

**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
on 7 December 1997**

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.