



**Statement by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
to the First Session of the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action
under the Convention (AWGLCA)**

(Bangkok, 31 March-4 April 2008)

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) expresses deep appreciation for the opportunity to report to the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention looking into developing a roadmap for the way forward after Bali.

The message is clear. ICAO is committed to its leadership position within the aviation sector in minimizing the impact of air transport on the environment. It is equally committed to the long-standing relationship that links ICAO to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In fact, these two organizations have long been partners in the common pursuit of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases to combat global warming. Both organizations have as constituents close to 200 member countries. Both strive for consensus among diverging and sometimes conflicting national and regional interests. Both have achieved substantial results in their respective areas of influence.

And both have worked well together for about the past 15 years to more clearly identify the problems and the potential solutions associated with climate change. UNFCCC has participated in many activities of ICAO's Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) and provided valuable input to further the work of the Organization. For its part, ICAO has contributed assessments, methodologies and data related to aviation emissions, in addition to keeping various bodies of UNFCCC abreast of progress achieved by the world aviation community in addressing both climate change and local air quality.

This close collaboration was made necessary given the extraordinary complexity of climate change, a global phenomenon which knows no boundaries – whether political, geographic, economic or social. It affects everyone, to varying degrees.

Today, the urgency of the situation coupled with the objective of the present meeting emphasize the need for an unprecedented level of global cooperation. Accordingly, UNFCCC and ICAO must increase even further effective coordination between themselves, to better tap the resources, the experience and the expertise both can bring to the table.

The 36th Session of the ICAO Assembly last September laid the basis for closer ties when it approved a comprehensive plan of action comprised of four major elements:

- 1) the regular assessment of the impact of aviation on the environment and the continued development of tools for this purpose;
- 2) the vigorous development of policy options to limit or reduce the environmental impact of aircraft engine emissions and the provision of advice as soon as possible to the Conference of the Parties of UNFCCC on technical solutions and market-based measures;

- 3) the continued development and updating, through CAEP, of standards and guidance for Contracting States, on the application of measures aimed at reducing or limiting the environmental impact of engine emissions; and
- 4) the formation of a new group to develop and recommend to ICAO an aggressive Programme of Action on International Aviation and Climate Change. This high-level group, known as GIACC, is composed of senior government officials representative of all ICAO regions, with the equitable participation of developing and developed States. The work of GIACC is meant to be inclusive and will involve consultation with all stakeholders concerned.

GIACC held its first meeting a few weeks ago in Montréal and the next one is planned for July. In all, four meetings are planned, following which the Council of ICAO will convene a high-level meeting to review the Programme of Action recommended by GIACC. It is noteworthy that the Assembly specifically requested that this high-level meeting be held at a time which would take into account the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) of UNFCCC in December 2009.

This timing set the stage for UNFCCC and ICAO to link their work programmes, given the timeframe which was adopted in Bali last December. As can be recalled, it was decided that the meeting which begins today would advance the Road Map agreed to last December. The Parties also agreed at Bali to formally launch negotiations on enabling the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention, and that these negotiations should lead to an agreed outcome by the end of 2009.

And so there are two parallel streams of activity, one by UNFCCC and the other by ICAO, culminating at the end of 2009. This provides a unique opportunity for consultation and sharing of valuable information along the way. After all, both organizations are moving in the same general direction, debating similar issues and setting their sights on likewise similar outcomes. It would make sense to join forces and enhance effectiveness. ICAO believes that this would be in the best interest of all stakeholders and is looking forward to cooperating with UNFCCC to make it happen.

Having said this, more effective collaboration must also be encouraged within each of the respective member States. In many cases, for example, there should be more communication between government authorities responsible for the environment and those responsible for civil aviation, so that the positions and proposals of Member States in international gatherings such as this one are better aligned and present a more comprehensive view of a State's policies and programmes. ICAO has promoted this unified approach for many years, with positive results.

To sum up, the world is watching. There exists a collective responsibility here in Bangkok to build upon years of cooperation between ICAO and the UNFCCC and advance the cause of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. ICAO wishes all participants a stimulating and productive meeting.