



**Keynote address by the
Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. Juan Carlos Salazar
to the IATA World Sustainability Symposium
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1. To the IATA Director General, Willie Walsh, and his senior management team, I am grateful for the opportunity to address you here today at the 2024 IATA World Sustainability Symposium. I had the opportunity earlier this year to visit with Willie Walsh and the rest of the IATA team – the first time that an ICAO Secretary General had been to the IATA office in Geneva – and I wanted to thank you for your collaboration, openness and friendship. The relationship between ICAO and IATA has never been more important and valuable.
2. I am also energized by the collective expertise and vision in this room. You, the leaders of the global aviation industry, guide our sector with remarkable skill and foresight.
3. IATA's initiative in organizing this symposium underscores the aviation industry's determination to drive sustainable solutions. This commitment is evident in the daily decisions and strategic plans of industry leaders worldwide.
4. In that role, you face a critical challenge: leveraging the green transition to ensure aviation's sustainable future. This task might seem challenging, but it also presents significant opportunities for innovation and growth.
5. Ensuring aviation's sustainable future is not just an environmental imperative; it is crucial for the industry's continued role as a catalyst for global economic development. This is particularly significant for developing countries, where much of the aviation growth is forecasted to occur. By successfully navigating the green transition, I believe that we can strengthen aviation's position as a driver of sustainable development worldwide, connecting people and markets while respecting environmental boundaries.

6. ICAO's role in facilitating global cooperation will be crucial in this journey. For 80 years, we have helped the aviation sector navigate complex technical and political challenges. This experience positions ICAO uniquely to support the industry's sustainability efforts.
7. Throughout our history, we have worked in partnership with IATA, using your technical expertise to complement our work. This collaboration has been instrumental in developing global policy frameworks that align with the realities and aspirations of airlines. Together, we've supported the industry's mission to connect more people to more places while continuously improving safety, speed, and efficiency.
8. Our partnership remains deeply embedded today, and nowhere is that more important than on the topic of sustainability.
9. Many of you may be aware that this year marks the 80th anniversary of the Chicago Convention, signed on 7 December 1944, and the subsequent creation of ICAO. And as we celebrate that milestone, we have been garnering support for our comprehensive new long-term ICAO Strategic Plan 2026 – 2050. The Strategic Plan is focused on outcome-oriented strategic goals that will remain relevant through 2050 and beyond. And we have set three ambitious and interconnected aspirational goals:
 - a) Zero fatalities in international aviation from accidents and acts of unlawful interference.
 - b) Net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 for international civil aviation operations.
 - c) Aviation serving as an integral part of a thriving, connected, accessible, inclusive, and affordable transport system.
10. Let me focus naturally on the second of these – net zero emissions by 2050.
11. We are pushing a specific strategic goal focusing on environmentally sustainable aviation. As we connect the world, we must do so by minimizing both emissions and noise. We want to ensure that air transportation capacity grows to meet increasing global demand. This environmentally conscious approach drives innovation, opens new opportunities, and ensures the long-term viability of our industry and our planet.

12. But to achieve that goal, collaboration is absolutely key.
13. This collaboration was crucial in achieving consensus in 2022 among ICAO's Member States on the Long-term Global Aspirational Goal (LTAG) for international aviation: Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050. LTAG demands innovative thinking and bold action – areas where airlines have consistently demonstrated excellence.
14. Building on this momentum, the ICAO Global Framework on Sustainable Aviation Fuel, Lower Carbon Aviation Fuel, and other Aviation Cleaner Energies was agreed by our Member States in Dubai last year at the 3rd ICAO Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3). Of course, the Framework is not perfect: it's the outcome of negotiation and compromise. But we believe the Framework will instill confidence for regulators, the aviation and fuel industries, and investors, sending a clear and positive market signal and paving the way for a significant increase in the production of sustainable fuels. ICAO is now supporting States with their progress under these agreements. We really look forward to even stronger collaboration with the aviation industry in our collective journey toward aviation's cleaner energy transition. Your cooperation has been of fundamental importance to this achievement and in supporting airline uptake of SAF.
15. I urge you to continue to push across the sector for increased scaling up in the production and use of SAF. We all know that there are huge opportunities to establish a SAF value chain in economies all around the world, particularly in developing countries. As airline representatives and stakeholders of the broader aviation sector, you have a huge advocacy role to play.
16. Our Assistance, Capacity-building and Training for Sustainable Aviation Fuels (ACT-SAF) programme provides tailored assistance, capacity-building and training support for global SAF development and deployment.
17. Through ACT-SAF, ICAO collaborates with over 180 States and Organizations to provide comprehensive implementation support, including coordination efforts, training programmes, and SAF feasibility and business implementation studies.
18. Our aim is to complete 20 feasibility studies by 2025, and a further 30 by 2028. These studies will create opportunities for States to reach their full potential for developing and deploying these fuels.

19. On the subject of funding, the scale-up of fuel production needed to achieve the LTAG is expected to require cumulative investments of around 3.2 trillion US dollars between now and 2050. That is why I have made a personal commitment to the establishment of the ICAO Fininvest Hub, which is intended to provide a platform to link clean energy project proposals with financing opportunities. It is part of our approach to creating innovative financial mechanisms to support the green transition.
20. Let me also take a moment to highlight CORSIA, the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation. As I'm sure everyone in this room is well aware, CORSIA establishes a basis for airlines to reduce their offsetting requirements, relying on a robust, globally harmonized sustainability certification and life cycle assessment for the use of eligible fuels. I am encouraged that we are seeing increasing volumes of certified CORSIA-eligible fuels being reported by the approved Sustainability Certification Schemes over the past two years.
21. As we move ahead with implementation of the scheme, we also need to continue to push for eligible emissions units in sufficient quantities to meet airlines' offsetting requirements, all the while ensuring the quality of emissions units without double-counting. Overall, we see very positive movement with CORSIA, with 128 States now participating on a voluntary basis. But it's absolutely crucial that we maintain consensus and momentum in the implementation of the CORSIA scheme as a key element in our overall emissions reduction strategy and I ask you, IATA and your member airlines, for your support in that.
22. While we have made significant progress with CORSIA and other initiatives, our work is far from over. Looking forward, there are still many critical areas in which we can further deepen our cooperation. ICAO's studies on fuel accounting systems for international aviation, for example, could greatly benefit from your expertise.
23. Just last week, we held our first ever ICAO symposium on non-CO2 aviation emissions. This is a new area for us in a topic of significant interest to airlines and we learned a huge amount about aviation's non-CO2 effects – including contrail formation, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. Again, ICAO can only stand to benefit from the contributions of the experts in this room as we strive to understand and enhance the climate science and explore mitigation measures and policy options. So, please join us in that future work.

24. Colleagues, as we've discussed today, ICAO and IATA have made significant strides in aviation sustainability through initiatives like LTAG, ACT-SAF, CORSIA, and the Fininvest Hub. However, the path to a sustainable future for aviation is one we must continue to navigate together. Your expertise and experience are crucial to this journey.
25. Working together, we can transform aviation sustainability from a challenge into our industry's greatest opportunity.
26. The discussions you have here, the ideas you generate, and the partnerships you forge will define our industry's trajectory.
27. Today, I have mentioned some key advocacy messages and I would like to finish on that point. We all know that in the past, air transport has been widely recognised as a “hard to decarbonize” sector. But I feel that the conversation has shifted and the “only 2% of global emissions” message is not enough anymore. We are all focusing much less on the percentage of global emissions that aviation contributes and much more on what we can and must do about it.
28. Aviation has a great story to tell: about the significant economic and social benefits we bring to the world’s economy through the creation of jobs and as a driver of economic development. About the massive progress we have made in reducing our environmental footprint. And about the robust international agreements which we have in place which lay the foundations for concrete action towards our sustainable future.
29. And so, if I have one request to make of all of you in this room, it is this. The full engagement of the entire aviation ecosystem in our external advocacy and outreach to the world is vital and we have to move together as a team, towards our common goals. So please, work with ICAO and work with each other, in telling that great story to the world. It will allow us to accelerate towards the overall objectives we share to mitigate, decrease and eventually eliminate air transport emissions.
30. Throughout this symposium, I encourage you to explore ways to strengthen our partnerships and work together. We owe it to the passengers of today and to all future generations.
31. Thank you.