

OPENING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO),
DR. ASSAD KOTAITE, TO THE SYMPOSIUM ON FUTURE GLOBAL CNS SYSTEMS

(Montreal, 4 to 5 September 1991)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to ICAO Headquarters in Montreal for the "Symposium on Future Global CNS Systems". The name chosen for this Symposium appropriately coincides with the theme designated for the Tenth Air Navigation Conference which is scheduled to commence tomorrow afternoon immediately following this Symposium.

The principal objective of this Symposium is to provide participants in the forthcoming Tenth Air Navigation Conference with a good understanding of the work of the FANS Special Committee of the Council, including an introduction to the communication, navigation and surveillance concept developed by that group.

Therefore, today and tomorrow morning, we will have the benefit of hearing twenty-eight international experts deliver presentations on topics including the shortcomings of the present air navigation system followed by several exposés containing detailed information on the FANS CNS and ATM concepts which propose solutions to those shortcomings. Other speakers will cover many of the important issues which are integral parts of any global air navigation system such as institutional, legal, economic and planning considerations.

The Symposium will also offer views on the Global CNS and ATM System concepts from the perspective of two provider States as well as those of users of air navigation services such as IATA, IAOPA and IBAC.

Finally, the views of pilots and air traffic controllers will be heard as to how their existing roles would be affected by the new FANS CNS and ATM concepts. One of the distinct advantages of a Symposium of this nature is that speakers are given a degree of flexibility to offer individual views and opinions and are not unduly bound by the usual institutional limitations. In this way we should get more "leading edge" thinking as to where civil aviation should be in the 21st century and how we may get there.

Delegates to the Tenth Air Navigation Conference will of course be given ample opportunity to put forth the "official" views of their States later during the Conference.

In my opinion the Tenth Air Navigation Conference is one of the most important meetings to be held within ICAO since its inception in Chicago on 7 December 1944. We are at critical crossroads in international civil aviation. Consideration of a move to a predominantly satellite-based air navigation system in place of a primarily terrestrial system will require foresight, knowledge and perhaps even courage.

A satellite-based system, in my view, has the potential to improve civil aviation to an extent similar to that achieved by the introduction of jet engines over reciprocating engines in the 1950s and 1960s.

The success of the Tenth Air Navigation Conference will to a large extent be dependent on a good understanding of the FANS work and the many related considerations.

A number of international experts are scheduled to speak at this Symposium. I am confident that the presentations by the experts will be very informative for everyone and lead to the achievement of the principal objective of the Symposium and the ultimate success of the Tenth Air Navigation Conference.

I wish you good luck in this endeavour.
