



Ministers adopt important commitments to help restore international travel and trade

For immediate release

Montréal, 22 October 2021 – Ministers, Deputy Ministers and the heads of 24 international organizations completed a comprehensive review of pandemic-driven priorities for global air transport today, formalizing new commitments on border risk management and vaccination approaches, building air transport back better for sustainability and future pandemic resilience, and other key priorities aimed at accelerating air tourism and trade recovery and reconnecting the world.

The agreements were enshrined in a new Declaration they adopted as the key outcome of ICAO's High-level Conference on COVID-19, which completed today after nine days of intensive virtual multilateralism.

The new ministerial Declaration, adopted in the presence of over 50 Ministers and Deputy Ministers, recognizes the severity of the COVID-19 crisis for civil aviation, and its cascading impacts on global supply chains and the many national economies which rely so significantly on international flights for tourism and trade.

It also recognized the critical role now being played by air transport and the ICAO Council's Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) in keeping the essential supplies and personnel moving to where the world needs them most.

The participating countries committed to a multilayer risk management strategy for international civil aviation, and one which is adaptable, proportionate, non-discriminatory, and guided by scientific evidence.

To strengthen global public confidence in air travel, the countries emphasized that while vaccination should not be a precondition for travel, it is highly desirable that it be used to facilitate increased international mobility. Countries agreed to work with ICAO and other stakeholders to ensure the interoperability and accessibility of secure applications to validate pandemic-related testing, vaccination, and recovery certification.

They also committed to promoting, to the greatest extent possible, a harmonized and inclusive approach, including alleviating or exempting testing and/or quarantine requirements for fully vaccinated or recovered passengers, taking into account the different circumstances of individual States and their national polices. This is consistent with current World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations.

Additional commitments focused strongly on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the air transport sector, both in terms of its future resilience to new infectious disease outbreaks and the need to address the climate change challenge.

Further agreement was forged around the financial support needed to sustain air operators and regulators through the coming critical months for sectoral recovery, and to address key safety and passenger facilitation priorities as the global air network returns to full operational readiness.

As he guided States' discussions toward the conclusion of their agreements, ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano noted that the Declaration reflecting them “demonstrates our solidarity and determination, and conveys a strong political message to international communities and world economies.”

“The level of commitment and engagement demonstrated has been remarkable, and I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation for the valuable contributions that have led to the successful outcome of this Conference.”

In his closing remarks to the event, ICAO Secretary General Juan Carlos Salazar stressed that this is a very critical moment for governments to be reviewing and refining their pandemic restrictions on international air travelers.

“These outcomes are of urgent concern today to the many millions of people around the world whose livelihoods so fundamentally depend on the capabilities and reach of global aviation. They are also of key importance to the wider global economic and supply chain recovery, and to the most basic socio-economic needs of all ICAO Member States,” he emphasized.

The ICAO High-level Conference on COVID-19 ran from 12-22 October, and featured the participation of 129 States and 38 international organizations, including key partnering global agencies such as the WHO and UNWTO.



Resources for Editors

[ICAO's COVID-19 Portal](#)
[Link to Declaration](#)

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created by governments in 1944 to support their diplomacy on international air transport matters. Since that time, countries have adopted over 12,000 standards and practices through ICAO which help to align their national regulations relevant to aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, enabling a truly global network to be realized. ICAO forums also provide opportunities for

advice and advocacy to be shared with government decision-makers by industry groups, civil society NGOs, and other officially-recognized air transport stakeholders.

About the HLCC

[Full event information](#)

About the CART

The [ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force \(CART\)](#) was established in March 2020 to provide practical, aligned guidance to world governments and aviation industry operators in order to restart the international air transport sector and recover from COVID-19 on a coordinated, global basis.

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