

THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANISATION (ICAO)

Mission: To serve as the global forum of States for international civil aviation

ICAO, Montreal, Canada, 2014

In 1908, some German balloonists crossed the Franco-German border and landed in France. The occupants included some German officers. Showing prescience in the light of subsequent events, the French government proposed an international conference to plan the regulation of flights into and over foreign countries. The result was the Conférence Internationale de Navigation Aérienne, which was attended by twenty European states in 1910. This project had been anticipated by the International Commission for Air Navigation (ICAN) which first met as a group of eight countries in Berlin in 1903 – the year of the Wright Brothers’ first flight. There was no agreement. Twenty-seven countries attended the second convention three years later, again in Berlin. The third ICAN convention, held in London in 1912, led to an agreement on aircraft call signs. ICAN was the forerunner of ICAO. The representatives of fifty-two ICAN states signed the Convention on International Civil Aviation (the Chicago Convention), in Chicago, Illinois, on 7th December 1944. This agreement was ratified by the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation – ICAO, as it became – in 1947.