

**International Associations representing the Air Industry offer their perspectives as part of the third session of the Round Table promoted by ICAO, on the challenges that commercial aviation faces in the face of COVID-19**



The third session of the Round Table promoted by ICAO, to exchange information on the challenges facing commercial aviation against COVID-19, was attended by Messrs. Luis Felipe de Oliveira, Executive Director of the Latin American Association of Air Transport (ALTA); Mr. Rafael Echevarne, Director General of the Airports International Council in Latin America and the Caribbean (ACI-LAC); and Mr. Javier Vanegas, Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Civil Air Navigation Services Organization (CANSO).

The guests thanked ICAO for creating this important space for exchange, and offered their perspectives regarding the necessary measures that governments, organizations and the airline industry must take to face the COVID-19 pandemic and to map the route to the recovery of the sector.

The adoption of the main health measures at the global and regional level has had a significant impact on the aviation sector, which is facing the first global crisis of this magnitude. In Latin America, air transport has contracted by 97%, reducing airline revenues to practically zero, while at least 50% of its costs have remained unchanged. For airports, the situation has also been dramatic, with the reduction in traffic, the revenues of this sector have dropped 700 million dollars in the first quarter of 2020, and it is calculated that the total fall in revenues for the whole year will be of around 52%, which represents at least 5 billion dollars.

For their part, Air Navigation Service Providers are carrying out a very large effort to maintain the provision of air navigation services, despite the application of strict sanitary measures to enable them to guarantee the continuity of operations. As of March, the daily number of flights has decreased from an average of 100,000 flights to just 32,000, while the reduction in flight hours reaches 78%.

The representatives of the organization agreed in stating that, to guarantee an orderly, fast and efficient reactivation of air services in the region, it is important to sensitize States, including health authorities, about the fundamental role that aviation plays as an integrating element, and key piece of the economic reactivation of the States. In this sense, they hope that governments can support the industry by:

- Providing short-term capital;
- Tax reduction;
- Reduction of fuel cost;
- Flexibility in relation to certain infrastructure obligations and quality controls in services at concessioned airports; and
- Inclusion of the airline industry in any special aid package to provide relief in this situation.

The guests were categorical when stating that the construction of a joint recovery plan is essential, which includes the determination of **harmonized sanitary control measures** at regional and global level. They reiterated the call to **work together**, highlighting **coordination** and **cooperation** not only among those who are part of the aeronautical system but also with the health authorities.

This is the moment the communication process is essential to organize ourselves and demonstrate that aviation has the full capacity to adopt all health safety measures and that it does not represent an additional risk for society.

They noted that airlines, airports, and air navigation service providers already have rigorous health controls, protective measures, and the technological means to reactivate the service safely and efficiently, as long as it can be run in an organized and within harmonized context.

Finally, the Organizations expressed their total openness to support governments and that they can count on them to support them and work together. What we all seek is the reactivation of economic and social development and that the value chain returns to bring in income and hope.

You can find more details and information about this conversation by accessing the full version through the following link: