



**Address by the President of the Council of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Roberto Kobeh González,
to the Global Air Traffic Management Forum on
Civil/Military Cooperation**

(ICAO Headquarters - 19 October 2009)

I would like to thank you for accepting ICAO's invitation to take part in this unique Global Air Traffic Management Forum on Civil/Military Cooperation.

What brings us here is a common realization that improved cooperation between civil and military authorities is one of the key conditions for increasing the effective use of available airspace. We all stand to gain. For civil aviation, it means being better equipped to meet the operational requirements of a safe and efficient air transportation system. For the military, it means meeting mission requirements safely and efficiently. And for all of us, it means achieving our goals in an environmentally-sustainable manner.

I view the forum as an opportunity to understand each other's specific requirements and challenges, to share best practices, and to explore how we can enhance the relationship between the two sectors. The fact that we must do so is becoming obvious given the pressures exerted by consistent and widespread traffic growth in many parts of the world. A globally-harmonized air transport system, operating at maximum efficiency — in terms of safety, security and sustainably — begins with a commitment from both civil and military authorities to improve cooperation and coordination.

To our military guests, let me emphasize that the benefits of flexible airspace management are not limited to the civil community. Better coordination between us can lead to improved access to civil airspace for military training purposes and good cooperation in the conduct of defence operations. Solid collaboration will allow you to meet your requirements even as we are facing increasing air traffic capacity demands.

ICAO has been involved in promoting civil/military cooperation practically from the time the Organization was created in 1944. Our focus over the years, as outlined in the provisions of Annex 11 to the Chicago Convention, has been on ensuring the necessary coordination between civil and military authorities on activities potentially hazardous to civil aircraft and on activities that may affect civil aircraft flights in prohibited, restricted, or dangerous airspace.

More recently, an appendix to Assembly Resolution A36-13 asks States to take appropriate action to coordinate with military authorities to implement a flexible use of airspace and cooperative approach to airspace organization and management.

The sharing of airspace between civil and military aviation also features prominently in ICAO's vision of an integrated, harmonized and globally interoperable air traffic management system as laid out in the ATM Operational Concept and in the Global Air Navigation Plan. Key principles argue that:

- airspace should be a usable resource;
- any restriction on the use of a particular segment of airspace should be considered transitory; and
- all airspace should be managed flexibly with an equitable balance between civil and military users through strategic coordination and dynamic interaction.

This new and flexible concept for airspace use, combined with the soaring cost of fuel in recent years, have provided the motivation to rethink the traditional role of civil/military coordination and cooperation. The ultimate goal is to open up segregated airspace when it is not being used for its originally-intended purpose which will allow for better airspace management and access for all users according to their needs without impeding the military's mission or operations.

In addition to the advantages that increased flexibility and balance in airspace management will bring for airspace users, there is also a positive impact for the environment: shorter flights between city pairs will mean reduced fuel burn and less CO₂ emissions released into the atmosphere.

Before we can reap the benefits, however, we have to make significant changes in the way we think about and engage in civil/military cooperation. The subject is fundamentally domestic in nature, involving the relationship between the civil aviation and military authorities in each State. The way that each State handles this relationship has an impact on the global air transport system and it is for this reason that ICAO has convened the Global Air Traffic Management Forum on Civil/Military Cooperation.

I encourage you to take full advantage of the experts that are here; listen to their presentations on how to establish the fundamental building blocks for cooperation; learn about security and unmanned aircraft systems; gain insight into the regional perspective; share your experience; and participate in the roundtable discussions. Your full participation will help in developing new and stronger civil/military relationships based on flexible airspace management and your findings will contribute to important discussions at ICAO's Assembly next year and to ICAO's efforts in the regions in support of improved civil/military cooperation in your States.

Over the next few days you will be working hard and I am confident that good progress will be made. Of course, work on civil/military cooperation is not limited to our efforts here in Montréal and I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the important role played by the Air Traffic Control Association and its successful series of civil/military air traffic management summits.

In addition, over the years there have been many seminars and workshops conducted by our colleagues in the ICAO Regional Offices. These will no doubt continue and will be augmented by the lessons learned this week.

In closing, let me express my sincere appreciation to our partners in the organization of this global forum: CANSO, EUROCONTROL, IATA, NATO, ATCA and UVS International.

And finally, I thank you for joining us here in Montréal. In three days' time, you will return to your countries and I urge you to share with your colleagues the important new ideas and fresh approaches you will have learned on facilitating civil/military cooperation.