



**OPENING STATEMENT BY
MRS. F. ODUTOLA, DIRECTOR AIR TRANSPORT BUREAU
ON BEHALF OF THE ICAO SECRETARY GENERAL
AT THE ICAO AIR SERVICES NEGOTIATION CONFERENCE (ICAN2009)**

(Istanbul, Turkey, 28 September – 2 October 2009)

Dr. Ali ARIDURU, Director General of Civil Aviation, Turkey;
Other dignitaries here present;
Delegations to this Conference;
Ladies and gentlemen, good morning!

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of Mr. Raymond Benjamin, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), to the ICAO Air Services Negotiation Conference -2009 (ICAN2009).

This global conference is the second such event organized by ICAO, which is designed to facilitate the air service negotiation process between States with a view to improving its efficiency and of course, its cost-effectiveness. It is a concept created by the ICAO Secretariat, and we are proud that it has materialized successfully, as exemplified by ICAN2008 held last year in Dubai! I am very pleased to report that our present conference -ICAN2009- has drawn the participation of over 50 countries about double last year's figure, reflecting an increasing interest of our Member States in utilizing this ICAO facility.

In this regard, I wish to express our special thanks to the Government of Turkey, particularly the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, for their support and generosity in hosting this event and in providing the excellent meeting facilities.

This conference takes place at a time when the world is going through one of the most challenging times in recent history. The global financial crisis and the economic downturn have had a serious impact on international air transport. The industry has called for action by governments to help it navigate through this difficult time. It is therefore timely that you, the government air service negotiators are gathered at this ICAO conference, as it is the air services arrangements you are making here that will directly shape the operating environment for the airline industry. I am confident that with common vision and through common efforts, your negotiations/consultations in the next few days will yield concrete results to the benefit of your States' economy, the travelling public and your airline industry, and in broader terms, contribute to the sustainable development of international air transport and the world economy.

As the global intergovernmental organization for civil aviation, ICAO's mission is to ensure the safe and orderly growth of international civil aviation, and to meet the needs of the people of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport. We will continue to

play this role in practical and effective ways to meet the needs of our Contracting States. ICAN is just one of the means we have initiated to serve our States. As a result of its success and the requests of the participating States, ICAO has decided to continue to hold this conference in different regions on a regular basis.

We all face many challenges as well as opportunities. Like you, we, in ICAO, must also contend with the tough reality of increasing demands on our services, competing priorities and resource constraints. Nevertheless, I am hopeful that with your support, including the generous offer of States to host this event, we will be able to continue this endeavour and serve you better in the future.

Let us all work together as a community and in a spirit of cooperation and understanding the benefit of which we stand to reap. In conclusion, I wish all of you success in your negotiations!