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INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

ASSEMBLY – 35TH SESSION

PLENARY

Agenda Item 2: Statements by delegations of Contracting States and of Observers

STATEMENT

(Presented by Andorra)

Mr. President of the Council of ICAO,
Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to be able to make a statement at the 35th Session of the ICAO Assembly.

It is the first time that the Principality of Andorra is able to address all of you in a plenary meeting of the Assembly as a Contracting State, having adhered to the Chicago Convention in February 2001. I therefore wish to express the great satisfaction that the Government of Andorra has, as the small European State that we are, at being able to belong to, and participate in the work of, this international civil aviation forum which has contributed so much to the development of civil aviation.

I wish first of all to congratulate ICAO for its constant dedication, for more than half a century, in pursuing with tenacity and perseverance all of the aspects that have an impact on the safety and quality of civil aviation and to highlight the exceptional work undertaken to obtain through the latest audits an X-ray picture of civil aviation at the global level.

The recent figures published by the World Tourism Organization clearly show that the very rapid growth that tourism has experienced in these last two decades foresees a promising trend for the next 20 years with regard to international flows of tourists.

It is clear then that the world air transport sector with its constant innovation and adaptation to new technologies has contributed significantly to this expansion.

The aeronautical industry has had as a whole some losses of 30 billion dollars and world traffic in 2003 fell by some 2.4% in relation to 2002, according to statistical data made public by IATA.

Nevertheless, the forecasts for growth are encouraging and predict that there will be 2.3 billion passengers using scheduled flights in the year 2001 as compared to 1.6 billion at the present time.

The increasingly important role that tourism is having at the global level in our society and the forecasts that there will be more time in the near future for leisure and entertainment make it predictable that tourism and its “industry”, “our industry”, are going to expand significantly.

These are the dizzy figures of international civil aviation of recent years at the global level, but at a more local level, allow me to make a brief comment on the situation of civil aviation in my country.

The Principality of Andorra lies in the middle of the Pyrenees, between France and Spain. It has a surface area of 468 km² and presently has some 10 million visitors. It is one of the most visited countries in the world in relation to its population of only 65 000 inhabitants. This means that tourism and commerce are the two basic pillars of Andorra’s economy.

The geographical conditions of our State have not made it possible up until now to build an airport within our territory. All our visitors travel to Andorra by the only means that exists, by road.

One of the priorities of the Government of Andorra is to develop and implement air transport in our Principality. Following this line of policy, the air navigation law was approved in 2000 and we adhered to the Chicago Convention as a Contracting State at the beginning of 2001. In 2005, we plan to build a national heliport open to international passenger traffic.

We are presently holding negotiations with the Government of the Kingdom of Spain for the opening of the Andorra International Airport located only 15 kilometres from the capital of Andorra, but with the particular feature of being in Spanish territory, which would undoubtedly help to open up an extensive geographical sector of the Pyrenees, for the benefit of the three Pyrenean States: Spain, France and Andorra.

On our scale, therefore, it is clear that air transport can only bring with it social and economic benefits for our small country and all the efforts of the Government of the Principality of Andorra to obtain the necessary airport infrastructures will go in this direction:

“The development of air transport in the Principality of Andorra that is sustainable and safe.”

In conclusion, I wish to thank expressly the authorities of Canada and Quebec, and especially the respective ministers of transport, the President and staff of ICAO, and all the authorities of our hosts for their kind attention and to express my heartfelt best wishes for the success of the organization of this important event.

Thank you very much.

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