Good morning ladies and gentleman, and I would like to join the Secretary General in welcoming you to Montreal. I am sure that you will enjoy your time in the city. Spring is a very nice season in Montreal and I hope you will have time to visit the revitalised Vieux Montreal which is nearby here and catch a little bit of the Formula One fever in preparation for the Grand Prix next weekend. Having said that, I also hope you will spend some time inside this building and enjoy a constructive and enriching symposium.

The Secretary General has explained to you why the net-centric information environment is one of the key elements of the ICAO Global ATM Concept. Let me dwell now a little bit more in the details. The global concept identifies the need for the availability of timely and accurate aeronautical information that includes the current status of the air navigation facilities, meteorological information, airspace status and traffic/congestion forecasts and flow restrictions. The concept supports the transition towards reference database, or databases, of quality-assured digital information related to AIS and aeronautical chart. Such high quality and timely information is required for the precise guidance of gate-to-gate operations using airborne and ground-based computer systems. The introduction of collaborative decision-making in the en-route environment will make the availability of such information to all involved parties, even more important.

The overall ATM requirement specifies that aeronautical information shall fully support the conduct of flights under new, flexible procedures in all types of airspace. Ultimately, with the help of this information, airspace users will be able to operate their flights on their preferred trajectories.

It is for these reasons that the aeronautical information services require much attention. And it is for these reasons that we have talented speakers coming to share their vision with us at this symposium. The objective is to ensure that AIS is improved and developed in such a way that it will provide a harmonised and coordinated service able to deliver quality assured aeronautical information of appropriate scope where and when it is needed.

There is, however, much work to be done. The state of AIS today can be described as a semi-automated process requiring significant manual intervention. The process remains attached to the principle of a master, paper reference document, even though in many cases the information may be maintained and transmitted electronically. Moreover, the provision of
Aeronautical information today is mainly focussed on the requirements of pre-flight briefing rather than on the whole spectrum of gate-to-gate requirements.

AIS in States has evolved over the years to meet the needs of airspace users for comprehensive information on airspace configuration, aerodrome and navigation facilities and other details needed by pilots. Traditional AIS, however, does not provide the complete range of information required for gate-to-gate operations or to support collaborative decision-making. To satisfy the new requirements arising from the ICAO Global ATM Concept and to serve future ATM needs, AIS has to transition in the medium and longer term from the supply of predetermined products to the management of aeronautical information. Thus AIS must leave behind its current product-centric nature and progress toward data-centric aeronautical information management.

Aeronautical information management, or AIM, is designed to provide mechanisms to establish and manage of the flow of quality assured and shared aeronautical information that are required by ATM system to support its tactical and strategic decision making. It requires a data-oriented, holistic, and net-centric approach and it is an effort that involves all suppliers of data.

AIM will bring important benefits to all parts of the ATM system. Allow me to highlight some contributions that will be of particular importance:

**Safety** – Timely and accurate aeronautical data is essential for the safe use of modern ATM and navigation techniques. ATC decision-making aids, advanced surface movement guidance and control systems, terrain awareness and warning systems, and airborne separation assistance systems — these all contribute to the enhancement of safety and they all rely on accurate and timely data. In addition, advanced information presentation displays in the cockpit are enabled by the data provided through AIM and have a direct impact on improving safety.

**Regularity** – AIM is an essential enabler for concepts such as collaborative decision-making and enhanced airspace management which rely on aeronautical data. These in turn improve the predictability and efficiency of the ATM network and serve to reduce capacity loss from system inefficiencies by making available latent capacity.

**Efficiency** – Airspace user ground systems and airborne systems can only fully exploit the capabilities offered by the new ATM system if provided with accurate and reliable aeronautical data. Data provided to aircraft in flight is especially significant in this respect. The data provided by AIM will enable the harmonized interaction of all elements of gate-to-gate activities and will support the creation of the “Time Ordered ATM System” to efficiently exploit the full capacity of airports and airspace.

**Environmental considerations** – In aviation we are always looking for ways to reduce noise and gaseous emissions. ATM improvements will make a significant contribution to preservation of the environment, by reducing delays, introducing shorter and more fuel efficient routes and, where possible, lessening the noise impact around aerodromes. Expansion of the range of aeronautical information will enable
those improvements, as will the availability of terrain, population, noise profiling and emission dispersion data.

The benefits from AIM are very important and technology is rapidly developing to support them. We must, however, pay attention to a number of legal and institutional considerations that could negatively impact on the transition from AIS to AIM. In particular, in considering an information sharing environment, the following issues will need to be taken into account:

- information ownership, control and liability;
- the regulatory framework;
- cost efficiency, licensing, and cost recovery;
- mechanisms for managing stakeholder rules, roles and responsibilities; and
- regulation of service provision on a global, regional or individual State basis.

It is, however, not clear if there are major difficulties with the existing ICAO provisions relating to the responsibilities of States, exchange of aeronautical information/data, copyright or cost recovery regarding these issues. Nevertheless, we certainly have to explore the impact of the important change from AIS to AIM in these terms. I am very pleased to see, both in the audience and in the speakers, that we have a wide range of expertise from States, international organisations and industry to do this.

ICAO stands firmly behind the move from AIS to AIM and we are committed to make it happen in cooperation and coordination with all stakeholders. I look forward to this symposium as a forum where constructive exchange of ideas take place on how we may nourish and cultivate the benefits of aeronautical information management within the net-centric information environment.