

**STATEMENT AT THE OPENING OF THE
FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR AERONAUTICAL METEOROLOGY**

by

M. Jarraud

Secretary-General

World Meteorological Organization

(Hong Kong, China, 3 February 2010)

Excellency,

Mr Carr McLeod, president of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology,

Mr Shun Chi-ming, vice-president of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology,

Mr Lee Boon-ying, Permanent Representative of Hong Kong, China, with WMO,

Distinguished Representatives of WMO Members and Partner Organizations,

Dear Colleagues and Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to address the fourteenth session of the WMO Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology. I wish to express my appreciation to the president of CAeM, Mr Carr McLeod, for his leadership of the Commission and the outstanding work accomplished during the intersessional period since the thirteenth session of CAeM, held in Geneva in November 2006. My thanks are also due to the vice-president, Mr Shun Chi-ming, as well as the chairpersons and members of the Commission's groups and expert teams.

I would like to express WMO's appreciation to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, for hosting this session of CAeM and the associated technical conference, to Mr Lee Boon-ying, Permanent Representative of Hong Kong, China, with WMO and to all Hong Kong Observatory staff, for the warm welcome and the excellent arrangements. Established in 1883, the Observatory has made key contributions to WMO's fundamental mission for the protection of lives and property and, in recent years, it has provided essential momentum to the implementation of the World Weather Information Service (WWIS) website concept, which in 2008 received the distinguished Stockholm Challenge Award in the area of the environment.

Additionally, I wish to extend a warm welcome to all representatives of WMO Members, partner organizations and to all participants in this session.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On 18 March 1911, Charles den Bron (1874-1958) flew the "Spirit of Sha Tin" from the area that later would become Sha Tin airfield. Today, a replica of his aircraft is exhibited at Chek Lap Kok Airport.

The spectacular development of aviation in the early years of the 20th century provided considerable impetus to the development of meteorological services and expanded the horizons of WMO's predecessor, the International Meteorological Organization (IMO), which initially had developed essentially in support of the maritime community. International aviation demanded observing stations and forecasting offices at airports, as well as telecommunications systems to facilitate the rapid exchange of reports, so it contributed to the enlargement of observing systems and to new meteorological services being created in regions where previously there had been none.

In September 1919 a Conference of Directors of National Meteorological Services was convened in Paris to re-establish international cooperation, which had been interrupted for several years. Among the key decisions adopted were restoration of five IMO technical commissions and the launching of two new ones, including the IMO Commission for the Applications of Meteorology to Aeronautical Navigation.

I therefore wish to congratulate your technical commission for its recent ninetieth anniversary.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The fourteenth session of your Commission will be addressing a number of institutional and scientific issues which shall have significant impacts on the provision of meteorological services to civil aviation during the 21st century. As you are aware, WMO has cooperated closely with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for over half a century.

Through its latest amendment, Annex 3 of ICAO's Convention on International Civil Aviation, which refers to Meteorological Service for International Air Navigation and is also Volume II of WMO Publication No. 49 (Technical Regulations, Meteorological service for international air navigation), will be requiring the implementation of a suitably organized and recognized quality management system. You will be informed in detail on the implications of this regulation, as well as on WMO efforts to support its Members in complying with this challenging requirement by the established deadline.

In this respect, there is growing evidence that WMO needs to review its existing guidance on required qualifications and competencies for meteorological personnel serving civil aviation, so your session may wish to discuss appropriate ways to meet this key requirement in the most cost-effective, realistic and timely manner. New training methodologies, including distance-learning, web-based and computer-aided methods, as well as cooperation with recognized training institutions and an enlarged role for WMO Regional Training Centres, are all part of the current plans to enhance the competency, knowledge and skills of meteorological staff.

One of the foremost justifications for aviation services is to contribute in preserving lives in a transport sector that has traditionally excelled in ensuring safe and efficient travel. In this context, weather hazard warnings are an essential part of WMO's contribution to disaster risk reduction. However, some users have expressed concern about the degree of compliance with regulations, so your session will be invited to discuss improvements to this vital system.

Other major challenges before you include the emerging requirements for dedicated meteorological information and products for air traffic management systems at the scale of continents, which have already been developed in North America and Europe but are just now being considered in other regions, such as Southeast Asia. A CAeM expert team has worked intensively to deliver the first prototype of what has been denominated a *"New Terminal Weather Forecast"* and I am certain that your Commission will have a constructive debate on this key issue.

Additional questions with likely operational implications include aviation effects on climate and the emerging evidence that, due in particular to the anticipated modified patterns of severe and extreme weather, climate change will not only affect the demand for aviation services but will also pose a significant challenge to meteorological services supporting tactical and strategic decisions by air traffic management, operators and flight crews.

Lastly, you will be requested to deliberate on emerging challenges originating from outer space in the form of cosmic and solar radiation, which can have a critical influence on radio communications as well as the health of passengers and crews, for which a new form of cooperation between the space and aeronautical meteorology communities has been established. In a similar manner, the new WMO Sand and Dust Storm Warning Advisory and Assessment System (SDS-WAS) will be supporting aviation by providing timely warnings on these disruptive weather events.

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have attempted to list some of the key challenges facing your session and the need for training will obviously be a common denominator for a significant number of them. Given the wide range of

topics and tasks before you, I wish to conclude by assuring you of my personal support to the work of the Commission, rather than to deprive you of any more of your valuable time.

Due to my other commitments, it will not be possible for me to be with you throughout your meeting, so I have designated as my representative Dr Geoff Love, Director of Weather and Disaster Risk Reduction Services, and other senior Secretariat staff will assist him. I look forward to the decisions and recommendations of your session and I am confident that your deliberations will be conducted in the traditional spirit of cooperation that has always been the hallmark of WMO.

I would like to thank once more the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, for hosting this key session, and to wish you an enjoyable stay and a most successful and productive meeting.

Thank you.
