



European Aviation Safety Agency

**Welcome Address by Patrick Goudou, Executive Director, on the occasion of the
Official Opening of the European Aviation Safety Agency's offices in Cologne**

PAGE 1 of 2

Note for journalists: please refer to the press release EASA PRESS/09/2004 and the Events page of the EASA website

COLOGNE, 13/12/2004

Commissioners, Ministers, Ambassador, Mayor, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen

On the 12th of December 2003 the European Council, which consists of EU heads of state and heads of government, decided that the European Aviation Safety Agency would establish its headquarters in Cologne.

Today is the 13th of December 2004. Exactly one year after the decision, I am pleased to welcome you for this historical moment: we are going to celebrate together in Cologne the official setting up of our Agency.

I am very touched and excited, and the Agency staff is honoured to see such a number of people, 500, and what people, gathered here today, coming often from so far away.

I wish to thank you all, not only for being with us today, but also for having been, since the very beginning, fervent and constant supporters of the creation of the Agency all through the years. Your presence demonstrates the support of the Commission, the Authorities and the industry, in Europe and worldwide. In that sense, all of you are Agency pioneers.

It is indeed immensely reassuring to know that the Agency has been constantly and will be in the future benefiting from your help. We want to deserve the trust you have placed in us. We are committed to one objective: ensuring civil aviation safety. This is more than our core task; this is our mission, and our dedication.

I must say that I am extremely proud and amazed that, one year after the decision on the seats of European Agencies, we are already settled in Cologne, and fully operational here.

For this achievement I have to thank many persons.

At first the Agency staff; they are our own "VEP", "Very Essential People". In one year time, 100 persons have moved from all around Europe and joined the adventure of setting up the Agency. In many cases their workload has been excessive and the pressure too high. I am not sure that 2005 will be less demanding. But I know that I can rely on the Agency staff to accomplish new miracles next year.

Vice President Barrot, Vice President Verheugen, I would like also to thank the Commission; without its strong and obstinate will to give Europe a high and uniform level of aviation safety, the Agency would not exist.

The European Commission is our parent institution, the Institution which invented us, even before the Council and the European Parliament had only created us. The European Commission is also the Institution which allowed us to start working before the word "Cologne" was pronounced. That is the past we have in common, and I know that we share the same vision of the future of the Agency.

We will continue building the Agency with your support. The field of competencies of the Agency will be extended in order to create a comprehensive and coherent European aviation safety system. I want to also share with you today my certainty that the Agency does contribute to the creation of cleaner, safer and more beautiful skies in Europe and in the world.

Of course, I am grateful to Germany for having provided us with administrative and financial support in the installation in Cologne. Mr Stolpe, I think that this inauguration is the appropriate moment for officially thanking your government for its help, especially regarding the renting of offices in this beautiful and brand new building.

The North Rhein Westphalia has also proven its involvement by providing huge logistical and material support to our installation. Mr Steinbrück, I can only say how grateful we are for the support of your administration, and for the furniture you provided us.

Cologne is a city rightfully proud of its past. But you have bet on the future, Mr Schramm, firstly when Cologne applied for being the seat of the Agency, and secondly when you decided to support the educational efforts for the children of our staff. I am sure it was very good choices

I would be too long if I explained the role played by the National Aviation Authorities and the industry in the creation of the Agency.

I am extremely pleased to acknowledge the constant help and support provided to us by the European National Aviation Authorities, especially since the 28th of September 2003 for our certification tasks, but also on every other occasion.

The clear support of the industry to the creation of the Agency is based on the wish to have a level playing field, one and only one set of regulations applied to all Members states and transparency in the costs. The Agency has already proved its commitment to these objectives.

Aviation is a field of passion and of passionate people. To fly has long been a dream. It is now a safe reality. And it is my sincere pride that the Agency contributes to this passion, and to make this reality safer and safer.

Thank you all for your attention.