

**Message from the President of the Council of the
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Dr. Assad Kotaite,
on the theme "Using Satellites to Make Civil Aviation Safer"
for the world-wide celebration of International Civil Aviation Day
on 7 December 1996**

Fifty-two years ago, even before the birth of the United Nations and while the world was at war, representatives of 52 States came together to plan the best possible future for civil aviation. They created a global organization of governments dedicated to the safe and orderly development of civil aviation, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The Organization was created in wartime to serve all mankind in peacetime

Today we look back over 52 years of tireless work by the many people sent over the years, from all over the world, to ICAO's Council, Air Navigation Commission, and Secretariat, as well as to many conferences, panels, and other meetings. Their efforts produced standards, recommended practices, policies, guidance, etc. — whatever was needed to develop the safest possible civil aviation.

In the past and coming decades ICAO has promoted and shall continue to promote the global implementation of new communications, navigation, and surveillance/air traffic management systems (the "CNS/ATM systems") which are largely based upon the use of space satellites.

Not even a half-century ago our planet Earth had but one satellite, our Moon. Today hundreds of manufactured satellites orbit our globe — a good number of them already serving civil aviation, particularly in communications and navigation.

We commend the efforts of all who are working to implement these new CNS/ATM systems. As they do so, our already safe civil aviation system will become even more safe, even as it grows to bring more and more people together in the days to come.