

**Message from the Secretary General of the  
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),  
Mr. Renato Cláudio Costa Pereira,  
for the worldwide celebration of  
International Civil Aviation Day on 7 December 2000**

I believe that ICAO's Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USAOP) will usher in a new era in aviation safety around the world. I also believe that it has ramifications far beyond the systemic application of the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) of the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

In January 1997, the President of the Council of ICAO, Dr. Assad Kotaite, initiated the creation of the USAOP by suggesting that the time had come for ICAO to play a more active role in the uniform implementation of SARPs. Within two short years, under the guidance of the Council, the 185 Contracting States of ICAO have reviewed, endorsed and gave life to the concept. The Programme was officially launched on 1 January 1999 and has since effectively broadened the scope and activities of the Organization.

We are enthusiastically committed to the success of the USAOP. From the outset, a special section was created within the Secretariat to administer the Programme. Appropriate financial and human resources were quickly allocated to the unit, to expedite its work during the formative stages. Due to the overwhelming support of Contracting States, we are meeting our objectives. By the end of 2001, all States will have been audited.

In the process, we have built a unique pool of talent, a dedicated team of experts in the field of aviation safety audits that will remain a valuable resource for our Contracting States. In addition, this growing expertise will make it easier for us to meet any additional challenges resulting from the possible expansion of the Programme, which will be determined by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the ICAO Assembly in 2001.

The men and women of ICAO devoted to USAOP will make it easier for Contracting States to fulfill their responsibilities under the Convention for the safe and efficient development of their civil aviation, and to do so in a spirit of global cooperation, global not only in geographic terms but in terms of involvement and responsibility of each of the members of the global aviation community.

In my view the USAOP binds all nations of the world in a unanimous recognition of the value of human life. In my view, no other programme says, and acts, on the notion that human life is what we value most.