

# **Statement by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to the World Summit on Sustainable Development**

**(Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August - 4 September 2002)**

It is a privilege for the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)<sup>1</sup> to address this World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, air transport has continued to grow. Comparing total world traffic for the year 2000 with that of 1992, there was an increase of 66 per cent, with the international component of this growing by 89 per cent.<sup>2</sup> An exception followed for the year 2001, when there was a decline, largely as a result of the events of 11 September. However, recent ICAO forecasts expect traffic to stabilize in 2002 and subsequently to return to traditional growth patterns.

Traffic growth has increased the economic and social benefits that air transport and related civil aviation industries generate at the local, regional and national level throughout the world. The economic contribution includes the output and jobs directly attributable to civil aviation as well as the substantial multiplier or ripple effect upon other industries throughout the economy. Recent estimates indicate that more than four and a half per cent of world economic output may be attributed to the air transport component of civil aviation.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, this growth heightens concerns about the environmental problems associated with civil aviation. ICAO is conscious of its responsibility and that of its 188 Contracting States "to achieve maximum compatibility between the safe and orderly development of civil aviation and the quality of the environment".<sup>4</sup> As with most ICAO activities, the emphasis is on fostering a common, harmonized approach worldwide. ICAO's activities in the environmental field primarily focus on those problems that benefit most from this common, harmonized approach, namely aircraft noise and the impact of aircraft engine emissions.

Aircraft noise is a significant problem for many communities in the vicinity of airports. Two recent achievements by ICAO in this field are the adoption by the ICAO Council in June 2001 of a new noise standard for jet aircraft (known as "Chapter 4") and the endorsement by the ICAO Assembly in October 2001 of the concept of a "balanced approach" to aircraft noise management.<sup>5</sup> This concept consists of identifying the noise problem at an airport and then analysing the various measures available to reduce noise, with the goal of addressing the problem in the most cost-effective manner.

Prior to the Earth Summit in 1992, ICAO's policy-making to address the impact of aircraft engine emissions focussed primarily on ground level effects. In recent years, the scope has been substantially expanded to include the global impact of these emissions. ICAO has received valuable assistance from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which in 1999 published a special report assessing aviation's contribution to global atmospheric problems.<sup>6</sup> The primary focus of ICAO's work in this field is on the further development of technology and related world standards, on reducing fuel burn through improved operational measures, and on analysing the possible use of market-based measures (such as an emissions-trading system, voluntary measures and emission-related levies). There is close cooperation with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process. When adopting the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, Parties to that Convention included a specific provision requiring Annex I Parties - that is, industrialized countries - to pursue limitation or reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from aviation bunker fuels, *working through* ICAO.

Policy-making on environmental issues is complex. States' views differ on the extent to which they are prepared to impose environment-related measures on aviation activities. As a consequence, identifying solutions that will be acceptable to all States can sometimes be difficult, requiring a great deal of patient and determined effort by those involved, as well as a willingness to compromise. ICAO has succeeded in the past in delivering solutions that are acceptable on a worldwide basis, and will continue to work hard to do so in the future.

Following 11 September 2001, when civil aircraft were intentionally flown into public buildings with the loss of thousands of lives, the international civil aviation community has taken major initiatives to ensure that such an abhorrent act never happens again. In February, ICAO convened a conference which was attended by representatives of 154 States from around the world, including more than 60 ministers, as well as 24 international organizations. The achieved goal of the High-level, Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security was to endorse a global strategy for strengthening aviation security with the aim of protecting lives, restoring public confidence in air travel and promoting the financial health of air transport, which has been seriously affected.

A key element of the strategy is the ICAO aviation security plan of action. The centrepiece of the plan includes a programme of mandatory audits in all ICAO member States. This audit programme, which has recently been initiated, will help States to identify and correct deficiencies in the implementation of ICAO security-related standards. The new programme builds on ICAO's experience with an existing safety oversight programme launched in 1999. Practically all member States have been audited under the universal safety oversight audit programme, with encouraging results. A number of safety deficiencies have been identified; many of these have already been corrected and detailed action plans have been developed for all others.

It is of course recognized that identifying deficiencies is one thing; correcting them another. Although all countries have the political will to do so, many lack the necessary technical or financial resources to take action. ICAO is therefore calling upon States, international organizations and the civil aviation industry to provide adequate voluntary funding or other forms of assistance, to help ensure that aviation safety and aviation security are properly maintained throughout the world.

Safety, security and compatibility with the quality of the environment are key elements, both in further expanding the benefits which civil aviation generates and in the contribution of ICAO towards sustainable development.

For more information on ICAO activities, visit the ICAO web site at [www.icao.int](http://www.icao.int).

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1. ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of civil aviation in the world. A specialized agency of the United Nations, it sets international standards and regulations necessary for the safety, security, efficiency and regularity of air transport and serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 188 Contracting States.

2. Based on traffic measured in tonne-kilometres performed on scheduled services, using data collected by ICAO from its Contracting States. Total world traffic includes both domestic and international.

3. See ICAO leaflet *"Economic Contribution of Civil Aviation - Ripples of Prosperity"*.

4. ICAO Assembly Resolution A33-7, Appendix A.

5. ICAO Assembly Resolution, A33-7, Appendix C.

6. *Special Report on Aviation and the Global Atmosphere* (1999), prepared by the IPCC in collaboration with the Scientific Assessment Panel to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The Panel estimated that aircraft contribute about 3.5 per cent of the total radiative forcing (a measure of change in climate) by all human activities and that this percentage, which excludes the effects of possible changes in cirrus clouds, was projected to grow.