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10TH ANNIVERSARY OF ICAO MRTD SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS UN ORGANIZATION'S EFFORTS TO SUPPORT NEW NATIONAL TRAVELLER IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS

MONTRÉAL, 8 October 2014 – The 10th Machine-readable Travel Document (MRTD) Symposium is now underway at the Montréal Headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), with over 500 participants from every region of the world reaffirming ICAO's leadership in strengthening the security and efficiency of air transportation.

Having met its 2010 deadline for the introduction of machine-readable passports on a comprehensive global basis, and responding to calls from States on the need to expand the scope of its guidance and assistance to ensure a more robust and secure global travel document regime, ICAO has recently begun to evolve its MRTD programme to assist States in the establishment of holistic traveller identification management systems.

“For nearly 45 of the 70 years that ICAO has been fulfilling its global aviation mandate, it has also been developing Standards, Recommended Practices and technical specifications specifically for machine-readable passports and other travel documents,” stressed ICAO Secretary General, Raymond Benjamin. “ICAO strives to ensure that States are equipped with the necessary tools for the highest possible level of travel document security and expedited border clearance, and the new ICAO Traveller Identification Programme guides our efforts in this area.”

ICAO's technical specifications for machine readable passports, visas and identity cards used as official travel documents are published in the Organization's Document 9303, *Machine Readable Travel Documents*. It also includes Standards for biometrically-enabled travel documents such as ePassports.

ICAO's Traveller Identification Programme (ICAO TRIP) Strategy is the global framework for holistic and coordinated identification management, integrating the issuance of travel documents and their inspection at borders. It originates from ICAO's recent achievements in driving the global deadline for machine-readable passports and promotes global adoption of standardized biometrically-enhanced ePassports to facilitate secure border controls.

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Resources for editors:

The ICAO MRTD/TRIP website: <http://www.icao.int/Security/mrtd/Pages/default.aspx>

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A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.
