



**Draft Opening remarks by the President of the Council of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano,
to the First Meeting (virtual) of the 214th Session
of the Air Navigation Commission**

(Montréal, 5 May 2020)

Welcome to the first ANC virtual meeting. We are certainly facing a number of firsts this session and I offer my thanks to you as Commission Members for your flexibility during these unprecedented and difficult times that is enabling you to continue your work. The open channel of communication through your President and extensive collaboration with the Secretariat has made this possible.

I would like to join Mr. Naoumi in welcoming your new Commissioner nominated by Argentina, Mr. Carlos Ruben Fernández, and Ms. Couchman, replacing Mr. Jackson who served many years as the Observer of IFALPA.

Your current session will be challenging and busy. Again, thank you for your flexibility and I encourage you to keep informed of any changes in ICAO priorities put forward by the Council Aviation Recovery Task Force and agreed by the Council during this time of COVID-19.

We will likely be asking for the Commission's input on quite a number of technical questions and so I will come back to you through your President with any requests from the Council.

Your session includes important work on Standards and Recommended Practices and I wish you well with those deliberations. I expect that the subject of delaying the applicability dates of some of the 2020 Standards, which has been raised by several States, will be discussed and the Council will look to the Commission for your best advice.

The work of your own panels will surely be impacted, to a greater or lesser extent, by the COVID-19 pandemic. I suspect that you will have to review and adjust their work and meeting programmes. I do note that you will take up deliberations on new ways for States and Industry to provide direct submissions of SARPs proposals. This is an intriguing development. Sometimes, a crisis such as this pandemic can serve as an opportunity to disrupt our status quo and usher in new thinking. Perhaps your new ideas can serve to not only address the resource implications of COVID-19 but also help your panel community to become more effective in supporting you to keep ICAO's SARPs relevant in a rapidly changing world.

Of course, in this session, we have all had to accept new work methods and the Council will be interested in your views on some of these new ways of doing business. Not all methods are ideal — some things will work well, others not so well. The difficult situation that we are in could well be a catalyst for improving the way we work and reducing the administrative burden, both on our Organization and on the States in meeting our requirements of them. Perhaps you could identify some software or hardware tools or even some procedures that might make us all more efficient.

Again, welcome to this unusual session and I wish you all well in your deliberations.