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INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION DAY 2004 CELEBRATES COOPERATION AMONG NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Montreal, 2 December 2004 – “*International Cooperation: Solutions to Global Aviation Challenges*” is the theme of the 2004 edition of the International Civil Aviation Day, celebrated annually on 7 December to mark the creation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on that day in 1944.

“The principle of global cooperation among nations of the world is at the heart of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*. Through 60 years, global cooperation has coalesced the Contracting States of the Organization and various aviation entities to create and maintain an extraordinarily sound and efficient global air transport system”, said Dr. Assad Kotaite, President of the Council of ICAO, in his annual message.

In stressing that it was not always an easy task, Dr. Kotaite added that “...we succeeded, by working jointly towards a common objective, in spite of sometimes diverging views and interests. At the same time, our vision has evolved and expanded, in keeping with the extreme complexity of our modern society”.

Reflecting on current challenges, he reiterated his views that, “In a world tempted by unilateral action on a national or regional basis, we must not forget that international aviation can only grow safely and securely through multilateral action. Global cooperation has always been and remains the solution to all of our global aviation challenges.”

Dr. Taïeb Chérif, Secretary General of ICAO, echoed these views by suggesting that this year’s International Civil Aviation Day “is a tribute to the extraordinary potential of global cooperation to solve the problems of the world and a tangible manifestation of that potential through the 60 years of ICAO as the global forum for ensuring the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation.”

“In retrospect, the ultimate achievement of ICAO over the past 60 years may well be its sustained ability to create and nourish a climate of trust amongst its various constituents, so effective in reaching global consensus. This consensus has proven essential in the establishment of an effective regulatory framework for air transport worldwide and the successful resolution of conflicts, which inevitably arise in world affairs,” he said.

“All worthwhile human endeavours rest on the goodwill of people to join forces in a collaborative effort. ICAO has embodied this principle for some 60 years now and I am confident that it will continue to shine as a prime example of global cooperation for many years to come,” concluded Dr. Chérif.

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 188 Contracting States.

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**Message from the President of the Council of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Dr. Assad Kotaite,
for the worldwide celebration of
International Civil Aviation Day on 7 December 2004**

The principle of global cooperation among nations of the world is at the heart of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*, which created ICAO when it was signed on 7 December 1944, in Chicago. Through 60 years, global cooperation has coalesced the Contracting States of the Organization and various aviation entities to create and maintain an extraordinarily sound and efficient global air transport system.

It was not an easy task. There were innumerable challenges to realizing the initial vision of a globally harmonized environment, as captured in the Preamble to the *Chicago Convention*, “in order that international civil aviation may be developed in a safe and orderly manner and that international air transport services may be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and operated soundly and economically”.

Yet we succeeded, by working jointly towards a common objective, in spite of sometimes diverging views and interests. The year 2003 was the safest year on record since the creation of ICAO. Always vulnerable to acts of unlawful interference, air transport is nevertheless secure. The number of passengers on scheduled services alone has grown to 1.6 billion since 1944 and should reach 2 billion in the not too distant future. And the renewed period of growth we are now enjoying in terms of passenger and cargo traffic is matched with an equally renewed determination to secure the foundation for a healthy, effective and efficient global air transport system.

At the same time, our vision has evolved and expanded, in keeping with the extreme complexity of our modern society. We look to solidifying a regulatory framework that ensures: optimum safety and security; the continued progressive, worldwide liberalization of air transport; a globally interoperable, harmonized and seamless air traffic management system; maximum compatibility between the safe and orderly development of civil aviation and the quality of the environment; and the further development of a unified, global legal framework.

In a world tempted by unilateral action on a national or regional basis, we must not forget that international aviation can only grow safely and securely through multilateral action. Global cooperation has always been and remains the solution to all of our global aviation challenges.

**Message from the Secretary General of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),
Dr. Taïeb Chérif,
for the worldwide celebration of
International Civil Aviation Day on 7 December 2004**

This year's International Civil Aviation Day is a tribute to the extraordinary potential of global cooperation to solve the problems of the world and a tangible manifestation of that potential through the 60 years of ICAO as the global forum for ensuring the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation, as prescribed by the provisions of the Chicago Convention of 1944.

Cooperation can be defined as working together towards a common, definite objective. In the case of ICAO, it is cooperation on a global scale involving the Contracting States of the Organization and all members of the world aviation community, resolutely focussed on meeting the needs of the end user - passengers and shippers - as well as those on the ground directly or indirectly affected by air transport operations.

In retrospect, the ultimate achievement of ICAO over the past 60 years may well be its sustained ability to create and nourish a climate of trust amongst its various constituents, so effective in reaching global consensus. This consensus has proven essential in the establishment of an effective regulatory framework for air transport worldwide and the successful resolution of conflicts, which inevitably arise in world affairs.

Of course, consensus building is often difficult and time consuming. It requires commitment to open dialogue and constructive compromise. Once achieved, however, it provides a solid foundation and direction for future action. Such, I believe, will be the enduring legacy of ICAO, that of a meeting of the minds for the good of all.

Making it happen are the people of ICAO, at our Headquarters in Montreal and in our seven Regional Offices around the world. They prepare the background material required for meetings, from Sessions of the ICAO Assembly to conferences and panels. They stimulate exchanges and prepare recommendations for approval by the ICAO Council. They assist Contracting States in fulfilling their responsibilities under the Chicago Convention.

All worthwhile human endeavours rest on the goodwill of people to join forces in a collaborative effort. ICAO has embodied this principle for some 60 years now and I am confident that it will continue to shine as a prime example of global cooperation for many years to come.