

standards and recommendations, it is obligated to notify ICAO to this effect.

Have ICAO standards ever been flatly refused by one or more States?

Not once. And we are particularly proud of this. While a standard may not be implemented, either because of the lack of political will or financial means, never has one been refused outright. This is particularly important bearing in mind that, throughout its 52-year history, ICAO has had to confront dramatic changes in the world. Created in a time of world conflict, the Organization continued to play a primary and vital role in peacetime.

This was also true during the so-called Cold War, the subsequent changes in the political landscape and the continuing violence and conflict in many parts of the globe. Whatever the changes, however, our objective has always been to provide the people of the world with safe, efficient, regular and economic transport, while respecting the sovereignty of our Member States.

For there to be peace in the skies, there must also be safety. How is ICAO working to improve this?

To give but one example. In 1994, we established the *Safety Oversight Programme* whereby an ICAO team of specialists will work with a Member State to make a safety assessment of its specific needs in this regard and present a follow-up report recommending changes or improvements.

Should there be a lack of political will to abide by the Convention in the sense that States do not establish a structure to administer any basic aviation law nor they empower that agency, or a lack of funding to implement such changes, or a lack of basic legislation or specific regulations for an adequate system for the certification and supervision of air operators, or a lack of will and dedicated personnel, ICAO's answer is simple.

Let us sit down and discuss it. We can always find a way to work things out for the benefit of both parties. To date, over 50 States have requested ICAO to assess their safety oversight. So far, we have made assessments to 18 and, by the end of this year (1996), we may reach the number of 30 States. We are confident that this figure will grow significantly in the months to come.

A major factor threatening safety not only in the skies, but also on the ground, are acts of unlawful interference against civil aviation. How successful has ICAO been in this regard?

Indicative of ICAO's leading role in the fight against terrorism was the recent Statement of the *Paris Ministerial Conference of seven most industrialized countries plus Russia on Terrorism* which emphasized the importance of multilateral cooperation in the fight to combat this ever-present threat. In doing so, the Conference referred in particular to the aviation security role played by ICAO and to security standards established by ICAO.

The Conference therefore reinforced what we have always believed. And that is that only through international cooperation can we be truly effective in combatting the scourge of terrorism. Here, ICAO has been, and continues to be, the forum where international cooperation on aviation security issues has achieved successful results. Our extensive work in this area, for example, led to the development of four international conventions against air terrorism. The last one, the *Convention of Marking Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection*, was developed in 1991. With the exception of the last one which is not yet in force, the other three have been accepted almost universally.

In this context, we welcome the State's call on States to work within ICAO to develop heightened security measures at airports, and to establish uniform and strict international standards for bomb detection.

Just as the political landscape has changed beyond all recognition over the years, so has the air transport industry. How does this impact upon the world of ICAO?

It has had enormous impact. The aviation industry has changed from a very controlled sector to one of globalization. Today, the market controls the commercial reality and destiny of the industry, not governments. This factor is reflected in ICAO's work today and it is more complex and challenging than ever before.

A major challenge currently being faced by ICAO is the implementation of Communications, Navigation and Surveillance and Air Traffic Management (CNS/ATM). Can you elaborate?

With pleasure. There is no question that one of ICAO's greatest challenges, and successes, is the CNS/ATM Systems

Concept based on satellite, which is absolutely essential for greater safety and for alleviating congestion in the skies. Ground-based stations can no longer cope with increased traffic in the skies and this new global navigation satellite system will provide far superior service up to the year 2010.

The surge of air travel will coincide with the shift from ground-based to space-based air traffic control, enabling controllers to handle the growth in air traffic with greater safety as well as greater efficiency. We at ICAO always think globally. For this reason, we are working so that implementation of CNS/ATM should not be exclusive to major carriers and certain air routes, but on a global basis and also of interest to smaller airlines.

Global cooperation is so important for the implementation of the system, as well as global understanding for cost services. To this end, and from the conceptual point of view, we must now establish the formula for implementation in terms of the legal framework, funding, cost recovery and financing.

To this effect, ICAO will host a world-wide conference in Montréal in the first half of 1998 to discuss the financial, organizational, legal and cooperative aspects of implementation. This will enable the Council to present a report to the next Session of the ICAO Assembly in the Fall of 1998.

In conclusion Dr. Kotaite, what are your thoughts on ICAO's move to new Headquarters?

I am absolutely delighted. Canada, Québec and Montréal have always been excellent hosts for ICAO and we could not be happier. With its serene and peaceful atmosphere and a superior quality of life, Montréal has always extended a warm welcome to ICAO. Not only by government and the authorities, but also by the people of Montréal.

I know that delegates always look forward to visiting our conferences and seminars here and they are always impressed with how cosmopolitan and relatively safe the city is day or night. Unfortunately, we live in a world where violence exists and is an ongoing threat in many countries. Here in Montréal, however, there is an exceptional level of security and we truly feel at home. ➔