



ICAO Council to pursue fact finding investigation into Ryanair FR4978

For immediate release

Montréal, 27 May 2021 – The ICAO Council expressed its strong concern today at the apparent forced diversion of Ryanair Flight FR4978, a commercial passenger aircraft flying in Belarus airspace on Sunday, 23 May 2021.

At a special meeting convened, the ICAO Governing Body underlined the importance of establishing the facts of what happened, and of understanding whether there had been any breach by any ICAO Member State of international aviation law, including the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) and its Annexes.

Recalling Article 55 (e) of the Chicago Convention, the Council decided to undertake a fact-finding investigation of this event, and in this connection requested the ICAO Secretariat to prepare an interim report to the Council for a subsequent meeting of the current session, presenting the available facts and relevant legal instruments.

The Council also called upon all ICAO Member States and other relevant stakeholders to collaborate with this fact-finding investigation in the interests of ensuring the safety and security of civil aviation, and offered the assistance and expertise of ICAO in the pursuit of this endeavor.

“The Council has therefore decided that all relevant facts should be officially established through an ICAO investigation conducted by the ICAO Secretariat,” emphasized ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano.

ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu responded to the Council's decision during the meeting and assured the full support and cooperation of the Secretariat in implementing this decision.



The ICAO Council during a pre-COVID-19 session hosted at ICAO. In today's virtual meeting, which included government and aviation officials from Belarus, Ireland, Lithuania, and Poland, Council States agreed that an ICAO-led international fact finding investigation should be conducted into the incident involving Ryanair Flight FR4978 in Belarus airspace on 23 May 2021.

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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.

[ICAO Council States: 2019-2022](#)

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