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INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO)

AT THE 50TH MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN AIR NAVIGATION PLANNING GROUP (EANPG)

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Je voudrais remercier bien sincèrement mon collègue et ami Karsten Theil, le Directeur régional du Bureau Europe-Atlantique Nord de l'OACI, d'avoir bien voulu m'inviter pour célébrer avec vous la 50e réunion du Groupe de Planification de Navigation aérienne pour l'Europe (EANPG), et surtout d'avoir invité d'anciens collègues à moi que j'ai eu le plaisir de retrouver parmi nous ce soir, et tout particulièrement Monsieur Yves Lambert, ancien Secrétaire Général de l'OACI et ancien Directeur Général de l'EUROCONTROL. La grande participation à cette célébration indique l'importance de ce groupe et le rôle qu'il joue dans la planification de la navigation aérienne en Europe, tenant compte de la technologie de pointe, de l'évolution de l'aviation civile, de la gestion du trafic aérien et de la croissance du transport aérien en Europe et, en général, de la libéralisation, la privatisation et la globalisation de l'économie mondiale y compris le transport aérien.

I recall that on the 21st June 2005 I had the opportunity, here in Paris, to address the 41st Meeting of the North Atlantic Systems Planning Group. Both NAT SPG and EANPG are the seniors of all regional planning groups of ICAO and both of them are served by the ICAO Regional Office in Paris. The North Atlantic and European Office is accredited to 54 of ICAO's contracting states, and its geographical area of responsibility stretches from the North Pole to the Sahara and from the Eastern Coast of North America to the borders of China, which illustrates the huge task and responsibility of these 2 planning groups. I am pleased that the polar routes in which I was directly involved as Chairman of the Committee, including negotiations with the countries concerned, are functioning very well in shortening the distance between North America and Asia.

Karsten Theil served as a Representative of Denmark on the ICAO Council, as a member in the NAT SPG and EANPG groups, and as their Chairman before his appointment as Regional Director of ICAO's North Atlantic & European Office. Presently Mr. Theil is the Secretary of the two groups. Karsten's competence, experience, skill and dedication to his work are well known to all of us. He is motivated, as an international civil servant, together with his colleagues at the Paris Office and at the ICAO Headquarters in Montreal, to serving the international civil aviation community at large.

The NAT SPG was created in 1965 with a view to providing a planning machinery for the North Atlantic Region, and the EANPG was created in 1972 with a vision to foreseeing the future of the air navigation in Europe and to establishing and modernizing the system in accordance with new technologies and the evolution of air transport.

Following the model and the terms of reference of the EANPG, other planning international regional groups (PIRGS) were established in other regions with adaptation to the regional environment and requirement. I received an invitation from the European Commission in Brussels to participate in the launching, ***this morning***, of modernization plans for air traffic management in Europe which are essential for the development of the single sky and its implementation. This project is very important and it requires the cooperation and support of all European states. I would like to mention here the major role played by the late Mrs. Layola de Palacio, mainly in promoting the European single sky when she was the Vice-President of the European Commission and the Commissioner for Transport, and with whom I had close cooperation. ***Also today*** in Brussels they are having a ceremony to commemorate Mrs. de Palacio's achievements. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend these two events.

Allow me now to make a brief tour d'horizon of the challenges facing civil aviation. I have been associated with ICAO since 1953, up to my retirement on August 1st, 2006. As I look back on those years, I consider myself fortunate to have been a witness as well as an actor in the extraordinary evolution of global air transport, whether in the technological, operational or regulatory fields. From a fledging industry just after the 2nd World War, air transport is now, more than ever, a catalyst for economic, social and cultural development worldwide. Europe is a prime example of the power of air travel to transform societies for the better and to connect them to the rest of the world.

Yes, we have done well thanks to the cooperation of ICAO's 190 member states, and thanks to academic institutions, scientific research and training centres in civil aviation. And yet, as proud as we can be of one's past successes, it is of the future that I wish to speak today. Air transport is a very important sector of the global economy. After 6 decades of remarkable growth and expansion, air transport has become an essential component of our global society, a catalyst for business and tourism and a powerful driver of economic, social, cultural and political change worldwide. The industry currently employs 32 million people directly and indirectly and represents 8% of the world's gross domestic product, or some 3 thousand billion US dollars. Some 40% of manufactured goods by value are shipped by air, and many national economies are largely or totally dependent on air transport. Air transport also supports the world's largest industry, which is travel and tourism.

Of course, these results could not be achieved without a safe and secure air transport. For air transport to contribute to the well-being of people in the years ahead, it must keep growing in a safe, secure and orderly manner. Managing growth, therefore, is the over-reaching challenge facing the world's aviation community in the 1st half of the 21st century, as was the case at the end of the 20th century. In May of this year, at the 3rd Regional Pacific Conference of Airports Council International (ACI) which took place in Cairns, Australia, as a keynote speaker I stated, and I quote: "We are now facing the most challenging economic crisis and after several years of robust growth the world economy is facing some serious challenges in sustaining its brisk pace. The end of the house bubble in the United States, as well as the unfolding credit crisis, the decline of the US dollar vis-à-vis other currencies, the persistence of large global imbalances, the recession which is looming in the horizon, the high oil prices, as well as the global inflation, are all threatening factors for the sustainability of the global economic growth in the coming years. End of quote. Indeed, the present global financial crisis has its negative impact on all the economic sectors including air transport. The growth of air transport this year has slowed down, and the global loss of the airlines amounts to approximately 5.2 billion US dollars and it will continue to do so in 2009. Despite the current global economic context which will impact air traffic in the short term, civil aviation development is expected to regain momentum by 2010 according to the latest ICAO forecast.

It is essential, therefore, in view of the financial turmoil, that our planning should continue for a more efficient, safe, secure, economic and environmental system. The EANPG should continue to play its fundamental role, together with the NAT SPG, with a view to providing a safer sky, more economical operations and environmental protection.

ICAO is traditionally identified as a standard-seating organization having adopted some 10,000 provisions. In order to have a safer and more efficient global aviation environment, having standards available is a necessary condition but not a sufficient one. In addition to this condition, contracting states must have the capacity, the resources and the will to adhere to these standards. With the diversity of growth from region to region, how can we build a sustainable development? Looking at sustainability from a holistic perspective, we therefore must consider all aspects: *operational, economic, political, human, environmental protection, safety, security and efficiency.* **With regard to safety, it remains a sine qua non condition for growth and sustainability of air transport**. A system that is not safe cannot be sustained very long. *Without safety and security there is no growth for air transport*

Unfortunately, terrorism continues to hit different targets. The hideous and ghastly acts of terrorism in Mumbai last month are a reminder that we should continue to be very vigilant and that very effective anti-terrorists measures should be taken to protect the society from such acts. **Terrorism should be eradicated.**

The rapid and sustained growth in air traffic over the coming years is another major factor.

The single European sky will no doubt make operations in Europe safer, more economical, more efficient, and will have a positive impact on the protection of the environment. The ICAO Assembly of 2004 was informed by the European Community about plans to develop and implement the concept of a single European sky (SES), a broad initiative to reform the architecture of European air traffic control in order to meet future capacity, safety and environmental needs. Three years later, at the 2007 Assembly, a progress report indicated that important measures had been taken to harmonize the legislation framework enabling the SES concept among participating countries. Another regulatory proposal brought before the Assembly was the establishment and recognition by ICAO of a single European Upper Information Region designed to facilitate operational improvement and complementary cost benefits. That proposal is presently under review.

As often stressed by various European aviation stakeholders, there is an urgent need to modernize ATM systems. Most of the basic technologies in use date back more than 30 years despite considerable progress in specific areas such as data processing or hardware equipment. The future European ATM System must be able to cope with the expected growth in air traffic. It must be implemented with a service-centric approval by tackling the fragmentation which exists throughout today's System and the associated institutional arrangements. There is a need for one simplified European framework and all stakeholders have a role to play in progressively modernizing the System to cope safely with the increased demand.

Addressing the technological issues will be done through SESAR (SES ATM Research). SESAR is described as a unique opportunity for modernization of ATM infrastructure by linking technological and development activities with legislative work, and by pulling all measures into a consistent program managed by a single entity. The European experience is by no means unique. The United States has launched a similar, although broader concept called NEXT-GEN. It has a larger scope than SESAR as it deals as well with airport infrastructure including security equipment. What is fundamental to these 2 regional efforts is that they both recognize the importance of evolving through ICAO's operational concept and global air navigation plan in order to ensure optimum worldwide inter-operability and harmonization.

In this context, consideration of the European Single Sky during this 50th EANPG Meeting is more than appropriate. The Single Sky in Europe will have a direct impact on the environment, which is a

global issue. Concern over the impact of aviation on the environment is widespread in large part because of the projected growth of aviation over the next 15 years or so. The growth of air transport could have a negative impact if measures are not taken to further reducing the impact of noise on the population living in the proximity of airports, as well as reducing the effect of the greenhouse gas emissions on the global climate change.

Aviation stakeholders are placed in a difficult position:

(1) On the one hand they have made remarkable progress in reducing engine emissions over the past 30 years or so – today's modern aircraft are about 70% more fuel efficient in terms of C02 than 1st generation turbo jet aircraft. NOX emissions have been reduced by some 40% and hydrocarbons have been virtually eliminated;

(2) On the other hand, in responding to increased public demand for air travel, the anticipated increase in traffic will carry results in a corresponding rise in CO2 emissions to grow above the current contribution estimated at 2% of the global total.

Environmental protection is a complex challenge involving many interconnected technical, operational, economic, social and political factors. ICAO has developed Annex 16 to the Chicago Convention on Aviation and Environment Protection. In addition to the existing CAEP group, another group on international aviation and climate change composed of senior government officials representing all regions and with equitable participation of developed and developing countries, was established by the ICAO Council in accordance with Resolution 36-22 of the last ICAO Assembly of 2007, with a view to providing recommendations on the protection of the environment. This group should recommend to the ICAO Council an aggressive program of action on aviation and climate change based on consensus and reflecting the shared vision and strong will of all contracting states. The Council was also requested to convene, at an appropriate time, a high-level meeting to review the program of action recommended by the group.

A global problem needs a global solution. ICAO should exercise its leadership role to ensure a sustainable long-term growth of air transport. Although pollution caused by aviation is only 2% at the present time (it may reach 3% by 2050), nonetheless we should have a vision to achieving 0% carbon emissions. **We should particularly focus on technology, air traffic management, operation of aircraft and economic measures**. *These 4 elements should help bring about, as a result, the protection of the environment from the growth of air transport.*

Using the most advanced technologies, including satellite technology, civil aviation is a complex industry. It is extremely vulnerable to socio-economic-financial and political factors. The work of the EANPG is essential for vision, planning and implementation. **If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail**. *To paraphrase Alan Kay, the father of the personal computer and modern multi-windowed interfaces, "the best way to predict the future is to invent it"*. A good dose of knowledge, enthusiast, trust and perseverance, together with a reason for taking risks, is the best guarantee for future success.

On the occasion of the Anniversary of the EANPG's 50th Meeting I would like to congratulate the Group for its achievements and to wish it every success in its planning and vision for the European Air Navigation Region.