

ECAC/EU DIALOGUE WITH THE AIR TRANSPORT INDUSTRY
Valencia (Spain), 24-25 October 2023

EMBRACING SUSTAINABILITY: A PROFITABLE AVIATION SECTOR CENTRED ON PEOPLE AND PLANET

The ECAC/EU Dialogue participants recognise that achieving true sustainability in European civil aviation requires a holistic approach. By embracing the interdependent dimensions of social, environmental, and economic sustainability, we strive to build a balanced and resilient aviation industry in Europe and for European citizens.

Instead of treating these pillars in isolation, we understand that their collective strength fuels progress and drives positive change. We embark on a journey towards a sustainable future for European aviation.

The ECAC/EU Dialogue participants:

- *Acknowledging* the essential role of aviation in facilitating Europe's connectivity to enhance and enhancing social, cultural and economic opportunity by facilitating the exchange of people, ideas, and values across Europe and beyond;
- *Stressing/Underlining* that connectivity boosts economic development and growth by supporting the competitiveness and innovation of the European aviation sector, creating jobs and value-added activities, and enhancing trade and tourism flows;
- *Recognising* that the European aviation sector must be socially sustainable: meaning that we need to take proactive steps to identify and address skills and labour market issues to secure high quality working conditions and maintain the sector's attractiveness for the future;
- *Recognising* the key role of skills and workforce as an enabler of the sector to ensure we are prepared to meet future challenges, such as decarbonisation and automation;
- *Emphasising* the need to attract and retain diverse talents, provide equal opportunities for all, and foster a supportive and more inclusive industry that thrives for gender equality;
- *Reaffirming* the commitment to address the environmental challenges faced by the aviation industry, including the goal of achieving net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, as adopted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the objectives of the EU Fit-for-55 package and decarbonisation targets adopted by European States and industry;
- *Highlighting* the importance of environmental sustainability and the promotion of sustainable aviation technologies, operations, and infrastructure to reduce the carbon footprint of the industry and contribute to the targets of the Paris Agreement – as also set out in the *Destination 2050* roadmap;
- *Underlining* the commitment to collaboration between governments and industry stakeholders to increase the production, availability, and uptake of sustainable aviation fuels, actively reducing the environmental impact of the aviation sector, and recalling the activities of the Renewable and Low Carbon Fuels Alliance;
- *Emphasising* that in addition to reduction of fossil CO₂ emissions, the non-CO₂ impacts of aviation need also to be addressed based on on-going research and recognising that many fossil CO₂ reduction measures in aviation also reduce non-CO₂ impacts;

- *Enhancing* economic sustainability in European aviation by guaranteeing that regulation is fit for purpose to safeguard and promote market access, ensuring fair competition, and achieving connectivity for all its citizens;
- *Recognising* that sustainability in aviation is not achievable without a robust approach to safety and security;
- *Promoting* accessibility and consumer protection as vital tools on the journey to achieving social sustainability;
- *Expressing* explicit support to the Ukrainian people and to all Ukrainian aviation stakeholders, victims of the aggression by Russian Federation; and
- *Addressing* the economic impact on European aviation and threat to sustainability caused by this war, and other conflicts, and the need to mitigate negative consequences for all stakeholders;

have agreed to call on all stakeholders across European civil aviation to:

- *Strive* to foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive work environment, to attract, develop, and retain diverse talents in the aviation sector, promoting inclusivity, equal opportunities, and career advancement;
- *Take all measures and implement the "call to action"* from the ICAO Global Aviation Gender Summit held in Madrid;
- *Build* partnerships with local and national authorities, universities, education and training programmes focused on aviation, which have the potential to yield significant benefits towards tapping into the potential of young professionals and attracting them in the aviation sector;
- *Invest* in research and innovation, to develop and deploy sustainable aviation fuels, cutting-edge technologies, operational optimisations, and safe and efficient infrastructure;
- *Collaborate* to increase the production, availability, and uptake of sustainable aviation fuels, to actively reduce their carbon footprint and promote a greener aviation industry and support efforts at the international level in the run-up to the 3rd ICAO Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels - CAAF/3;
- *Enhance* the competitiveness of European aviation on the global stage, ensuring a level playing field for fair competition in Europe and beyond;
- *Ensure* a just transition means moving towards sustainability in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind;
- *Engage* in consistent dialogues to establish proportionate and effective policies that support the growth and sustainability of the aviation sector;
- *Establish* regular round tables to explore the best methods and options to enhance sustainability in all its forms in aviation; and
- *Support* the air connectivity of islands and remote regions that face connectivity challenges, by providing specific measures to ensure their effective access to sustainable aviation fuels, technologies, and infrastructure, and to mitigate the social and economic impacts of the green transition.

It is vital to balance the need for economic growth with limiting the negative impact of aviation on the environment, and maintaining a fair and trustworthy social framework. This approach is needed to ensure the emergence of a truly sustainable sector that continues to grow and provide global benefits in terms of economic growth, and territorial cohesion.

By working collectively, maintaining regular contact, identifying bottlenecks, designing and implementing ways to solve them, with the objective of reaching/building/achieving holistic social, environmental, and economic sustainability, we aim to shape a resilient, responsible, and competitive European aviation industry that overcomes the challenges it faces, helps European citizens reap the benefits of the connectivity which aviation brings, and contributes to a better future.

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