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ICAO FORGES AGREEMENT ON 15-YEAR AIR NAVIGATION STRATEGY

MONTREAL, 5 December 2012 – The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has come away from its landmark 12th Air Navigation Conference (AN-Conf/12) with resounding State and industry agreement on its revised Global Air Navigation Plan and the aviation system Block Upgrade planning strategy it presents.

More than 1,000 delegates from 120 States and 30 international organizations attended the Conference, which was seeking to provide a strategic solution to the monumental capacity challenges that will be faced by the global air transport network over the next 15 years.

“The primary goal of the 12th Air Navigation Conference was to ensure coherent and harmonized ATM modernization and implementation in order to keep air transport safe, reliable and efficient,” stressed ICAO’s Council President, Roberto Kobeh González. “Several States and regions had already embarked on their own efforts to begin addressing these issues with the latest in technologies and procedures, but it was clear that the global aviation system needed to adopt a standardized global solution to ensure optimized efficiency and investment certainty for all players.”

Current projections indicate that flight volumes will more than double in the coming years, from 30 million departures today to 60 million in 2030, but the growth will be rapid for some States and slower for others. An important feature of the revised Global Plan is that it provides flexibility for States to move at their own pace, adopting only those performance upgrades needed to address their unique operational and traffic density profiles.

The Block Upgrades were able to deliver both strategic certainty and adoption flexibility by setting clear operational performance targets cross-referenced with technology capability timelines. Essentially, this places innovation at the service of the air transport community’s long-term needs and mitigates the effects of first-to-market innovation on broader interoperability objectives.

“Establishing clear operational objectives may sound easy but it required a significant advance effort on behalf of our entire community to realize this Conference’s success,” stressed ICAO Air Navigation Bureau Director, Nancy Graham. “What’s important now is that we get to work on the 140 new work items the Conference established for ICAO.”

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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.