

**Remarks by the Secretary General of ICAO, Mr. Raymond Benjamin,
at the Dinner hosted in his honour
by the Director General of IATA, Giovanni Bisignani**

(Montréal, 8 September 2009)

I would like first and foremost to thank you, Giovanni, for organizing this official dinner in my honour.

It is my great pleasure to sign this commercial agreement along with Giovanni, which commits our two organizations to pursuing our long history of working together to develop and optimize the safe transport of dangerous goods by air. This has been to the benefit of international airlines but more importantly to the global economy as well.

The significance of this agreement is not simply that it extends this successful collaboration but that it strengthens and broadens the scope of our partnership on dangerous goods. As equal partners in the commercial aspects, we will bring to market online systems that will improve the exchange of this critical information.

I see this agreement as the model for the future cooperation between our two great organizations. Giovanni, it is with great confidence that I have signed this agreement reflecting the success of our past efforts as well as the mutual respect for the professionalism and leadership that IATA and ICAO consistently deliver.

When I was interviewed for the position of Secretary General by the Council, I was clear about what I wanted to do.

One of the objectives I put forth was for ICAO to meet the needs of the industry, while obviously fulfilling our mandate to States under the Chicago Convention.

ICAO does not operate in a vacuum. We have to recognize that we are evolving in a constantly evolving global context. We need to be more engaged with non-governmental organizations representing industry and, eventually, with industry itself.

A well-worn cliché is perhaps appropriate here – we want to be more a part of the solution and not part of the problem, as some perceive us sometimes.

And this can only come through dialogue, through cooperation, towards a common vision of a safe and efficient global air transport system.

That is in short the message I will be giving in Washington on Friday at the Annual FAA Safety Forum.

That ICAO will strive to foster even greater cooperation among Member States and the world aviation community in supporting the overall growth of a robust and sustainable air transport system, for the benefit of our global society.

And so Giovanni, I look to this dinner as a sign of things to come – cooperation, camaraderie and confidence in our resolve to work together for the good of all.
