DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION AGREE ON GREATER TRANSPARENCY AND SHARING OF INFORMATION

Montreal (Canada), 22 March 2006 - Directors General of Civil Aviation from Contracting States of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) meeting in Montreal have agreed to post results from the Organization's Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) on the ICAO public website.
Whereas the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its Annexes provide the essential framework required to meet the safety needs of a global aviation system;

Whereas the Directors General of Civil Aviation have a collective responsibility for international civil aviation safety;

Recognizing that the safety framework must be fully utilized by all stakeholders and continuously evolve to ensure its sustained effectiveness and efficiency in the changing regulatory, economic and technical environment of the 21st century;

Recalling that transparency and sharing of safety information are fundamental tenets of a safe air transportation system;

Recalling that recognition as valid of certificates and licences of other States is governed by Article 33 of the Convention and applicable Standards;

Recalling the role of ICAO in the settlement of disputes;

Recognizing that mutual trust between States as well as public confidence in the safety of air transportation is contingent upon access to adequate safety information;

Recognizing that safety is a shared responsibility, and advancements in global safety can only be possible through the leadership of ICAO, and a cooperative, collaborative and coordinated effort among all stakeholders; and

Recognizing that further improvements in aviation safety within and among States require a cooperative and proactive approach in which safety risks are identified and managed;

The Directors General of Civil Aviation:

1. Commit to reinforce the global aviation safety framework by:

a) sharing as soon as possible appropriate safety-related information among States, all other aviation stakeholders and the public, including the disclosure of information on the results of their safety oversight audit as soon as possible and, in any case, not later than 23 March 2008;

b) exercising safety oversight of their operators in full compliance with applicable SARPs, assuring themselves that foreign operators flying in their territory receive adequate oversight from their own State and taking appropriate action when necessary to preserve safety;
c) expeditiously implementing safety management systems across the aviation industry to complement the existing regulatory framework;

d) developing sustainable safety solutions, including the formation or strengthening of regional and sub-regional safety oversight organizations and initiatives; and

e) promoting a just culture;

*The Conference:*

2. *Calls upon* States to base the recognition as valid of certificates and licences of other States exclusively on safety considerations and not for the purpose of gaining economic advantage;

3. *Calls upon* States, ICAO, industry, and donor organizations to direct resources towards the establishment of sustainable safety oversight solutions;

4. *Calls upon* States, ICAO and industry to support the coordinated implementation of safety management systems;

5. *Calls upon* ICAO to:

   a) develop and actively support information exchange mechanisms that allow for an unrestricted flow of safety information between all aviation stakeholders;

   b) develop by June 2006 a strategy to communicate safety information effectively to the public;

   c) develop a mechanism under Article 21 of the Convention to make available aircraft registration and operator information;

   d) develop guidelines and procedures to verify the conditions for recognition as valid of certificates and licences, in keeping with Article 33 of the Convention; and

   e) study the development of a new Annex on safety oversight, safety assessment and safety management;

6. *Calls upon* States to demonstrate the political will to address aviation safety shortcomings, this includes the establishment, where necessary, of an autonomous Civil Aviation Authority which is empowered and adequately funded to provide effective safety oversight; and

7. *Calls upon* States and industry to closely coordinate with ICAO their safety initiatives to ensure optimum benefits to global aviation safety and to reduce duplication in effort.
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Although the deadline for posting the results is set for 23 March 2008, ICAO urged Directors General to comply as soon as possible. At the conclusion of the conference, some 70 States had authorized ICAO to publish the information.

A progress report will be submitted to the next regular Session of the ICAO Assembly in the Fall of 2007 and a full announcement on transparency achieved will be issued on 23 March 2008, listing those States that have failed to meet the deadline.

USOAP consists of regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonized safety audits carried out by ICAO in its 189 Contracting States to assess the level of implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices, identify safety concerns or deficiencies, and provide recommendations for their resolution.

Summary safety reports to appear on the ICAO website will cover eight critical areas: aviation legislation, operating regulations, structure of the civil aviation administration and safety oversight function, technical guidance material, technical personnel, licensing and certification obligations, continuing surveillance obligations and resolution of safety issues. States will be able to add complementary data to help evaluate the level of safety in their country.

“Transparency and sharing of safety information are fundamental tenets of a safe air transport system. I believe that this initiative and others taken at the conference will foster mutual trust between States, increase public confidence in air travel, and help maintain the integrity of the safest and most efficient means of mass transportation ever created,” said Dr. Assad Kotaite, Chairman of the Conference and President of the ICAO Council.

Dr. Kotaite emphasized that implementation and enforcement of all safety-related provisions of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, its Annexes, and ICAO Assembly Resolutions were essential to ensure aviation safety.
“Together, these documents constitute the essential regulatory framework for global air transport and must be fully utilized by all stakeholders, in a cooperative manner, to achieve optimum safety. Accidents most often happen when standards and regulations are not applied on a consistent basis,” he added.

566 participants from 153 Contracting States and 26 international organizations attended the conference convened by ICAO, from 20 to 22 March, to evaluate the current status of aviation safety worldwide, identify ways to make significant improvements in an assertive, coordinated and transparent manner, and formulate a Global Strategy for Aviation Strategy in the 21st Century.

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 and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 189 Contracting States.

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