



International Civil Aviation Organization

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ICAO NEWS RELEASE

COM 26/12

AVIATION: YOUR RELIABLE CONNECTION TO THE WORLD
Theme for International Civil Aviation Day on 7 December 2012

Message from the President of the ICAO Council
Mr. Roberto Kobeh González

MONTREAL, 4 December 2012 - Air travel is essential to the wellbeing of our global society. It brings together family and friends from different countries and different cultures. It drives international tourism and trade, which in turn generates economic growth, maintains millions of jobs, improves living standards and alleviates poverty. It is a lifeline for island States and land-locked countries for tapping into the markets of the world. It gives access to essential services like health care in remote areas with non-existent or poor ground transportation. It provides humanitarian assistance during emergencies caused by natural disasters, famine or armed conflict, in a timely and expeditious manner.

Air travel is also exceptionally reliable. It is as safe, as secure and as environmentally responsible as it has ever been since the early days of powered flight. This has inspired the highest levels of public confidence in what has been described as the most efficient mode of mass transportation ever created.

Our challenge, and it is a huge one, will be to maintain and improve on this remarkable achievement in the face of the consistent growth of air traffic. By 2030, the number of passengers on scheduled services will more than double, from the current 2.7 billion passengers a year to some 6 billion, while the number of flights should also double, from 30 million to 60 million a year.

We will need to upgrade or build airports and air navigation systems to accommodate safely and efficiently the steady increase in the number of passengers and flights. We will need to train hundreds of thousands of aviation professionals to keep up with demand and to replace those pilots, mechanics, air traffic controllers and others who will be retiring. We will need to reduce the accident rate worldwide, already at an historic low. We will need to strengthen and streamline security measures to make air travel more enjoyable and efficient, while maintaining the highest standards of security. We will need to maintain our focus on minimizing the adverse effects of aviation on the environment. And we will have to support the development of a sound and economically viable air transport industry.

All of this can and will be done through the time-tested formula of cooperation and mutual understanding among governments, industry, and other public and private organizations, so that aviation will always represent "Your reliable Connection to the World".

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Note to Editors: International Civil Aviation Day commemorates the establishment of ICAO on 7 December 1944.

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 191 Member States.