

**Message from the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Mr. Renato Cláudio Costa Pereira,
for the world-wide celebration of International Civil Aviation Day
on 7 December 1998**

In my capacity of Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), I am privileged at having the opportunity to interact on a regular basis with all major segments of the global air transport world.

Reviewing the events of the past year especially, it strikes me that we are entering a new era in civil aviation, one in which all of our energies are totally committed to a single, universal and harmonized air transport system, focused on the individual. It is a renewed consciousness that we are all here for one reason, to contribute to the betterment of life on earth through civil aviation.

For example, the endorsement by the Contracting States of ICAO of a Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme places the safety of the individual above all. This ground-breaking initiative consists of regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonized audits of safety-related aviation activities in each of ICAO's 185 Contracting States.

I emphasize to all States the importance of supporting this programme and of cooperating fully in its implementation, if we are to succeed in improving still further the enviable safety record of civil aviation. ICAO's Technical Cooperation Programme, coupled with similar assistance activities in different parts of the world, is designed to help States in overcoming their limitations with regard to aviation safety.

The Contracting States of ICAO also approved a Global Aviation Safety Plan, with the underlying concept of concentrating the safety-related activities of ICAO on those initiatives, planned or currently under way, that are likely to be most effective in reducing the rate of airline accidents.

These and many other substantial safety-related undertakings are vivid testimonials to the spirit of true collaboration I have observed in all sectors of civil aviation, and of the trust and mutual understanding that they foster. Nothing of lasting value can be achieved without those two values.

Yes, the world aviation community has the moral responsibility to do all that is humanly possible to ensure the safety and efficient development of international civil aviation. I truly believe that all are fully committed to aviation safety and to a harmonized global air transport system. It is only through unrelenting cooperation that we will achieve our common goal, of "Flying Safely Into the 21st Century".