

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

allow me to thank you for your kind invitation to the AirTN NextGen Final Network Meeting and Workshop. The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic is along with the University of Žilina an AirTN project partner involved in the current network.

We believe that research and development in aviation is crucial in order for this sector to develop further. Nevertheless we know that this process is not only time consuming but also very expensive and therefore there must be clear cooperation between not only the private and public sphere but also between other participants from other countries as well as between different industries. I can speak for the Slovak Republic in that we do not have any European Aeronautical Research Facilities which focuses mainly on the strategic and key facilities according to the ACARE classification but we believe in cooperation with our partners and this is also what AirTN helps to achieve. Aviation is an important force for the economy of each country not only directly by employing people in the aviation sector but also in making the world a smaller place, therefore delivering goods faster and more plentiful and making the world more globalized and better connected which in turn also helps other regions in the world. We also value highly our cooperation between the universities and the ministry that can also be seen in the fact that most of the employees at the Directorate General of Civil Aviation at the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic are graduates of the University of Žilina and we often cooperate at different venues and seminars regarding a wide range of aviation related topics. In terms of research and development the University of Žilina has established a new research centre in 2013 with a mission to achieve synergic effect in using and enhancing research potential by integrating crucial research activities for applied research. I do not want to say what was already said by Benedikt but just a few words about the research and development at the University of Žilina. The University and all its faculties including the Faculty of Operation and Economics of Transport and Communications / Air Transport Department has, and now let me directly quote them: *a long tradition and enjoys reputation for solving scientific and research topics, especially in transport technologies, transport services, postal technologies and services, and economics of transport*

*and communications. An important objective of the Faculty's scientific and research activities is to enhance the career potential of future graduates in the above mentioned areas and to further develop major industries in Slovakia and abroad.*

The aviation sector in the Slovak Republic may not be perceived as being too large. It is true that we do not have our own scheduled air carrier and that our biggest commercial airline has only six Boeing 737 aircraft. Nevertheless we are manufacturing some ultralight aircraft such as TomarkAero or Aerospool and also the AeroMobil is a Slovak invention. We have our own aircraft maintenance facilities at Trenčín or at Piešťany and Bratislava airports among others as well as foreign maintenance facilities such as Austrian Technik Bratislava. And of course there are other important organisations in aviation such as the air navigation services provider or the public sector. One might view research and development as being important only in the private sphere but the truth is that it is necessary in both the private and public. Nevertheless new technologies create new problems that the public sphere must address. One such example are the remotely piloted aircraft systems, better known to the public as drones where the governments as well as international organisations had to create a new set of legal rules for the use of these new technologies. The same will need to apply for the Aeromobil where new set of rules will need to be made in order to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle and for all parties.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, as we all know education and the workforce as well as the research are all extremely well connected. As Benedikt mentioned there are numerous achieved results – I can for example not only say about the civil aviation but also regarding Slovak space activities where the Slovak Republic has for example built its first own satellite or a stratospheric balloon. Nevertheless in order for aviation to grow and expand and for it to be even more economical and ecologically friendly we must work further in closer cooperation between the sectors and countries. This is slowly becoming a reality where we see even more crucial cooperation than ever before. I have on Sunday returned from the 39th ICAO General Assembly, where the Slovak Republic due to its Presidency in the Council of the European Union presented

a number of working and information papers on behalf of both the EU member states and European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) member states and was in charge of the coordination meetings of the member states. The level of coordination and cooperation between all the concerned parties in all areas but mostly in the main global market-based measures scheme was very very good and this was the main reason why the whole European Commission and Council of the European Union were succesful in making the landmark deal to curb international aviation emissions a reality and that from 2021 65 states including all EU member states will be covered by a Global Market-Based Measure to offset CO2 emissions. The European Union as well as ECAC have achieved considerable success at the ICAO General Assembly which paves the way for the future. This is also the way with AirTN and that is why it is so important and why we must work together!

Thank you for your attention!