



MESSAGE FROM
DR. PHILIPPE
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SECRETARY
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OF ICAO

The move to new Headquarters represents an exciting new chapter in the continuing and ever-evolving success story that is the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Indeed, it is the realization of a dream and it is so for many reasons, not the least of which is the fact that in the past 20 years our Membership has grown from 135 to 184 States. It was simply time to re-evaluate our location and our situation.

In light of this, we approached the Government of Canada stating that we would be very pleased to move to new premises designed and built to meet our very specific requirements, most particularly in terms of larger conference facilities and improved security.

With the excellent support and co-operation we have always enjoyed from our host country, we worked together to achieve this goal. And today, we have in effect returned to our roots as ICAO was first located on the other side of University Street from 1949 to 1975.

These new Headquarters will only serve to strengthen our image and standing in Montréal, while contributing decisively to the international character of the city and to its envied title as the world's capital of civil aviation. Moreover, I believe that it will also enable us to make our Organization, our role and, above all, our ICAO family better known and understood by the public at large.

Our Headquarters will also serve as the cornerstone of the Place de la Cité internationale and, in this regard, we shall do our best to encourage other aviation-related Organizations such as IATA and SITA to relocate in the Second Phase of this project.

It is also our sincere hope that the aeronautical industry in the Greater Montréal Region will become involved in this truly exciting new venture either by helping to finance works of art such as the sculpture "Flight", for example, which is envisaged for the exterior of the building, or by adopting the new premises as a showcase for new products and technologies.

Such exhibits, to be visited by participants to our world-wide events, by schoolchildren and university students, will serve to demystify certain aspects of our work. Perhaps more importantly,

they will stimulate interest and encourage young people to consider a career in the world of civil aviation. As the Organization within the United Nations Family in charge of civil aviation, I believe that we have a large responsibility in this respect. Education and training are indeed an area in which we play a critical role.

ICAO's presence to date has certainly contributed to the selection of Montréal as the venue for a growing number of other international bodies, particularly in the environment, as well as the continued development of an extremely dynamic and diversified aeronautical industry in and around the city.

In addition, ICAO has had a considerable economic and social impact on the life of Montrealers. For example, the 800 or so people who work at ICAO Headquarters in the National Delegations of our Member States and in our international Secretariat inject at least \$40 million annually into the local economy, not to mention the \$15 million which ICAO spends here on equipment and services.

In addition to this, close to 4,000 visitors and participants at our meetings stay one to three weeks a year in Montréal. Hotels, restaurants, taxis, retailers, airlines and airports, all benefit from these visitors who often have an extensive purchasing power. Indeed, there is no doubt whatsoever that this socio-economic contribution has become today a true competition among potential host cities for international Organizations.

I am convinced that we will soon feel at home in our new Headquarters and our new surroundings. For the first time, we have a daycare, fitness centre and outdoor patio, as well as other improved facilities, for all to enjoy. And the very design of the building, horizontal as opposed to vertical, facilitates daily contact with one another, thus helping to build new spirit and strengthen ties within the true family that is ICAO.

Let us all salute the wisdom of the Government of Canada, the Government of Québec and the City of Montréal for creating a most welcoming environment for ICAO. It is a sound investment for today and tomorrow, in perfect harmony with the international vocation for which Canada has always been admired since the early days of the United Nations.

Dr. Philippe Rochat
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