

THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION DAY

by Albert Pelsser



Figure 1

The collecting theme on the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), whose headquarters have been in Montreal since 1945, remains active in terms of new issues. On 10 December 2007, Bolivia released a set of two stamps (see Figure 1) to commemorate the International Civil Aviation Day, which was established in 1994 by ICAO.

By Resolution A29-1, the 29th Session of the ICAO Assembly, held in 1994, declared 7 December of each year, starting in 1994, as International Civil Aviation Day to highlight and advance the benefits of international civil aviation. The 7th December 1994 marked the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (also known as the Chicago Convention) at Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. Pursuant to an ICAO initiative and with the assistance of the Canadian Government, on 6 December 1996 by Resolution 51-33, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 7 December as International Civil Aviation Day and urged governments, as well as national, regional, international and intergovernmental organizations, to take appropriate steps to observe it. Since then, 7 December is listed as an official UN day. The purpose of

the global celebration is to generate and reinforce worldwide awareness of the importance of international civil aviation in the social and economic development of States, and of the role of ICAO in promoting the safety, efficiency, and regularity of international air transport.



Figure 2

Every year, the ICAO Council adopts a theme, which is launched on 7 December, and then used by ICAO's Member States over the following twelve months to promote international civil aviation. The 2007 theme was "Global Air Transport — a driver of sustainable economic, social

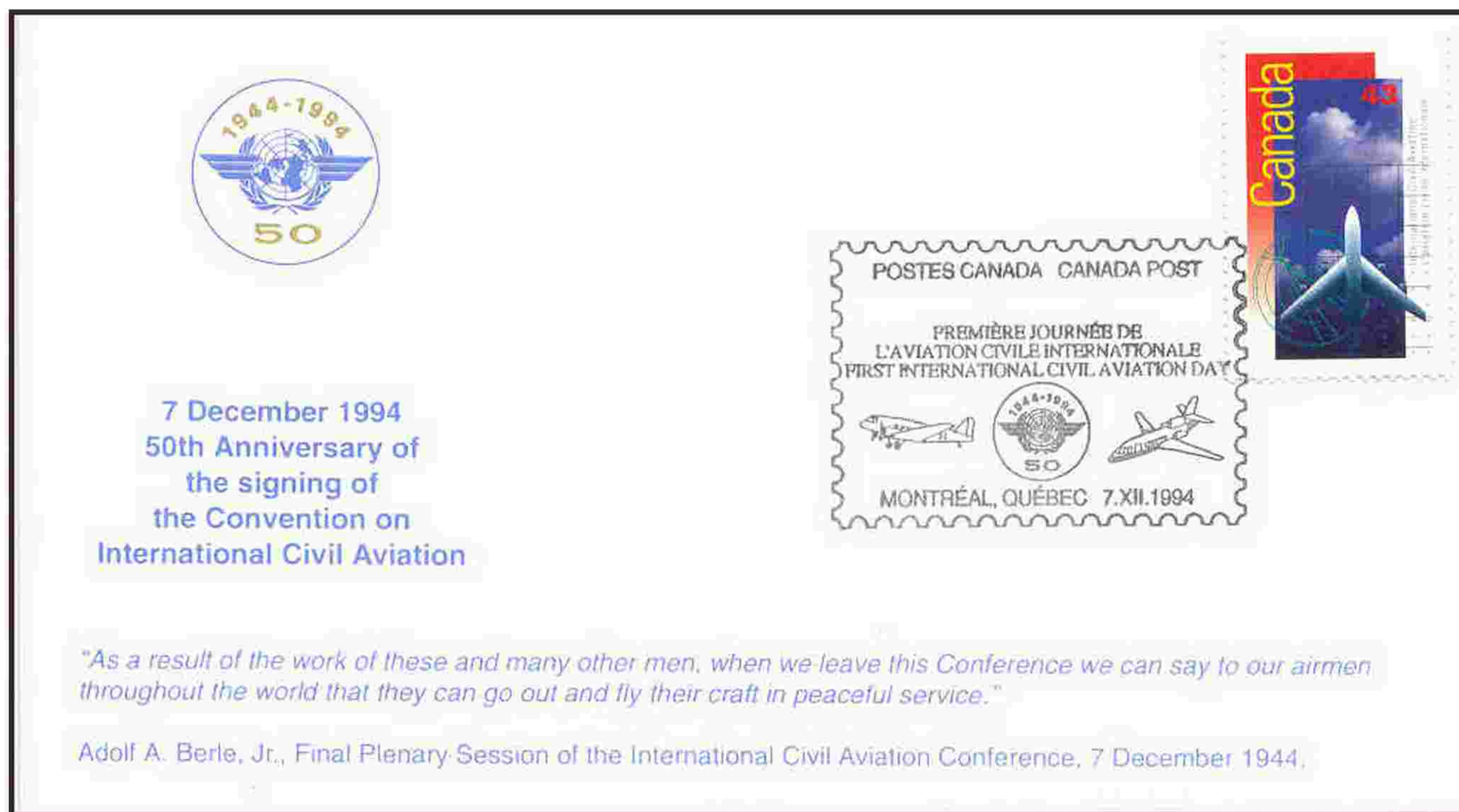


Figure 3

and cultural development."

Several countries or regions already celebrated an *aviation day* prior to ICAO's initiative to launch the International Civil Aviation Day. A few examples are given herewith. President F.D. Roosevelt had proclaimed 17 December 1940 the *Pan-American Aviation Day*; in commemoration of this day, Costa Rica issued a set of over-printed stamps. The Arab States had also established an *Arab Civil Aviation Day*. Among the countries from the Middle-East which celebrated this event with the issue of stamps on different days during December, Qatar issued a set of four stamps on 1 December 1974 (see Figure 2).

It is to be noted that, according to the U.S. Code, the President of the United States may issue each year a proclamation to designate 17 December (anniversary date of the first flight by the Wright Brothers) of each year as Pan-American Aviation Day and to issue a proclamation calling upon all officials of the Government, Governors of the States, possessions, and all citizens to participate in the observance of this day to further and stimulate interest in aviation in the American countries as an important stimulus to the further development of more rapid communications and a cultural development between the nations of the Western Hemisphere.

Along with the 50th anniversary celebrations, a special cover was issued by ICAO for the first coordinated celebration of the International Civil Aviation Day on 7 December 1994 (see Figure 3). This philatelic cover paid tribute to the founders of ICAO and specially to the Honourable Adolf A. Berle, Jr., U.S. Assistant Secretary of State,

Chairman of the American Delegation and President of the International Civil Aviation Conference, by quoting a sentence of his closing address on 7 December 1944 at the Final Plenary Session in the Grand Ballroom of the Stevens Hotel, Chicago, Illinois. The quotation reads as follows: "As a result of the work of these and many other men, when we leave this Conference we can say to our airmen throughout the world that they can go out and fly their craft in peaceful service."

The following year in 1995, Israel issued a souvenir leaf (see Figure 4) for the International Civil Aviation Day, showing the tail of an El Al Airlines Boeing 747, an early aircraft in the background, and the emblem of the Civil Aviation Administration (CAA). The stamp on this card (issued on 9 July 1990) is Michel #2 (in the section of automated stamps of the Michel Catalogue) produced by the Klussendorf ATM machine (value \$1.00, light gray, no machine number printed); it shows the stag, emblem of the Postal Authority, and the Star of David. The theme of the 1995 celebration was: "The Aeroplane in our Lives." Israel souvenir leaves were produced for the first time in 1988. Issues are commissioned by private companies or organizations to mark special events, and bear postage stamps as authorized by the Postal Authority. In this case, the CAA of Israel required the printing of 2010 souvenir leaves (see number at the bottom centre of the picture). Ten souvenir leaves were donated to the Postal Archives and the balance was sold to the public.

On 7 December 1999, Kuwait released a set of three stamps (see Figure 5) to celebrate the International



Figure 4

Civil Aviation Day. The theme of that year was: "International Civil Aviation - Promoting Global Friendship and Understanding." This issue is the only one in the ICAO collection showing the third and current official emblem of ICAO.

As regards to the 2007 Bolivian issue, it is to be noted that there is a mismatch between the day of celebration of the International Civil Aviation Day (7 December) and the actual issue day (10 December).

The Bs8.50 value at Figure 1 shows for the first

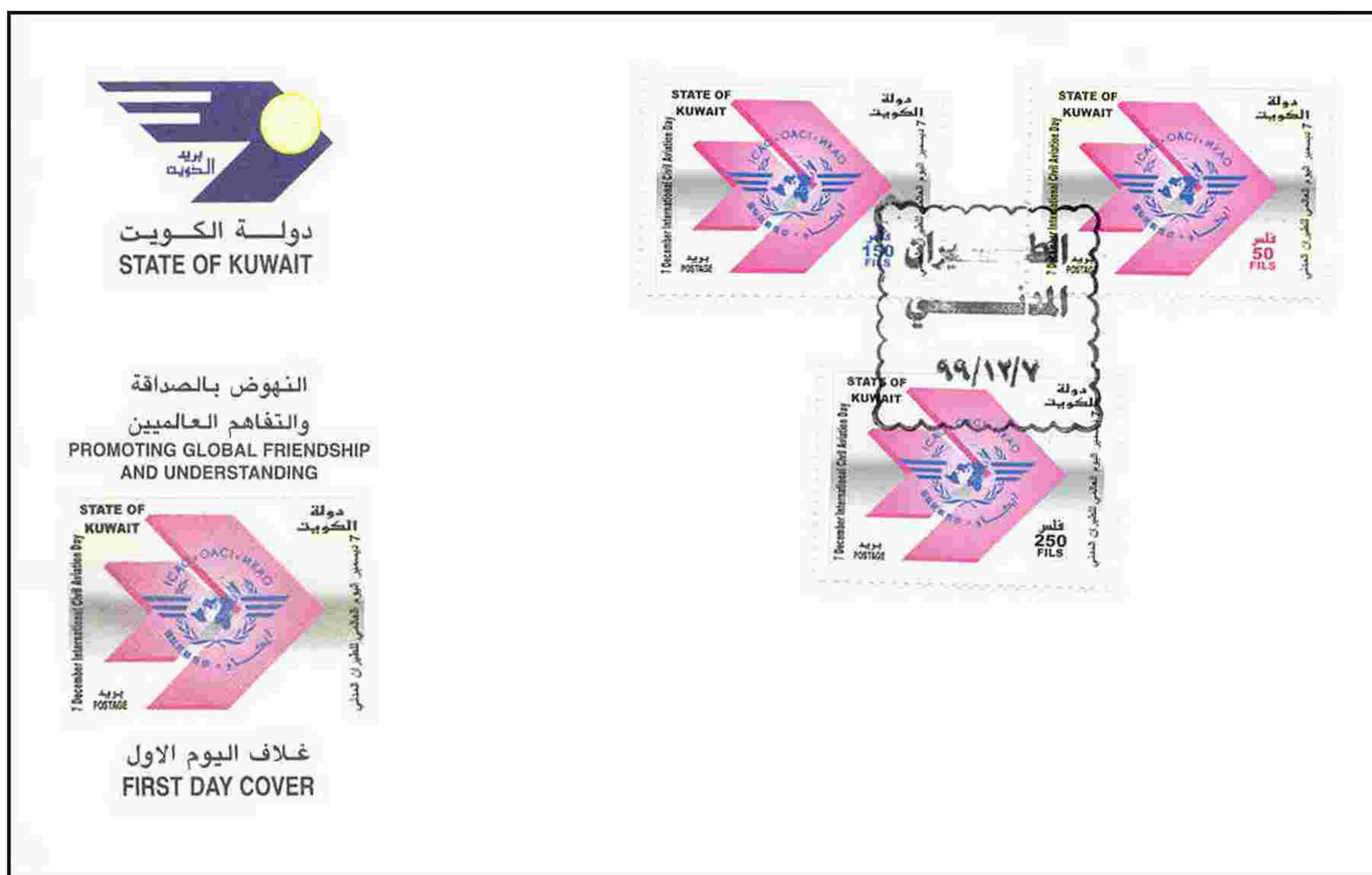


Figure 5

time in the ICAO collection an Airbus A380, the double-deck, wide-body, four-engine airliner manufactured by the European corporation Airbus, an EADS subsidiary.



Figure 6

The largest passenger airliner in the world today,

the A380 made its maiden flight on 27 April 2005 from Toulouse, France, and made its first commercial flight on 25 October 2007 from Singapore to Sydney with Singapore Airlines. The aircraft was known as the *Airbus A3XX* during much of its development phase.

It is be noted that, within the ICAO collection, Singapore had issued in 1994 a set of four stamps reflecting the progressive, high-tech and futuristic nature of the aviation industry. The 35-c value of that set (see Figure 6) features an aircraft of the future, an Airbus A3XX, a double-decker plane; however, although the philatelic notice mentions Boeing 747-X, the design of the aircraft on this stamp seems to be closer to the preliminary design specifications of the Airbus project.

CHECKLIST

Bolivia	2007 Dec 10	International Civil Aviation Day
Costa Rica	C55-C56	1940 Dec 17	Pan-American Aviation Day
Israel	Carmel 201	1995 Dec 07	International Civil Aviation Day
Kuwait	1458-1460	1999 Dec 07	International Civil Aviation Day
Qatar	411-414	1974 Dec 01	Arab Civil Aviation Day
Singapore	703-706	1994 Oct 05	Airbus A3XX
Syria	767	1976 Dec 30	Arab Civil Aviation Day
Syria	1229	1990 Dec 11	Arab Civil Aviation Day

REFERENCES

ICAO website at http://www.icao.int/icao/en/aviation_day.htm

