ICAO AND INDUSTRY JOIN FORCES
TO SHAPE THE FUTURE AIR NAVIGATION SYSTEM
On 20th September ICAO presented a proposal to the international aviation community that will assist in the modernization of air traffic management systems in order to cope with the anticipated doubling of passenger traffic to some five billion by the year 2030.

Some 500 representatives from States and industry attended ICAO Headquarters for the Global Air Navigation Industry Symposium (GANIS) from 20th to 23rd September.

“Over the next ten years, some $120 billion will be spent worldwide on upgrading the global aviation system to enhance safety, efficiency and overall sustainability. We have to ensure that it is done in a timely, coordinated and harmonized manner around the world,” said Raymond Benjamin, Secretary General of ICAO.

“The proposed approach provides a clear way forward for States and the aviation community. Success ultimately depends on States, operators, air navigation service providers, manufacturers and airports working closely together to synchronize deployment of the future systems,” added Nancy Graham, Director of ICAO’s Air Navigation Bureau.

The plan is based on an “aviation system block upgrades” concept. Developed in co-operation with States, international organizations and industry, it is flexible and can be implemented by a State or region based on need and level of readiness and has the essential qualities of:

- A clearly defined measurable operational improvement with appropriate metrics to determine success;
- The necessary equipment and/or systems in aircraft and on the ground along with the operational approval or certification plan;
- Standards and procedures for airborne and ground systems; and
- A positive business case over a clearly defined period of time.

The approach proposed by ICAO will provide a level of investment certainty for operators, infrastructure providers and equipment manufacturers. It will also outline a regulatory approval process to support States in the introduction of significant changes.

The Symposium was an opportunity for participants to share latest developments and best practices, identify common ground and differences among existing or planned systems, discuss emerging issues and chart out the next steps to achieve a seamless and interoperable global air navigation system.
Feedback from participants will help refine the “block upgrades” concept, which ICAO expects to incorporate into the revised ICAO Global Air Navigation Plan that will be presented to Member States at the Organization’s 12th Air Navigation Conference in November 2012. This Conference will set the planning horizon for the coming decade.