



**Opening address by the President of the Council
of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Roberto Kobeh González,
to the ICAO Symposium on Aviation and
Climate Change “Destination Green”**

(Montreal, 14-16 May 2013)

On behalf of the Council of ICAO, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this *Fourth ICAO Symposium on Aviation and Climate Change*.

The 38th Session of our Assembly this fall will agree on the policies and practices that will guide the work of ICAO on environmental protection over the next triennium, including our activities on aviation and climate change.

In light of the complexity of many of these issues, the purpose of this Symposium is to ensure that all our Member States are given ample opportunity to review and discuss the relevant issues, as well as take note of the latest research and other developments which have arisen since our last Assembly in 2010.

The coming week, therefore, represents an invaluable opportunity to broaden your knowledge and awareness of our most pressing environmental challenges. ICAO’s ultimate goal with this endeavour is to fully support the high-level considerations and decision-making that will be required of you at the 38th Session of the Assembly, notably so that you may come to agreement on the most environmentally responsible and sustainable path forward – both for international aviation and our planet.

The environment, of course, has been an important area of priority for ICAO for many years now. During this time, we have made some noteworthy achievements in tackling complex issues and our work on environmental protection has always emphasized the value of a globally harmonized approach.

This objective has guided us well as we have sought to address the impacts of noise and local air quality around airports and, more recently, to face the much broader challenge of international aviation greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. One noteworthy example of our progress in this regard is how global aviation has improved its fuel efficiency by a remarkable 80 per cent over the past 50 years, exclusively on the basis of technological advances and operational efficiencies. No other transportation or major industrial sector can make a similar claim.

And so with air transport as a whole now accounting for 2 per cent of our annual CO₂ emissions globally, and international aviation specifically just 1.2 per cent, some might ask why ICAO, an international civil aviation body, is making this an area of such high priority.

The answer is that, despite aviation's current impacts, it is also one of the world's fastest growing economic sectors. It is our responsibility, therefore, to realistically acknowledge what the scale of this growth entails because, without concrete and determined action, our aviation emissions will continue to grow.

Recently, ICAO's Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection came forward with projections for noise, local air quality and CO₂ emissions up to 2050. These figures will be presented to you during this Symposium, both to aid in related policy deliberations and to highlight why ICAO would like you to focus over the coming days – not on our important and collective achievements of the past – but on where we must go in the future to realize our “Destination Green”.

ICAO's determination in this regard is clearly reflected by our Strategic Objective on *Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Air Transport*. We will continue to be guided in our related research and planning by our guiding environmental goals which prescribe that we must constantly seek to limit or reduce:

- the number of people affected by significant aircraft noise;
- the impact of aircraft engine emissions on local air quality; and
- the impact of aviation greenhouse gas emissions on the global climate.

Toward these objectives, ICAO will continue to promote cooperation among all aviation stakeholders. We will provide the required assistance, develop supporting guidance and, most importantly, create the agreed Standards and policies that will better attune the global civil aviation regulatory framework to our agreed environmental priorities.

This “Destination green” Symposium has been divided into nine sessions covering all aspects of our environmental issues. It will allow you to explore the future of aviation in the context of a low-carbon global economy, as well as provide you with an overview of the range of operational and technical abatement options presently available. It will also help you to be familiarized with the latest economic measures and regulatory options that can be deployed to achieve further sustainable emissions reductions.

You will additionally receive technical information over the coming days on the achievements and progress delivered by the recently-concluded Ninth Meeting of ICAO’s Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection, including the drawing-up of the new CO₂ Standard for aircraft.

With respect to our initiative of supporting States’ Action Plans on aviation CO₂ reduction, representatives from several of our Member States will share their experiences and perspectives with you, showcasing their respective activities and discussing how ICAO can help to support your assistance needs.

The levels of cooperation and partnership evident in our Action Plan approach will continue to be important to ICAO as we further coordinate our environmental activities with governments and many other international organizations. A notable example is the large-scale project that will be undertaken between Indonesia’s Ministry of Transport and ICAO’s Technical Co-operation Bureau, which aims to improve the management and reduction of Indonesia’s aviation carbon emissions.

Ladies and gentlemen, our ideal aviation future would see our network:

- expanding safely and efficiently to meet the world's increasing connectivity and capacity demands;
- maintaining the long-term precedent of lowering costs for passenger travel and freight transport; and
- limiting carbon emissions on a continuous and enviable basis.

ICAO is committed to leading the aviation sector through the sustainable development agenda to ensure access to air transport for generations to come. This is a crucial reason why we're embarking today towards our "Destination Green".

I wish you all a very productive and engaging week ahead.