



# ICAO NEWS RELEASE

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## **"ENHANCING FLIGHT SAFETY THROUGH GLOBAL CO-OPERATION" THE THEME OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION DAY - 7 DECEMBER 1997**

**MONTREAL, 5 December 1997** -- "Enhancing Flight Safety Through Global Co-operation" is the theme of this year's International Civil Aviation Day, celebrated annually to mark the creation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on 7 December 1944. ICAO is the specialized United Nations agency mandated to ensure the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation world-wide.

Under the guidance of the President of the ICAO Council, Dr. Assad Kotaite, safety was the focal point of much of ICAO's activities in 1997, culminating in an historic November meeting of Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCAs) of Contracting States devoted exclusively to the issue of safety. Among the many recommendations endorsed by the 148 participating DGCAs were the introduction of mandatory safety audits in all Contracting States, and greater transparency and disclosure of audit reports. Safety will remain at the core of the Organization's agenda throughout the coming year.

"It is my firm belief that air transport remains the safest mode of transportation today. However, I see two disturbing trends that can jeopardize this formidable achievement of our modern civilization," notes Dr. Kotaite in his message supporting International Civil Aviation Day.

He points to the levelling off of accident rates, which could lead to an actual increase in the number of accidents as the industry grows from 1,35 billion passengers to 2 billion in a few years. He also suggests that governments cannot divest themselves of their responsibility of ensuring the optimum level of safety through major changes like globalization, privatization, liberalization of economic controls and the emergence of new technologies.

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"I am deeply convinced that the solution to these two issues lies in an unprecedented level of co-operation among countries and a corresponding level of global co-ordination in all aspects of civil aviation which affect safety," he emphasizes. "When one deals with human life, one accident is still one too many."

In his message, Secretary General Renato Cláudio Costa Pereira says that a high level of safety also inspires confidence in an industry which contributes significantly to the economy of practically every nation in the world, through job creation and economic output.

He suggests that reaping the enormous benefits of a healthy civil aviation industry rests primarily on the implementation of safety-related standards contained in the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its Annexes.

"Just as it is the responsibility of each State to implement safety standards in its own airspace and territory, it is also each State's responsibility to ensure that an effective and efficient safety oversight system prevails world-wide. This will come about through the harmonization of safety oversight initiatives of States and regions, and through the implementation of a world-wide strategy for safety oversight," he says.

"I will work diligently with all of our members and partners in creating and putting into place such a strategy," he concludes, "to ensure that ICAO fulfils its role of guiding civil aviation into the 21st century and providing all the peoples of the earth with the safest and most efficient international civil aviation system."

ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of civil aviation in the world. A specialized agency of the United Nations, it sets international standards and regulations necessary for the safety, security, efficiency and regularity of air transport and serves as the medium for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 185 Contracting States.



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Attachment A

**Message from the President of the Council of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Dr. Assad Kotaite,  
on the theme "Enhancing Flight Safety Through Global Co-operation"  
for the world-wide celebration of International Civil Aviation Day  
on 7 December 1997**

I have been associated with the International Civil Aviation Organization now for the past 45 years and it is my firm belief that air transport still remains the safest mode of transportation today. However, I see two disturbing trends that can jeopardize this formidable achievement of our modern civilization.

The first is the rate of airline accidents around the world. Up until a decade or so ago, the rate of accidents consistently went down, thanks primarily to improvements in technology and air navigation systems. Since then, however, accident rates have remained stable. As the number of passengers increases from 1,35 billion annually to some 2 billion in a few years, this could translate into a corresponding increase in the number of accidents. We must not allow this to happen.

The second is the implication for aviation safety of such fundamental social and political changes as globalization, privatization of government services and liberalization of economic controls, increasing environmental controls and the emergence of new technologies. Through all of this, governments cannot divest themselves of their responsibility of ensuring the optimum level of safety of civil aviation at the international level. Again, we must not allow this to happen.

I am deeply convinced that the solution to these two issues lies in an unprecedented level of co-operation among countries and a corresponding level of global co-ordination in all aspects of civil aviation which affect safety. After all, safety is not a national issue, nor is it a regional or continental issue. It is a global issue. Human beings travel all over the world regardless of political boundaries and they are entitled to the uniform application of internationally recognized safety standards wherever they may go.

During the coming year, I look forward to continue working in close cooperation with civil aviation authorities of all 185 ICAO Contracting States in making the theme of this year's International Civil Aviation Day, "Enhancing Flight Safety Through Global Co-operation", a dynamic reality.

When one deals with human life, one accident is still one too many.

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**Message from the Secretary General of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),  
Mr. Renato Cláudio Costa Pereira,  
on the theme "Enhancing Flight Safety Through Global Co-operation"  
for the world-wide celebration of International Civil Aviation Day  
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Flight safety essentially means preserving the well-being of all those who travel by air and those on the ground who could be physically injured in an accident. Achieving this vital objective has always been at the heart of the mission of the International Civil Aviation Organization, to ensure the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation.

Flight safety also means instilling confidence in the civil aviation industry, which contributes significantly to the economy of practically every nation on the face of the earth. In 1994 alone, it provided some 24 million jobs around the world and generated 1.14 trillion dollars in gross output. The travel and tourism industry, of which air travel is a vital component, employs 262 million people and generates 3.8 trillion dollars in gross output.

Maintaining a healthy civil aviation industry and reaping the enormous benefits we can derive from it in economic, social and recreational terms, rests primarily on the implementation of safety-related standards contained in the Convention on International Civil Aviation of 1944. This perennial document created ICAO in 1944 remains the foundation for uniting 185 Contracting States in a unique international forum for all matters related to civil aviation.

Just as it is the responsibility of each State to implement safety standards in its own airspace and territory, it is also each State's responsibility to ensure that an effective and efficient safety oversight system prevails world-wide. This will come about through the harmonization of safety oversight initiatives of States and regions, and through the implementation of a world-wide strategy for safety oversight.

In keeping with the theme of this year's International Civil Aviation Day, "Enhancing Flight Safety Through Global Co-operation", I will work diligently with all of our members and partners in creating and putting into place such a strategy.

My ultimate aim is to ensure that ICAO fulfils its role of guiding civil aviation into the 21st century and providing all the peoples of the world with the safest and most efficient civil aviation system.