aviation sector since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic associated with the development of greater resilience. These had included cost-cutting measures, fleet adjustments, AI-driven efficiency and government funding. From a European perspective, Mr Van Faassen highlighted that frequent flyers were often as a majority, younger people (21-30 years old). However, some younger people were also seen to be choosing not to fly and preferring alternative transport methods, such as high-speed trains. Whilst the benefits of being able to be connected through air travel with other cultures and global experiences are well known, it was also recognised that there were negative feelings towards aviation, in particular with regards to noise complaints, land use restrictions, and poor labour conditions in some areas such as groundhandling. He commented that, in order to sustain the future reputation of the aviation sector, it was important for the sector to communicate clearly and to apply regulations and policies that created a better balance between reducing the negative impacts of aviation and maintaining its benefits.

30. The chair of the Energy and Environment Commission of the Air and Space Academy, Mr Xavier Bouis, gave an overview of the work carried out by the French academy on decarbonisation of air transport.¹ The findings of this work reported that the aviation sector would be able to reach its zero emissions target by 2050 for flights from Europe, providing the substantial investment needed for this could be realised, for example to secure sufficient sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) supplies. This work also explored the misconceptions that existed, and which exaggerated or distorted the negative effects of aviation vis-à-vis other sectors. Mr Bouis shared with participants conclusions that found that the negative impact of aviation as a whole, when measured in terms of the full cost of air transport “externalities” per passenger, was lower than alternative transport options. He concluded that the aviation sector needed to do a better job in communicating to the public the work that is being done to further develop more sustainable aviation if it was to protect its reputation to attract younger generations as both workers and customers.

31. Picking up the theme of communication, Ms Celine Shakouri-Dias (EUROCONTROL) agreed that whilst there were still attractions to joining the aviation sector, more work needed to be done to communicate the benefits, by those who work in

¹ Opinion N°20: Decarbonising air transport (available in French and English)-
<https://academieairespace.com/publications/opinion-n20-decarbonising-air-transport/?lang=en>

it already. She stated that it was also important to recognise that potential new entrants to the workforce were probably already passengers as well, and therefore come with their own knowledge and experience from this different perspective. Some of the challenges faced by the sector were universal, but owing to the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, the aviation sector was in some respects also facing unique challenges. Europe faced in particular also a challenge in retaining staff and skills, which in part is worsened due to the competitiveness and growth of aviation in other regions. Ms Shakouri-Dias highlighted that the sector itself was in charge of much of its own branding and therefore had a duty to decide how best to shape its messages and communicate this to potential future employees. For example, she highlighted that the sector could demonstrate its understanding of the needs of younger generations, which is being seen to extend beyond pays and benefits to include aspects such as more flexible working, meaningful roles, positive working culture and an opportunity for growth. Ms Shakouri-Dias stressed the real and urgent need for more diversity in aviation. This extended beyond introducing a better gender balance to the sector, to incorporate diverse backgrounds. All round diversity would not only benefit the sector by offering a solution to the current lack of skills and individuals, but also help the aviation sector to find better and more creative responses to problems across all domains. This view was supported during the open discussion where it was suggested that government funding to support less-well off students could also help to equip such candidate with the necessary skills and knowledge to apply to the sector.

32. Mr Saeed Mohammed Al Suwaidi (Representative of the United Arab Emirates on the ICAO Council) opened his remarks by stating the important partnership between his State and Europe which was aimed at building a harmonised aviation culture and fostering economic growth for the resilience of the long-term, future aviation sector. Maintaining high standards in aviation in relation to safety, security, passenger infrastructure, and other areas was a big challenge for aviation but was important for retaining its place in society. Mr Al Suwaidi noted that the reputation of the sector would only be improved in future by meeting its environmental targets. In terms of methods of attracting new talent to the aviation sector, Mr Al Suwaidi stated that it was important to encourage innovative strategies and suggested that these could be effectively developed in partnership with international stakeholders, such as those present in today's meeting. It was a common goal across all of the aviation sector to gain benefits by attracting more talent and improvement.

33. During the open discussion, it was agreed that international partnerships in aviation aimed also at skills and attracting talent, while already in existence, could be further strengthened. The meeting heard an example of existing efforts including the current project under the ICAO Council to consider social aspects of sustainable aviation. The discussion also raised a question as to whether regulators and policy makers had a full and accurate picture of what aviation sector workers were currently being faced with as a result of challenging economic and social conditions. It was proposed that to tackle these issues more broadly, more should be done on a regional and international level to capture this information, to analyse the root causes of the problems in the context of current labour market conditions.

34. In concluding the discussion, Mr Et'Hemaj highlighted that investment was a clear driver of improvement and that from the discussion it was clear that there was a substantial amount of work that could be carried out at a State level to improve the resilience and real situation in the aviation sector; to attract new entrants, to retain skilled workers and to demonstrate the benefits and high standards in aviation. He cited his experience in Albania and the work being carried out to develop its aviation sector, which included use of international support where it was available. By building a sector to be proud of and committing resources where they were needed the aviation sector could also send a positive message about its quality and sustainability.

Session 2: Connectivity, liberalisation and fair competition

35. Moderator Ms Ana Mata (DGCA Portugal) introduced the second session highlighting that air transport connectivity brought with it a range of benefits including enhanced efficiency in travel, increased trade and increased quality of life opportunities. Achieving a level playing field for the aviation market was challenging but fair competition benefited the sector itself by increasing innovation, improving service delivery and enabling higher levels of passenger satisfaction.

36. The Director General of the Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority and Vice President of AFCAC, Ms Andile Mtetwa-Amaeshi, started her remarks by offering a regional perspective. She acknowledged that, while there was more work to be done, African states had made strong progress in developing common goals towards a more effective and harmonised aviation sector across the continent. She highlighted that, for many African states, air transport remained the only viable option for travelling internationally and thereby offered connectivity between developing and developed nations as well as providing a vital lifeline to more remote locations. The 1999 Yamoussoukro Decision – which had come into effect in December 2001, though to date not yet fully realised – was hugely significant for regional aviation sector growth. In 2018 the African Union had launched the SAAT-AM initiative to drive forward the decision with AFCAC appointed as its implementation agency. The decision had created an enabling framework to fully liberalise the air transport market across Africa up to Fifth Freedoms, and had included the establishment of key mechanisms such as free pricing and the removal of capacity constraints.

37. During the discussion, Ms Mtetwa-Amaeshi further explained that, in the past, progress in developing a unified air transport market in Africa had been impossible largely due to the lack of understanding from policy makers. This had now changed, and there was optimism that connectivity improvements would continue to be seen as a result. With frameworks for safety and security starting to mature, it was also felt that other domains could be worked on – such as consumer protection, which to date had not been as robust as in other regions such as Europe. During the discussion, a concern was also raised in relation to sometimes restrictive national licensing regimes that had prevented international business from accessing some African markets. The example cited was restrictions for air cargo companies, who had been viewed as competitors to local or national postal services, as opposed to an organisation that could help to improve international trade and connectivity.

38. The Managing Director of Airlines for Europe (A4E), Ms Ourania Georgoutsakou, highlighted a recent A4E survey where passengers had recognised the benefits of air travel in enabling them to visit friends, family and to discover the world. However, the responses also showed concerns in relation to experiencing delays and environmental impacts as a result of flying. The survey findings had suggested that passengers expected the sector to take steps to address these issues. Ms Georgoutsakou further commented on the European aviation market as being more fragmented than the US one, with a diverse range of airlines, with diverse business models and a robust regulatory framework for enabling mergers or other significant changes in the market. The biggest challenge the industry was seen to be facing currently was how to achieve ‘competitive decarbonisation’. The total expenditure cost of achieving this had been calculated at EUR1.888 billion cost over the next 32 years (to reach the targets set for 2050).

39. Ms Georgoutsakou noted that, at the same time as the above, government interventions were increasing the cost of aviation to the industry, such as through fuel taxes arising from the revision of the European Taxation Directive. This was felt to be a concern for the future sustainability of the European aviation market as it could see

passengers choosing to fly instead to other regions, where such taxes would not apply and operators could deliver services at lower costs. Whilst this particular factor was a regional issue, Ms Georgoutsakou highlighted that working out how to balance the need for affordable and accessible air transport with sustainable aviation is an issue for the global aviation sector. Other key issues to be addressed as part of this were noted to include airspace congestion. This calls for initiatives aimed at greater efficiency, such as through optimised trajectories. Ms Georgoutsakou concluded her remarks by stating that solutions to these issues – and particularly for sustainable aviation - needed collaboration across the whole of the aviation sector. During the discussion she further noted that policy makers should also be cognisant of the costs of compliance and that closer engagement with industry could help the sector to develop its communications on the sustainability efforts being made already within the aviation sector.

40. The Deputy Director of ACI EUROPE, Mr Morgan Foulkes, shared with the meeting the latest results on ACI Europe Connectivity report, that had been published that month. These showed good recovery for the aviation sector in terms of total air connectivity, but figures for Europe remained below those for 2019. While direct connectivity had improved more than indirect connectivity at European airports, full-service carriers' figures had in particular shown a reduction in business, while low-cost carriers had seen their business grow beyond 2019 levels. This was said to be particularly true in relation to direct connections at medium and large airports (excepting the top five European airports).

41. Mr Foulkes went on to discuss how regulatory and policy trends had impacts on liberalisation and fair competition. He called for measures to be taken, such as the relaxation of foreign ownership and control rules, to maximise connectivity and maintain balance across the air transport network. New and innovative changes in aviation, such as the expected introduction of innovative air services (or advanced air mobility), were also mentioned as possible mechanisms for improving air transport connectivity in some areas – and provided they did were integrated fully so as not to disrupt existing air transport. During the open discussion, the topic of policy impacts on connectivity was brought up again, but in particular in relation to the growing issue surrounding implementation of the 'balanced approach' in relation to airports and noise. It was suggested that to ensure harmonised implementation of this approach, guidance from the EU or another organisation should be produced.

42. The Director General of the Global Express Association, Mr Carlos Grau Tanner highlighted the importance of ensuring air cargo connectivity. He made the point that air cargo accounted for 35% of global trade and therefore was a vital industry in its own right: and that it was also directly linked to passenger aircraft, as a considerable amount of cargo is delivered in the hold (of commercial passenger flights). Mr Grau stressed that in the current climate of evolution and uncertainty in the market, the air cargo sector was in particular need of greater flexibility. To achieve this, increased liberalisation and competitiveness across the aviation sector and more broadly would be vital. He cited the 'LACAC MOU on Air Cargo Liberalization' as an important development, with its aim to open traffic rights to the Seventh Freedom across the region.

43. Mr Grau also provided a broader look by highlighting that despite progress in air transport liberalisation, there was evidence from e.g. the OECD Services Trade Restrictiveness Index that, compared to other sectors, it remained restricted. Mr Grau concluded his opening statement by saying that air cargo by its nature consisted of a broad range of services and requirements – from brokerage to logistics and storage. For that reason, he proposed the need for regulators and policy makers to take a full system approach to the sector. One example of this was the inclusion of air cargo under the general

topic of 'logistics related services' for negotiations by APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade held in Thailand in May 2022.

44. The chair thanked the moderators and panellists for their insights and interesting remarks during the debate. He underlined the message that the aviation sector itself was best placed to recognise the full benefits that the sector offered, and the work that was being done to reduce the negative impacts of air transport (such as moving towards sustainable aviation). He agreed therefore that it was incumbent on those present today and others from within the sector to communicate this to future workers and external stakeholders.

Agenda item 6: Statements by international partners

45. The chair welcomed all participants back to the second day of the Triennial Session, and expressed warm thanks to the French DGAC, on behalf of all delegates, for the gala dinner.

46. Recalling the importance of cooperation among regional organisations and/or with bilateral international partners, the chair invited international partners to make their respective statements.²

47. Mr Raúl Medina Caballero, Director General, EUROCONTROL, spoke about the complexity of the global system of aviation. He saw it as necessary for EUROCONTROL to be close to operational partners, but also close to the European institutions such as ECAC, to address the challenges within Europe, including the question of the most effective use of capacity. He emphasised the need for a spirit of humility and partnership, for aviation to deliver society's demands.

48. Mr Norazman Bin Mahmud, CEO, Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia, extended his congratulations to ECAC for its achievements. He emphasised the role of good governance in Europe in delivering aviation safety. He hoped that bilateral partnerships with ECAC Member States would continue to grow, and said that Malaysia hoped to finalise a new cooperation arrangement with ECAC during 2024. He noted the use of technology and digital transformation in compliance and quality control in aviation, and offered to share Malaysia's digitalisation framework with ECAC Member States. He thanked ECAC Member States for their support for Malaysia's membership of the ICAO Council.

49. Mr Peter Kyungsoo Yu, Director General for Aviation Safety Policy, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Republic of Korea, noted the range of areas of cooperation between Korea and Europe, with aviation as a key part of this partnership. He emphasised the need for international cooperation, and set out priority areas for such cooperation in the European context, including in the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuels as part of decarbonisation efforts. He concluded by committing to work with ECAC to deliver the economic benefits that aviation could deliver.

50. Mr Tay Tiang Guan, Deputy Director General, Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS), commented on the need for cooperation to deal with aviation's challenges, and reflected on the challenges faced in CAAS's forty-year history. He confirmed Singapore's willingness to pursue cooperation with ECAC in additional fields, noting cybersecurity as an area where renewed cooperation would be necessary. He recalled the successes of the Singapore Aviation Academy and noted the academy's

² Where speakers provided a full text of their statements, and agreed to have it released, these are included on the ECAC website.

expansion plans. He set out Singapore's plans for implementation of the Long Term Aspirational Goal for aviation emissions.

51. Mr Toshiyuki Onuma, Senior Deputy Director General, Civil Aviation Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan noted that he was the first Japanese representative to participate in an ECAC Triennial Session. He praised the leadership of the ECAC President. He said that the views of Strasbourg that he had enjoyed had reminded him of the importance of sustainability in aviation. He noted the range of bilateral aviation agreements between Japan and European States, and looked forward to continuing and expanded cooperation. Continuing, Mr Onuma said that Japan had decided to nominate him as a candidate for President of the ICAO Council election in 2025, and requested support from participants, thanking those who had offered him advice on his candidacy. He extended his thanks for the invitation and hoped for even more substantial and effective cooperation in the future.

52. Ms Cindy Baraban, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Aviation and International Affairs, Department for Transportation, United States conveyed the good wishes of Annie Peterson, who had been unable to attend. She commented that the US's relationship with ECAC was a central plank of transatlantic aviation cooperation. She set out an overview of work on the strengthening the safety and efficiency of aviation, preserving and advancing environmental priorities to address aviation's climate impact, and on ICAO and emerging aviation policy questions in other regions of the world.

53. Ms Baraban noted the high level of alignment between US and Europe on these matters, and confirmed support for the positions set out by the European Commission the day before on the Russian Federation and the ICAO Council. She said that COVID had forced an expanded scope of international cooperation, that would prove valuable for the future.

54. Ms Ingrid Azucena Zelaya, President of LACAC, said that this event provided an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between LACAC and ECAC, noting that LACAC had, at its founding, taken inspiration from ECAC among others. She said that the relationship of trust had led to valuable exchanges of information, and had led to reciprocal support for candidacies in ICAO. She restated LACAC's commitment to ratify the Protocols expanding the ICAO Council and Air Navigation Commission. She thanked ECAC for taking the initiative in establishing meetings between all regional aviation organisations, noting that LACAC would host the next such meeting. She noted successes in liberalising the air cargo market in Latin America and concluded by hoping that the cooperation she had mentioned would lead to further successes across regions.

55. Mr Silas Udahemuka, President of AFCAC, noted AFCAC's commitment to solidarity and collaboration towards common goals, and that the strong and fruitful relationship with ECAC contributed to this work. He commented on the opportunities and challenges presented by technological shifts in aviation. He looked forward to building on the strong foundations of cooperation for the benefit of aviation in the two regions.

56. Mr Abdennebi Manar, Director General, ACAO, commented on the important role of regional aviation organisations, and the benefits that could be brought from increasing regional governance and cooperation among the regions. He provided background on the origins and role of ACAO, and said that it spared no effort in addressing the challenges across aviation domains. He said that city pairings between ACAO and ECAC involved 44% of destinations in the ACAO region, and noted that this interconnectedness showed the importance of the relationship between the regions. He drew attention to coming events organised in ACAO, and noted the cooperation in relation to such events among the four regional organisations.

57. Closing this agenda item, the chair thanked all presenters, and emphasised the importance for ECAC of its partnerships with States and organisations, and the value they brought to enrich the thinking on the main achievements and opportunities facing aviation.

Agenda item 7: Consideration and approval of the ECAC work programme and associated budget for 2025-2027

Papers presented: WP/2, WP/3

58. The chair invited the Executive Secretary to present the draft work programme (**WP/2**) and associated budget (**WP/3**) for the next Triennium 2025-2027, noting that both were already endorsed at the last meeting of Directors General in April 2024.

59. In presenting WP/2 on the ECAC work programme for the 2025-2027 triennium, the Executive Secretary recalled that it had been prepared by the various ECAC working groups, reviewed by the EMTO Task Force on several occasions and submitted in successive versions to the Coordinating Committee and to Directors General over nine months. She noted that the work programme was structured similarly to previous work programmes but now added Communications and Diversity & Inclusion as new domains of activity of the organisation. The implementation of the programme would be reviewed mid-term to assess whether any amendments needed to be made in the light of this progress.

60. The Plenary Session approved the work programme for the 2025-2027 triennium, as presented in the Attachment to WP/2.

61. In presenting WP/3 on the ECAC budget for 2025-2027, the Executive Secretary noted that the budget had been developed by the EMTO Task Force, who had developed different options that it had presented to the Coordinating Committee and to Directors General. The final proposal agreed was a 3% increase in Member State contribution from 2026. The budget remained in deficit, which would need to be covered by the Special Reserve Fund. The proposal also included a new source of income in the form of interest on ECAC's financial reserves.

62. The Plenary Session approved the proposed 2025-2027 budget, as presented in the Attachment to WP/3.

Agenda item 8: Adoption of Recommendations or Resolutions

63. The chair noted that no Recommendations or Resolutions had been submitted to the 42nd Triennial Session for adoption and closed this agenda item.

64. The chair concluded the open session of the Plenary, thanking participants for their contributions. He noted the contribution of Mr Laurent Pic, Representative of France to the ICAO Council, and invited him to the lectern. Mr Pic said it had been a privilege to work in the sector for the previous four years, saying that there had been many successes, but he would still leave his post with frustration at what remained to be done, and asking all participants to continue their efforts. He thanked participants for their support and wished them well.

65. The chair also thanked Ms Charlotte Basquin (France) for her efforts in supporting the organisation of the event.

66. The chair asked Member States to return for the closed session in 30 minutes.

ATTACHMENT 1
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Alessio Quaranta President of ECAC

ECAC MEMBER STATES

Albania	Maksim Et'Hemaj Adela Hajdari Dorina Verdho
Austria	Christian Schleifer Karin Puleo-Leodolter
Azerbaijan	Gasham Abbasov Nazim Ziyadov
Belgium	Koen Milis An de Lange
Bulgaria	Anelia Marinova Vanya Dimitrova Mariya Kantareva
Cyprus	Eftychios Eftychiou
Czechia	Zdenek Jelinek
Denmark	Lars Pedersen
Estonia	Üllar Salumäe Taivo Linnamägi
Finland	Jari Pöntinen
France	Damien Cazé Laurent Pic Nils Raynaud Charlotte Basquin Eric Risse Pascale Fils Delphine Follenius Emmanuel Jacquemin
Georgia	Givi Davitashvili Levan Karanadze
Germany	Wilhelm Eschweiler Marina Köster Heinz Decker

Greece	Christos Tsitouras Maria Saranti
Hungary	Kinga Arnold
Iceland	Jon Gunnar Jonsson Valdís Ásta Aðalsteinsdóttir Kristin Helga Markusdottir
Ireland	Ethna Brogan Niamh O'Brien
Italy	Alessio Quaranta Sergio Martes Giovanna Laschena
Latvia	Luca Demicheli Maris Gorodcovs Iveta Giela Ruta Ramane
Lithuania	Virginija Zegunyte
Luxembourg	Pierre Jaeger Charles Klein
Malta	Charles Pace
Netherlands	Henri Van Faassen Ingeborg van Gasteren Richard Ossendorp
North Macedonia	Erina Andonova Veti Gjorgjieska Atanasoska
Norway	Øyvind Ek
Poland	Julian Rotter
Portugal	Ana Vieira da Mata Fernanda Bandarra da Silva Ferreira
Republic of Moldova	Vasile Saramet Elena Voscoboinic
Romania	Nicolae Stoica Maria Cristina Liliana Ionita Laura Madalina Catrina Valentina-Mihaela Divricean
Serbia	Mirjana Čizmarov Ana Lazarevic
Slovakia	Michal Hysek

Spain	David Benito Astudillo Luis Ángel Arias Serrano
Sweden	Gunnar Ljungberg Emma Jeppsson
Switzerland	Francine Zimmermann Marian Schulte-Orlet Helena Hallauer-Hess
Türkiye	Kemal Yüksek Anil Koçer Mehmet Sefa Ceyhan
Ukraine	Oleksandr Bilchuk Alina Zadorozhnia
United Kingdom	Andrew O'Henley Mari Durban

Non-ECAC Member States

Brazil	Marcelo Lima
Canada	Annick Goulet Andrew Larsen
Guatemala	Cesar Augusto Lechuga Chicas
India	Angshumali Rastogi
Japan	Toshiyuki Onuma Satoshi Oshima
Malaysia	Norazman Bin Mahmud Muhammad Nazirul Izzat Flora Chin
Republic of Korea	Peter Kyungsoo Yu Yool Kim Chul-ha Hwang
Singapore	Tay Tiang Guan Eileen Poh Elise Phang

	Sim Mong Kai
United Arab Emirates	Saeed Mohammed Al Suwaidi
United States	Cindy Baraban Ben Taylor Joe Landart Jennifer Solomon

International and Regional Organisations

ACI EUROPE	Morgan Foulkes
African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)	Silas Udahemuka Andile Mtetwa-Amaeshi Melissa Rusanganwa
Air and Space Academy	Xavier Bouis
Airlines for Europe	Ourania Georgoutsakou
Arab Civil Aviation Organization (ACAO)	Abdennebi Manar
EUROCONTROL	Raúl Medina Caballero Céline Shakouri-Dias
European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)	Florian Guillermet
European Commission	Magda Kopczynska Filip Cornelis Peter Bombay
European Organisation for Civil Aviation Equipment (EUROCAE)	Anna von Groote
European Regions Airline Association (ERA)	Montserrat Barriga
European Transport Workers' Federation	Sabine Trier
Global Express Association (GEA)	Carlos Grau Tanner
Hermes Air Transport Organisation	Kostas Iatrou
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)	Salvatore Sciacchitano Nicolas Rallo
International Federation of Airline Pilots (IFALPA)	Arnaud du Bédât

**Joint Aviation Authorities
Training Organisation (JAA TO)**

Paula Vieira de Almeida
Eric Schoonderwoerd
Murat Yalçin

**Latin American Civil Aviation
Commission (LACAC)**

Ingrid Azucena Zelaya
Jaime Binder

ECAC Secretariat

Patricia Reverdy

Executive Secretary

Mark Rodmell

Deputy Executive Secretary

Hanan Achahboun

CASE II Project Manager

Angela Lynch

Policy Coordinator

Gillian Caw

Communication Assistant

Alexandra Alexis

Administrative Assistant

Klejda Dervishaj

Administrative Assistant

ATTACHMENT 2
AGENDA**Agenda item 1. Opening of the Forty-Second Plenary (Triennial) Session**

Note: *The Session will be opened by the President of ECAC. The President of the Council of ICAO and other high-level officials will be invited to address the Session.*

Agenda item 2. Adoption of the agenda**Agenda item 3. Presentation of the President's triennial report**

Note: *The President of ECAC will present an overview of ECAC's activities over the past three years.*

Agenda item 4. Presentation of the Focal Point reports

Note: *The Session will be addressed by ECAC's Focal Points in the fields of safety and accident investigations, security, facilitation, the environment, economic matters, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), diversity and inclusion, and other domains. The chair of the EMTO Task Force and the chair of the JAA TO Foundation Board will also briefly address the Session.*

Agenda item 5. Debate

Note: *ECAC Member States, European industry partners and representatives of ECAC's international partners will be invited to join moderator-led panel sessions. These sessions will foster dynamic discussions, encouraging open debate on topics of significant mutual interest to ECAC Member States and international partners.*

Agenda item 6. Statements by international partners

Note: *Representatives of ECAC's international, regional and bilateral partners will be invited to offer remarks on their cooperation with ECAC.*

Agenda item 7. Consideration and approval of the ECAC work programme and associated budget for 2025 – 2027**Agenda item 8. Adoption of recommendations or resolutions****Agenda item 9. Election of the President, Vice-Presidents and members of the ECAC Coordinating Committee**

Note: *Article 8 of the Constitution refers*

Agenda item 10. Any other business

ATTACHMENT 3

OPENING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF ECAC

Dear President of the ICAO Council,

Dear Director General for Mobility and Transport of the European Commission,

Dear Directors General of Civil Aviation,

Dear colleagues and friends,

Good morning everyone,

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to welcome you today to the 42nd Triennial Session of the European Civil Aviation Conference. Three years ago, we had to meet online for the 39th ECAC Triennial Session, so I am very happy today to be able to welcome you here in Strasbourg, the place where ECAC held its inaugural session at the end of 1955, and where we have traditionally met for our triennial sessions.

It is impressive to see so many participants in this Triennial Session of ECAC: Directors General of ECAC Member States and of several other ICAO States, ICAO Council members, senior representatives of our sister organisations: ACAO, AFCAC and LACAC, as well as of other international and regional organisations, including the European Commission, EUROCONTROL, EASA, ICAO, to name only a few. I am also particularly pleased to welcome representatives of industry organisations, with whom ECAC has valuable cooperation links: ACI EUROPE, A4E, and CANSO to name only a few.

It is also a privilege for ECAC to welcome the President of the ICAO Council, Mr Salvatore Sciacchitano as well as the Director General of Mobility and Transport of the European Commission.

Thank you all for joining us today in this important event for ECAC.

When we met online, three years ago, our industry was, like most other things in the world, going through unprecedented times. The desperate state of the industry, at one of its worst periods of the COVID-19 crisis, was made even worse by the existence of a patchwork of travel restrictions, imposed in the majority of European states, as well as at global level. The uncertainty around the restrictions was in many ways worse than the restrictions themselves.

A great deal of our discussion in the early part of the triennium was about how to do better in a future crisis. But first, we had to think about the immediate question of the revitalisation of the industry in the face of the worst economic and financial crisis in the history of the sector.

“Restart, Recovery and Resilience” were then the motto of all our actions and efforts. Today, traffic levels are back to the pre-2020 levels in most of our Member States, and in some States traffic has even surpassed 2020 levels. This crisis seems far away, forgotten by many. But this crisis has had long term impacts on our sector, and on the expectations of the citizens we serve, of the people who work in our sector. Economic, social and environmental sustainability are necessary not just for the growth, but for the survival of our sector.

During this crisis, we have demonstrated our ability to adapt to change, to be creative and to find innovative and efficient solutions to rapidly evolving challenges. Coordination and harmonisation of measures have been at the heart of our actions, in the face of a legacy of uncoordinated actions in Europe and elsewhere during the pandemic, and despite the many challenges to the international order and a rules-based approach to global aviation.

While our industry is a very competitive sector, it is also marked by a strong solidarity between States. All European organisations joined forces to support Ukraine, its aviation sector and our colleagues from the civil aviation administration since 2022. Solidarity is also visible through our contribution to ICAO initiatives such as ACT SAF or the multiple programmes of capacity building that we collectively or individually offer to other regions of the world.

I also strongly believe that, in the years to come, we must continue to exert our combined efforts to address the challenges affecting the European civil aviation sector, and that together we shall continue to improve the passenger experience and to have both the public and political recognition of the added value of aviation to our economies. In this context, we need to confront the challenges of the day and seize the opportunities, whether on artificial intelligence, GNSS interference, cyber security, decarbonisation or innovative mobility.

Aviation is global. It reaches everywhere. We must therefore work together to facilitate the smooth transportation of people and goods, and the social and economic benefits that this brings. ECAC remains committed to strengthen its cooperation with international organisations dealing with civil aviation, with our sister regional organisations and other international partners.

It is now my pleasure to declare open ECAC's forty second Triennial Session, and to invite the President of the ICAO Council to address our assembly.

OPENING KEYNOTE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Dear ECAC President, Dear ECAC Executive Secretary,

Directors General of Civil Aviation, ICAO Council Representatives, distinguished guests,

I wish to thank ECAC for inviting me to address this 42nd Triennial Plenary Session of the European Civil Aviation Conference.

Of course, you know that I have participated in several ECAC Triennial Sessions here in Strasbourg, albeit in a different capacity.

You will understand that it is particularly endearing for me to address you today in my role as President of the ICAO Council.

I also wish to take the opportunity to thank France, the Host Country of the ICAO Regional Office and of ECAC for the unwavering support provided to both Organizations. In this regard, I wish to take the opportunity to highlight the enhanced coordination and cooperation between ECAC and ICAO's Paris Office throughout the last few years, which benefits you all.

As we all know, the establishment of Regional Organizations such as ECAC have been promoted by ICAO with the objective of helping support States in their pursuit of ICAO objectives at the regional level.

ICAO appreciates and recognizes the remarkable ECAC engagement and support to ICAO policies and to ICAO's regional activities in the EUR/NAT region.

Additionally, the presence of influential European leaders in the ICAO Council, several of which are present here today, underscores the region's strong voice in shaping international aviation's sustainable, resilient, and robust future.

This year, ICAO is celebrating its 80th anniversary. This celebration offers the opportunity to reflect on the important achievements over the last eight decades, critical to the current economic and social development of our world.

However, ICAO intends to take this opportunity not solely to reflect on the excellent achievements, but more importantly, to reflect together with all stakeholders on how aviation development will continue to be supported by ICAO over the next decades.

For this reason, on the occasion of the celebrations of the 80th Anniversary of the signing of the Chicago Convention, the Council is in the process of approving the 2026-2050 ICAO Strategic Plan.

I will not enter into details on the Strategic Plan, but I wish to underline that it will have to pursue the highest global safety and security levels supporting the sustainable development of air transport along three dimensions: Environment, economic and social.

This development will have to be pursued in a manner that No Country is Left Behind. For this reason, the No Country Left Behind initiative will become an integral part of the ICAO Strategic Objective.

Actually, ICAO is already implementing a new approach in this specific regard.

The change of the Technical Cooperation Bureau into Capacity Development and Implementation Support Bureau is definitely not a cosmetic change. It is an Organizational one, and I would say cultural change. It is a dramatic change whereas technical cooperation, assistance, capacity building and implementation support activities are driven by the One ICAO approach and no longer "in silos".

Regarding Environment and in particular Climate Change, as you know, a massive leap forward has been achieved at the Third ICAO Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3) in November last year in Dubai, with the adoption of a Global Framework for SAF and LCAF and cleaner energies development and deployment. In particular, I wish to recall the global target to achieve of 5% CO2 emissions reduction by 2030.

Now, we must deliver.

Just a few weeks ago the Council approved a roadmap that will guide ICAO implementation activities, starting with financial and human resource allocations without which the Global Framework will remain on paper.

This will be done through a re-prioritization process that the Secretariat has performed within the perimeter of the regular budget that, as you know, is systematically not sufficient to cover all the tasks assigned by ICAO Assemblies, but mainly through resource mobilization, requesting consequently your support.

Amongst the several activities, the Finvest Hub, which was so well received during CAAF/3 in Dubai, will be an important project establishing a platform to facilitate investment partnerships, particularly in the interest of countries and regions that do not have SAF production.

Additionally, I am happy to share that 150 States and organizations are now part of ICAO's Assistance, Capacity Building, and Training programme for SAF, known as ACT-SAF. This includes ECAC and 12 ECAC States.

ACT-SAF provides training, feasibility studies, support for SAF certification and policy development, and implementation of specific SAF projects for States. I am grateful to the partnering States from this region that have contributed resources to ICAO in these efforts, and we look forward to continuing this collaboration with you.

Remaining in the area of Climate Change, I wish to recall that ICAO is focusing more intently on non-CO2 emissions. The Symposium organized in Montreal in September will offer an excellent opportunity to take stock of the scientific progress and will offer the opportunity to outline future ICAO initiatives in this regard.

As I mentioned a few moments ago, the celebrations of the 80th Anniversary will offer the opportunity to reflect on the challenges that will have to be addressed by air transport in the next decades, starting with the forecasted increase in passengers air traffic from approximately 4.5 Billion this year to approximately 11.4 Billion in 2050. These apparently simple figures paint a dramatic picture of the challenges that will have to be faced to reach aviation decarbonization by 2050. That is, to reach Net- Zero while aviation continues to grow substantially.

Additionally, it will grow faster in Countries or Regions that have done less so far. This will require common efforts, in accordance with the No Country Left Behind strategic objective, so that air transport development continues enhancing safety, security, and capacity. We need to remain focused and not allow ourselves to become complacent.

The systematic introduction of new technologies, and innovation will support this development while at the same time cybersecurity will become more and more crucial in aviation.

As you know, ICAO remains fully committed.

The adoption of an ICAO Cybersecurity governance will help implement the cybersecurity roadmap integrating all Secretariat and Panels activities.

The recently concluded ICAO 2024 Innovation Fair brought together the aviation community, innovators, students, and startups to explore the transformative potential of digitalization. They delved into the future of the sector and how collaborative efforts can harness digital technologies to enhance process efficiencies, drive sustainability, and achieve ICAO's Strategic Objectives.

Regarding innovation, I would be remiss if I did not stress that we must prepare ourselves for the extraordinary potential of remotely piloted aircraft systems and advanced air mobility (AAM).

ICAO is supporting our member States on the regulatory, aspects and the first ever AAM Symposium will take place in Montréal in September. I invite you all to participate.

As 2024 is also the ICAO Year of Facilitation, we are particularly active in encouraging the advancement of initiatives in this field this year. By leveraging the ICAO Digital Travel Credential, the interoperability of these initiatives with other entities can be eased and we look forward to working with all of you to make such globally interoperable seamless travel a reality.

Another very significant and extremely important focus of our work in this area is on the provision of Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families. Respect for victims of aircraft accidents and their families' mental, physical and spiritual well-being is paramount to ICAO and to all aviation stakeholders.

The ICAO Council is assuring continuous advocacy and attention for these important global priorities with the insights and appeals of committed representatives of victims and their families. Furthermore, the Council, with the support of all stakeholders, is helping States set the regulatory framework through the provisions of the Convention on International Civil Aviation. In this context, the second symposium on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families (AAAVF) is planned to be held in the Kingdom of the Netherlands in November later this year, and I wish to thank again the host State for its support.

Before concluding today, I would also like to stress that we will not be able to achieve our objectives unless we are successful in breaking down barriers to participation in aviation. Women continue to be massively underrepresented in our sector, and we must accelerate and improve our efforts in support of gender equality.

The Call to Action resulting from the 2nd ICAO Global Aviation Gender Summit in Madrid provides 26 specific actions that we can take to do so. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to urge you to join us in implementing it.

Now, as we look to the future of our sector, it is certainly heartening to see Europe so strongly displaying the spirit of cooperation that has always enabled the safe, secure, and sustainable development international civil aviation.

Over the past 80 years, safeguarding human lives and well-being has been aviation's top priority. Let us keep this front of mind as we strive to enhance flight safety, security, and sustainability, and seek to find ways to raise ambitions.

I look forward to positive and crucially important outcomes of our collective efforts. I will also await with interest your fruitful discussions at this 42nd Plenary Session of ECAC. You will help shape the future of aviation in Europe and beyond.

With that, I wish you highly successful and productive discussions.

Thank you.

OPENING REMARKS OF DIRECTOR GENERAL, DG MOVE

Mr President of the ICAO Council,

Mr President of the European Civil Aviation Conference, Distinguished Members of the ICAO Council,

Madam Secretary General,

Directors General from the ECAC States and representatives from other regions

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased and honoured to have been invited to address you at the opening of this Plenary meeting. For me, this is a clear signal of the excellent relations the European Commission, and DG MOVE in particular, enjoys with ECAC, under the leadership of Alessio and Patricia. In essence, ECAC and the EU are two emanations of the same European spirit. ECAC provides an excellent framework for Directors General of Civil Aviation to meet and to reflect, and to do so in a pan-European setting. The EU from its side provides a big single aviation market, with a modern common legal framework in almost all aspects of aviation, and a special close relationship with most non-EU ECAC members. And in a number of areas the legislative action of the EU was based on earlier work within ECAC, as was notably the case with regard to aviation security.

But nowhere is this symbiosis more fruitful and of bigger importance than in our joint actions at ICAO. The substantive contributions of both the EU as well as ECAC to important meetings of ICAO take the format of joint Working Papers, which are each time very influential documents wherever ICAO meets. I want to take this occasion to pay tribute to all officials from the ECAC Secretariat, at the Commission and in all our capitals who make this joint work at ICAO possible. It is thanks to their expertise and relentless efforts that time and again we jointly manage to be as effective and influential. And I also want to pay tribute to the important work done by the Representatives of the EU and ECAC States on the ICAO Council.

We are fully in the process of preparations for the upcoming 14th Air Navigation Conference for which in the past weeks a number of very good joint Working Papers have been submitted. All of them point at concrete files for which we think action at ICAO is necessary, and many of them outline the best possible way to get there. Many of them enjoy co-sponsorship from other regions.

We need to progress the technological modernisation of air navigation in order to continue to deliver the necessary capacity for growing traffic, and the arrival of new entrants – whether it is at very low or very high altitude, whether it is manned or unmanned aircraft. I wish all of you who will attend the Conference a lot of success.

Of course, we should already now set our eyes on the 42nd Assembly, of which we know that it will come at a challenging time for international aviation.

The first of our joint tasks will be the election of the 8 Council candidates which Europe proposes in the ICAO Council. A crucial factor in that effort will be unity around 8 candidates. And the earlier this unity is found, the earlier we will be able to focus on all our other priorities. From my perspective, we need every prospective member of the ICAO Council to be among the best in the business, and to be fully committed to playing an influential role at ICAO by being permanently based in Montreal. This is crucial to continue

efficiently defend our joint interests and ensure a good European coordination under the co-leadership of the European Union.

Another important question for the Assembly will be the role of Russia in the Council. Each and every of the reasons which the 41st Assembly had for not electing Russia are still valid or have gotten worse. Aviation in Russia has become even more unsafe, a considerable number of aircraft remain stolen and improperly certified, and all of these continue to constitute grave breaches of the Chicago Convention. Russia continues to over-politicise the work of the ICAO and showed disrespect to its work and procedures, including through its withdrawal from the MH 17 case. We don't believe that a state which shows so much disrespect for the ICAO Council belongs on the ICAO Council!

I am happy to learn that ECAC Directors General, with the Commission, have started their reflection on what Europe should bring in terms of substantive files and preoccupations to the next Assembly. The issue of jamming and spoofing of GNSS signals is a growing problem, especially on Europe's Eastern flank, and a direct threat to the safety of aviation, which would need to be addressed at the upcoming Air Navigation Conference but also the Assembly. There will be other themes such as cybersecurity or the fight against the instrumentalization of international aviation for human trafficking and illegal migration.

Environmental sustainability will continue to be an important topic too. We think that there is room for the strengthening of CORSIA and we need to start addressing at the level of ICAO the scientific understanding and the mitigation of the non-CO2 climate impact of aviation. Also, referring to sustainable fuels, the very broadly supported achievements of CAAF/3 should find a way into the Climate Change resolution. In the past, environmental action was seen as the indispensable licence to grow for the aviation sector. We should realise that in the meantime in many countries and amongst many citizens, including in Europe, environmental action has in fact become the licence to operate. There is thus no other choice than to continue tackling, ambitiously, the environmental impact of aviation!

As to the Assembly, the last point I want to make is that we should be ready to listen to and reflect together with our partners in other regions of the world. The European Union is strongly committed to ICAO No Country Left Behind Initiative and is strongly supporting many states around the world be it on safety, security and environment. I had the pleasure of being at ICAO two weeks ago where I signed a new cooperation agreement with ICAO on capacity building and implementation support. We look forward to work closely with our African colleagues, through our co-operation with AFCAC. The same applies of course to our friends in LACAC and in ACAO. ICAO is about global action: if we can't convince our friends in other continents of the merits of working together, then this global action is just not going to happen. I count on all of us working together as much as we can in the preparation of and during the 42nd Assembly.

Dear colleagues,

Let me finish with a few words about the EU. Indeed, many people approach me in search of insights into what to expect from the new European Parliament and the next European Commission, including at yesterday's very friendly reception.

I am of course not in the position to speculate about the political agenda of the next Commission, which has not even been nominated yet. It will be set out in the political priorities of the Commission President designate, Mrs von der Leyen – actually next week right here in Strasbourg.

Let me only highlight a few elements for reflection:

The objectives to achieve decarbonisation and the digital transition will certainly remain high on the agenda and we will need to ensure the proper implementation of the regulatory framework that was set in motion in the previous mandate. This includes also a number of files directly addressing the aviation sector.

In this sense, the objectives and the roadmap provided by the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy remain valid and even though the vast majority of actions proposed under the strategy have already started, further work is necessary to complete its delivery.

Sadly, the EU has faced a number of crises in the past five years and we continue to experience the impacts of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. It is therefore clear that the security, resilience and preparedness are expected to gain in political importance. That means strengthening our industrial and technological autonomy, and our energy independence.

Securing the eastern flank of Europe is vital for our future. This means making sure that the Ukraine Facility delivers on strengthening infrastructure links with the EU. It also means helping our Ukrainian colleagues, and our colleagues in Moldova, to align their legal and business environment with that of the EU, on the path towards enlargement, together with the countries of the Western Balkans.

As you know, the next Commission will also put forward a proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework of the EU, that will start in 2028. It's too early to communicate on these issues but it is fair to reflect on the importance of mobilising the different levers to support the transport sector, being through EU funding, Recovery and Resilience Facility, Member States' funding but also private investments, including through Public-Private Partnerships or Joint Undertakings in research.

Well-functioning transport, and aviation, is not a 'nice to have'. It is a must, if we are serious about gearing up Europe to face known – and unknown – crises, and about boosting its competitiveness.

We will all need to see how things develop in the coming months, but rest assured that there are no indications that the EU's strong and positive engagement with ECAC and with ICAO would in any way change.

Thank you for your attention and let's have a very fruitful Plenary meeting!

— END —