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Since the beginning of Chilean history, there have been reports of unidentified phenomena, sometimes called UFOs, observed in our skies.

Over the years, we have increased our capacity to explain many of the sightings, but some continue to remain without a scientific or logical explanation.

For that reason, in October of 1997, the Department of Civil Aeronautics, the Chilean equivalent of the American FAA, set up the Committee for the Study of Anomalous Aerial Phenomena, known as the CEFAA. This agency handles the best reports of unidentified aerial phenomena in cooperation with aeronautic specialists.

In 2000, the Aviation branch of the Army of Chile assigned me to research anomalous aerial phenomena, which they knew were real, and their affect on aerospace security. I then graduated to become a military pilot, and learned that the Aviation Army had in its files many reports of UFO incidents from military pilots.

A link was then established between our Army office and the CEFAA, and as a result, nine official cases have been documented. This has helped to create awareness among the flight crews about UFOs, and they now cooperate with flight security to report any abnormal situation.

One of our most important civil aviation cases occurred in 1988, showing that unidentified flying objects can be a danger for air operations. A Boeing 737 pilot, on a final approach to the runway at "The Tepual" Airport in Puerto Montt City, suddenly encountered a large white light surrounded by green and red. The light was moving in the opposite direction of the airplane, coming straight at it. The pilot had to make a steep turn to the left in order to avoid a collision. The phenomenon was observed by the control tower personnel.

In 2000, the crew of a Chilean plane from the Aviation branch of the Army, flying South of Santiago, observed a long cigar-shaped object, a brilliant gray. It flew parallel to the right side of the aircraft for two minutes and then disappeared at a very high speed. This object was detected by the radar of the Control Center of Santiago which notified the crew minutes before the incident.

Sadly, the UFO subject has been contaminated with false information, out of touch with reality, provided by unqualified people to the media. This has moved the issue away from a scientific and specialized study where it belongs.

In light of that problem, we now make the call to all the countries that are presently working on this issue in a serious and factual way, to unite their efforts. We would like this to include the United States of America.

This cooperative effort would help all of us counteract the potentially unsafe effects of UFOs on air operations around the world.

New cases are being documented by pilots, traffic controllers, operations staff at the world's airports, and by many others with the proper training to determine if a flying object is something unusual.

The true origin of these UFOs is unknown, yet they do affect aviation all around the planet, and this must be addressed.