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**Subject:** First ICAO Global Air Cargo Summit,  
Antalya, Türkiye, 9 to 11 April 2025

**Action required:** To register online by 31 March 2025

Sir/Madam,

I have the honour to invite you to participate in the First International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Global Air Cargo Summit, which is being convened in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 11 April 2025. A preliminary programme is enclosed for your reference.

The summit with the theme *Advancing the Sustainable Growth of Air Cargo* is being hosted by the Turkish Directorate General of Civil Aviation and will bring together stakeholders of air cargo services at various levels, including regulators, airlines, freight forwarders, airport operators, academia, and other strategic partners from relevant United Nations agencies. The meeting will discuss and address emerging issues in the development of air cargo, identify ways of maximizing the benefits of air cargo to States and other stakeholders, and propose pragmatic solutions and a roadmap on identified regulatory and operational challenges to the sustainable growth of air cargo services.

The event, which will be conducted in English, will be complemented by an exhibition showcasing a broad range of products and services related to air cargo services. Additional information, including administrative arrangements and online registration, will be made available on the meeting website at <https://www.icao.int/Meetings/IACS/Pages/default.aspx>.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Juan Carlos Salazar  
Secretary General

**Enclosure:** *Preliminary programme (English only)*

# FIRST ICAO GLOBAL AIR CARGO SUMMIT

## Theme: *Advancing the Sustainable Growth of Air Cargo*

### Concept Note

#### Introduction

Air cargo serves as a trade facilitator, increasing the global reach of enterprises, enabling them to get products to the market in a more convenient and faster way. It allows enterprises to be more responsive to customer needs while also improving connectivity between buyers and sellers, including just-in-time inventory management and build-to-order production.

Globally, air freight constitutes 35 per cent of world trade by value despite accounting for less than one per cent by volume. Air cargo is highly diverse in its physical characteristics and value. It may originate from, and be delivered to, almost anywhere in the world, most commonly as goods being sent from a seller to a buyer or from a consignor to a consignee. This is why e-commerce cannot flourish without air cargo services.

Accelerated advancement of aircraft technology, rapid growth of electronic transactions, and reshuffling in the logistics services and its complementarity with other means of transport (intermodal) in the supply chain are increasingly influencing air cargo businesses and the way enterprises interact among themselves, and with consumers and governments.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, air cargo played a vital role in the transport of humanitarian and medical goods, including personal protective equipment and vaccines, while still meeting demand for everyday consumer needs. This is due to aviation's speed and reliability, giving it an advantage over other modes of transport in "same-day" and "next-day" delivery services and transportation of urgent or time-sensitive goods.



#### The Issues

In order to continue to optimize the numerous benefits of air cargo services and to assure the safe, secure and sustainable growth of this unique sector, concerted efforts must be made to improve its operating environment by removing operational and regulatory constraints without compromising safety and security. In this regard, it would be necessary to establish a more liberal and flexible market access for air cargo operations and:



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- put in place quality infrastructure commensurate with the current and future air cargo development;
- encourage improved and integrated supply chains under a liberalized marketplace;
- streamline security and safety measures to improve efficiency;
- foster the use of technology and innovation to enhance cargo processing speed, accuracy and safety;
- optimize the use of Pre-Loading Advance Cargo Information (PLACI) data for risk and aviation security purposes;
- intensify the use of unmanned aircraft systems to perform tasks of cargo deliveries; and
- encourage the ratification of the legal framework for global cargo operations, among others.

### The Summit

The First ICAO Global Air Cargo Summit would therefore provide a unique forum and opportunity for a collaborative approach to address these issues and provide a pragmatic roadmap to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the air cargo operating environment. Having a collaborative and harmonized approach to ensure safety, security, facilitation, economic regulation of air cargo services and resolving any operational challenges and vulnerability in these domains, would define a practical, efficient and viable future for air cargo operations.

### The Target Audience

The Summit will bring together stakeholders of air cargo services at various levels, including regulators, airlines, freight forwarders, airport operators, academia, and other strategic partners from relevant United Nations agencies.

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## TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

**Location:** Antalya, Türkiye

**Date:** 9 to 11 April 2025

**Duration:** 3 days

Day 1 – Wednesday, 9 April	
09:30 – 10:30	<b>Opening Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Welcome Address by Türkiye</li> <li>➔ Remarks by relevant industry partners</li> <li>➔ Remarks by ICAO</li> <li>➔ Keynote Address by Türkiye</li> </ul>
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11:00 – 12:30	<b>Session 1 – <i>Establishing a more operational flexible and liberal market access for air cargo operations</i></b>
<b>Presentations</b>	<p>Improving the regulatory environment for international air cargo services through increasing numbers of liberalized bilateral and multilateral air services agreements, including fifth and seventh freedom traffic rights, would create notable operational flexibility for air cargo to provide efficient and cost-effective services on a regional and global basis.</p> <p><i>This session would examine how the regulatory environment can be further liberalized in view of the vital role that air cargo plays in ensuring the competitiveness and commercial success of many industries across the globe. The need for different regulatory arrangements from those applying to international air passenger services, and the development of a specific international agreement to enable air cargo to respond more efficiently to market developments and demands, would also be looked at.</i></p>
12:30 – 12:45	<b>SKYTALKS</b>
12:45 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00 – 15:30	<b>Session 2 – <i>Interaction between air cargo and e-commerce</i></b>
<b>Panel Discussion</b>	<p>Air cargo is an enabler for e-commerce with 80 per cent of cross-border e-commerce transported by air. E-commerce businesses are growing exponentially, which in turn is an important driver for demand. Meanwhile, this rapid growth brings significant impacts on air cargo development with players in the e-commerce industry stretching business to their own logistics process.</p> <p><i>This interactive session and panel discussion will focus on the interaction between air cargo and the continuous increase in e-commerce industry. The discussion would also highlight the opportunities and importance, as well as the challenges, of the role of air cargo in supporting the future growth of e-commerce.</i></p>
15:30 – 15:45	<b>SKYTALKS</b>
15:45 – 16:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>

16:00 – 17:30	<b>Session 3 – Adequate infrastructure, an essential for air cargo services</b>
<b>Presentations</b>	<p>Sufficient and quality infrastructure is essential for meeting the present and future development needs of air cargo and maximizing its potential. Infrastructure advancement enables air cargo systems to streamline operations and optimize efficiency. Moreover, modernization in infrastructure is required for air cargo to adapt and cope with the trend of end-to-end service, and efficiently connect with other modes of transport. The improved supply chain through more effective intermodal transport system will ultimately better serve the consumers of the services.</p> <p><i>This session will focus on infrastructure development for air cargo operations and intermodal transport system. Focus would also be on how States can integrate infrastructure programme in their national development plan and elevate the role of the private sector in financing infrastructure to support the development and efficiency of air cargo operations.</i></p>
17:30 – 17:45	<b>SKYTALKS</b>
17:45 – 18:30	<b>Cocktail Reception?</b>
18:30 – 20:30	<b>Welcome Dinner?</b>
<b>End of Day 1</b>	

<b>Day 2 – Thursday, 10 April</b>	
08:45 – 09:00	<b>SKYTALKS</b>
09:00 – 09:15	<b>High Keynote Address by the ICAO Secretary General</b>
09:15 – 10:45	<b>Session 4 - Streamlining cargo release and clearance processes for global trade efficiency</b>
<b>Panel Discussion</b>	<p>Current inefficiencies and complexities in cargo release and clearance processes are hindering compliance with standards, impeding maximum facilitation by the authorities, and obstructing efficient international trade and supply chain operations. ICAO Annex 9 – <i>Facilitation</i> on facilitation requirements promotes the concept of premium procedures. These procedures aim to smooth the entry and departure of goods while maintaining security and compliance measures. They also seek to strengthen the authorities' ability to oversee control processes, enforce laws, facilitate international trade, and enhance supply chain efficiency.</p> <p><i>This session will explore strategies to enhance cargo release and clearance processes, to promote the use of advanced electronic documentation and risk-based screening, to foster collaboration between customs authorities and industry stakeholders, to implement customs warehouse control and electronic granting of release and clearance of goods, and to set up electronic payment arrangements.</i></p>

10:45 – 11:00	<b>SKYTALKS</b>	<b>SECURITY AND FACILITATION</b>
11:00 – 11:15	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
11:15 – 12:45	<b>Session 5 – Advancements in automation of cargo processes to enhance efficiency and compliance</b>	
<b>Presentations</b>	<p>Traditional air cargo systems that operate without the assistance of information technology often experience long dwell times for imported shipments. Modern technology in the air cargo clearance process is a top priority for public authorities, as it offers the most efficient means of managing a vast amount of data exchanged among several parties and other relevant government agencies. The goal is to ensure real-time exchange of information among authorities, trade and transport stakeholders, and the airport cargo community, including any international exchange of information. This can be achieved by automating cargo processes to align with ICAO Annex 9 facilitation standards and leveraging information technology to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of air cargo procedures.</p> <p><i>This session will focus on the latest developments such as digitizing air cargo documentation, implementing electronic data interchange (EDI) systems, utilizing blockchain technology for cargo tracking, advance cargo information, and the impact of automated processes on the overall efficiency of the movement of goods across borders.</i></p>	
12:45 – 13:00	<b>SKYTALKS</b>	
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	
14:00 – 16:00	<b>Session 6 – Securing air cargo and mail to advance sustainability and resilience</b>	
<b>Presentations and Panel Discussion</b>	<p>In the rapidly evolving threat landscape, which may challenge the sustainability of the air cargo global supply chain, it is essential to implement robust security measures while incorporating technological advancements. Security plays a critical role in the aviation cargo and mail operations and should take innovative approaches to drive progress toward a more responsible aviation sector.</p> <p><i>The aim of this session is to inspire collaborative and actionable strategies, working toward shared security and sustainability goals across the aviation cargo and mail security sector. The discussion will seek to foster collective efforts to strengthen security and support the transition to a more sustainable aviation security industry.</i></p>	

16:00 – 16:30	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
16:30 – 17:00	<b>SKYTALKS</b>	
<b>End of Day 2</b>		

<b>Day 3 – Friday, 11 April</b>		
08:45 – 09:00	<b>SKYTALKS</b>	<b>SAFETY AND EMERGING ISSUES</b>
09:00 – 10:30	<b>Session 7 - Supporting air cargo transportation with unmanned aircraft</b>	
<b>Presentations</b>	<p>Unmanned aircraft are increasingly used to transport cargo and mail. Different technical capabilities enable transportation at decreasing costs, whether through small, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), or larger remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS). Opportunities include package deliveries in urban and suburban environments, or regional, and even international operations. Regulatory challenges include certification of aircraft; operational approvals and oversight; ground and airspace infrastructure; airspace management; increasing levels of automation and the role of the human; identifying and addressing novel regulatory challenges.</p> <p><i>This session will explore how unmanned aircraft are used to support economic activities, humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, as well as other critical functions such as infrastructure monitoring, firefighting, data collection. Experts will share insights on the operational capabilities offered by these technologies, as well as specific regulatory challenges and highlight the critical importance of international cooperation to maximize the benefits of unmanned aviation to support air cargo operations.</i></p>	
10:30 – 10:45	<b>SKYTALKS</b>	
10:45 – 11:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
11:00 – 12:30	<b>Session 8 – Air cargo safety (Transportation of Dangerous Good)</b>	
<b>Presentations</b>	<p>Dangerous goods pose a danger to the aircraft and its occupants if not packaged, handled and stowed safely. Some dangerous goods are too dangerous to be carried on an aircraft, and some are forbidden under normal circumstances but may be carried through an approval granted by the States concerned. Most dangerous goods can be transported on aircraft subject to compliance with the required regulations. Dangerous goods that should not be transported by air or that do not comply with ICAO provisions are often discovered in cargo, mail and baggage. These can pose a significant risk to aviation safety.</p> <p><i>This session will explore current risks associated with the transport of dangerous goods by air and measures that can be taken to mitigate against them. It will highlight the need for a risk-based, collaborative approach to managing cargo safety.</i></p>	

12:30 – 12:45	<b>SKYTALKS</b>
12:45 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00 – 15:30	<b>Session 9 – E-commerce and technology advancement on the future of air cargo transport</b>
<b>Presentations</b>	<p>Air cargo has become an indispensable component of e-commerce. This is because e-commerce cannot flourish without air cargo services. To optimize its services to meet the demands of e-commerce, cargo airlines need to continue to utilize technological innovations, including advanced tracking systems, Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) technology, digital technology and sophisticated data analytics to enable them to enhance shipment visibility, improve inventory management, and streamline the e-commerce supply chain.</p> <p><i>This session will feature presentations on the latest technological innovations impacting air cargo transport and service development particularly e commerce, and how these technologies are advancing the growth of e commerce.</i></p>
15:30 – 16:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>
16:00 – 17:30	<b>Summit Wrap-up</b>
<b>Panel Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Wrap-up/Summary of Discussion</li> <li>➔ Closing remarks</li> </ul>
<b>End of the Summit</b>	

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