

The Stamps That Commemorate ICAO's 75th Anniversary

By Albert Pelsser

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) with headquarters in Montreal commemorated in 2019 the 75th anniversary of the 1944 Convention on International Civil Aviation. Eight Member States issued stamps and the related first day covers to commemorate this anniversary. Among these, some of the States that joined ICAO in the last 25 years took the opportunity to commemorate ICAO's important milestone in the history of air transport.

From the first fragile biplanes to wide-body jets, from balloons and gliders to the space shuttle, stamps have continued to reflect the amazing interest that people have in vehicles travelling through the sky. As with aviation, stamp collections allow us to explore cultures around the world and to learn from one another, breaking down borders and frontiers to lead to a better understanding between people of all nations. The topical collection of ICAO-related stamps crosses aviation and United Nations themes and consists of a limited number of items from 105 different countries or organizations. The total number of stamps/miniature sheets issued amounts to 450, for an average of 2.4 items per issue. The 177 ICAO-related stamp issues, along with the great variety of covers, have shaped the mainstay of what is called The Postal History of ICAO, available at the following web site address: <https://applications.icao.int/postalhistory>.

Slovakia was the first country to issue a stamp on April 4, 2019. Their stamp (Figure 1) shows an Italian bomber Caproni Ca.3 that references General Milan Rastislav Štefánik who died in this aircraft 100 years earlier near Bratislava on May 4, 1919 on his return home from Italy to see his family. Štefánik was an important figure in the creation of Czechoslovakia. The date of this stamp's issue corresponds exactly to the 72nd anniversary of the entry into force of the Chicago Convention.

The stamps of two States feature international airports in their countries because they are the key interface between the passengers and the aircraft, and the location where every flight begins and ends. Airports are a fundamental component of every State's socio-economic well-being. The stamp of Mauritius (Figure 2) that was released on December 7, 2019 shows the new passenger terminal at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (SSR). The international airport, that was inaugurated on August 30, 2013, has a structure that was designed after the tropical "Traveller's Palm" (Ravenala madagascariensis), a genus of flowering plants.

Kyrgyzstan released their stamp on December 13, 2019. It is a sheetlet (Figure 3) with one label and five stamps that feature international airports of the country, from the largest airports Манас (Manas) and Ош (Osh) airports to much smaller airports of Иссык-Куль (Issyk-Kul), Каракол (Karakol) and Баткен (Batken). For each stamp, a different aircraft is stationed in front the airport. The margins of this leaflet are beautifully decorated with the ICAO logo and that of the 75th anniversary.



Figure 1: Slovakia Scott #814



Figure 2: Mauritius Scott #1202



Figure 3:
Kyrgyzstan Scott #620

The stamp from the Philippines (Figure 4), released on December 7, 2019, came to be through a design art contest that was open to all Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAA) employees. Aside from the ICAO themes, the artwork of the stamp highlights the following features: the technological evolution of aviation in the Philippines and in the world; the readiness of the aviation industry in facing a fast-paced future; the involvement of the different nations in connecting the world through aviation; and the youth's significance in aviation. In addition to this stamp, Philippines released a souvenir sheet (Figure 5) with splendid designs for the foreground and the background.

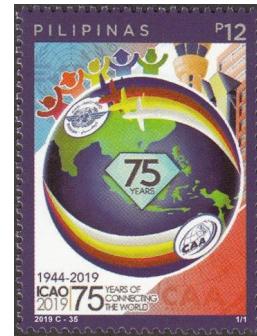
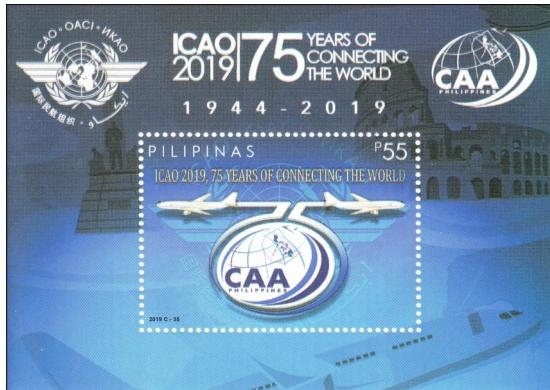


Figure 4:
Philippines Scott #3841



Figure 5:
Philippines Scott #3842

Azerbaijan released a miniature sheet (Figure 6) on the opening day of the 40th Session of ICAO's Assembly on September 24, 2019. The sheet depicts an airplane wing against a background of clouds; the wings of ICAO's emblem are used as the horizontal bars for the embossed 7 and 5 digits. The cachet of the related first-day cover (Figure 7) shows the figure 75 surrounding the compressor fins of a jet engine.



Figure 7: Azerbaijan FDC

As per regular practice in past, Cyprus again commemorated several events and anniversaries in one issue released on September 10, 2019. The ICAO stamp of this issue (Figure 8) reproduces the special theme of the 75th anniversary on a white background, while the margins of the sheetlet of 8 stamps (Figure 9) are nicely adorned with the special emblem of the anniversary.



Figure 8: Cyprus Scott #1318



Figure 9: Cyprus Scott #1318

The First Regional Air Navigation Meeting for the Middle East Region was held in October 1946 in Cairo, Egypt. This country took this opportunity to overprint one of its stamps for the commemoration of this meeting; this is the only stamp from the topical collection issued during the lifetime of PICAO, the Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization. Egypt released an admirably luminous blue stamp on December 7, 2019 picturing the 75th anniversary emblem (Figure 10). Note the syncopated perforations at the top and bottom of the stamps.



Figure 10: Egypt Scott #2219



Figure 11: Benin Michel #1676-8

Formerly named Dahomey and today officially named la République du Bénin, Benin was the only country from the African region to release on December 7, 2019 three values of the same stamp showing the ICAO's logo. On a coral blue background, the text on the stamps (Figure 11) reminds us that French is the official language of Benin.