



**Statement from the International Civil Aviation Organization to
the 14th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14) of the
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

(Poznan, Poland, 1-12 December 2008)

In one year's time, the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will meet in Copenhagen with the objective of reaching a climate change agreement for the period beyond 2012.

One of the elements of such an agreement will be how to address greenhouse gas emissions from international civil aviation.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) appreciates that this is a very complex issue and that a decision must ultimately take into account three fundamental considerations:

1. Emissions from international aviation are, by definition, global in nature; they are not restricted to national boundaries. Accordingly, the task of assigning them would be extremely complex at best and equally difficult to implement or enforce.
2. Achieving consistent improvements in the energy efficiency of air transport requires globally harmonized environmental aviation Standards, procedures and practices that need to be cooperatively established and universally accepted and implemented.
3. Optimum compatibility between environmental sustainability and the safety and efficiency of the global air transport system must not be compromised. An environmentally friendly aviation industry that is not safe or efficient is not viable.

Air transport is a driver of economic activity and, as such, a key contributor to not only the well-being of hundreds of millions of people around the world but also to achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, particularly for less-developed and island countries that rely on air travel to reach international markets for their goods and for attracting business and tourist travel.

Aviation CO₂ emissions today represent approximately 2 per cent of the global CO₂ emissions from human activity, with international aviation being responsible for roughly half of it only. The problem is that the growth in traffic is outstripping the enormous progress of the industry in reducing emissions. For example, thanks to increasingly more stringent ICAO emissions Standards and practices, coupled with sustained efforts by all major air transport stakeholders, jet aircraft today are at least 70 per cent more energy efficient than they were some 40 years ago. Newer aircraft on the production line are even more fuel efficient. But the anticipated increase in traffic, particularly in some parts of the world, could negate this remarkable collective achievement. More robust action is both essential and urgent.

This was acknowledged by the 36th Session of the ICAO Assembly in September 2007 when it called for the creation of a Group on International Aviation and Climate Change, or GIACC, to produce an aggressive ICAO Programme of Action to deal with GHG emissions from international aviation. The GIACC is currently formulating an implementation framework consisting of strategies and measures that the 190 Member States of ICAO can use to achieve emissions reductions. It will identify fuel efficiency goals and means of measuring progress. The range of options considered include voluntary

measures, technological advances in both aircraft and ground-based equipment, more efficient operational measures, improvements in air traffic management, positive economic incentives and market-based measures. The Programme of Action on climate change will be considered by a high-level ICAO meeting held in connection with COP 15.

In the meantime, the aviation community is forging ahead with current and emerging solutions to the climate change challenge, including the promising option of alternative fuels to improve the energy efficiency of aircraft engines. ICAO knows how important it is to generate momentum around such innovative avenues and will host a workshop on alternative fuels for aviation from 10 to 12 February 2009. The workshop is designed to promote exploration of key issues related to alternative fuels, including ongoing and planned research and development, certification of fuels, production and associated infrastructure implications for distribution. The results of the workshop will form the basis of a world Conference on the subject planned for the end of the same year, with the objective to produce a roadmap for the implementation of alternative fuels for aviation.

There is no question that an effective solution for handling emissions from international aviation must involve a global framework encompassing a basket of measures of a technological, operational and market-based nature to deal with the specific realities of States and regions, and in which alternative technology will play a definitive role. Above all, it will require unprecedented levels of cooperation with all parties concerned, most noteworthy with the UNFCCC itself.

The world aviation community is entirely committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from its operations and ICAO stands ready to continue providing the leadership that is essential to transform this commitment into a global reality. Our challenge is great, yet our will to succeed is greater, for it reflects the collective will of all parties.