

**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.