

PRESS RELEASE

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AAPA 64th Assembly of Presidents / Resolutions

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ASIA PACIFIC AIRLINES STRIVE FOR GREATER COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENTS TO SAFELY REOPEN BORDERS

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – The Assembly of Presidents of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) together with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific, issued a joint declaration today highlighting their commitment to ensure the continued safety of aviation as well as revive air travel and secure its future.

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic that has severely affected air travel and tourism this year, the declaration expresses firm support for ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) guidance which is the basis of the aviation industry's risk mitigation measures aimed at safeguarding the safety and well-being of air travellers.

The industry is committed to ensuring that air travel is safe and expresses its firm resolve to partner with governments to harmonise cross-border measures that will ensure safe, smooth and sustainable air transport, as well as quicken the pace of the restart of travel and tourism.

As a critical risk mitigation measure, the industry supports the establishment of globally accepted and mutually recognised COVID-19 testing protocols.

Conscious that emergency measures are required to contain the pandemic, the industry requests that travel restrictions are harmonised and coordinated among countries so that they are targeted, balanced, transparent and flexible in duration.

In addition to the joint declaration, the AAPA Assembly of Presidents issued a number of resolutions addressing various industry priorities.

The Assembly views the setting up of a robust international testing framework, based on mutually-recognised accredited facilities delivering rapid, accurate, affordable and scalable testing prior to departure, coupled with other risk mitigation measures recommended by ICAO, as an effective approach to safely restart international air travel. Blanket quarantine measures are a significant deterrent to air travel and should be reviewed in the context of these and other risk mitigation measures.

Reaffirming the industry's commitment to environmental sustainability, the Assembly of Presidents also renewed their call on governments to respect the integrity of ICAO CORSIA and refrain from applying duplicative requirements on international aviation CO2 emissions, as well as to support the use of sustainable aviation fuel, so that the industry can reduce its reliance on fossil fuels.

Noting that a broad framework conducive to the early restart and recovery of aviation is urgently needed, AAPA called on governments to refrain from increasing the burden of aviation levies in any form and to support Asia Pacific airlines as they face unprecedented financial and operational challenges due to the prolonged grounding of international aviation.

Mr. Subhas Menon, Director General of AAPA said: "The ICAO CART guidelines established earlier this year provide practical guidance to governments and industry to restart aviation and recover from COVID-19 in a coordinated manner, while keeping the safety, health and wellbeing of the travelling public as a top priority. Inconsistent and patchy measures create unpredictability and confusion for both travellers and airlines, while hampering the meaningful restart of cross border air transport."

Mr. Menon concluded, "The prolonged closure of borders has had deep and lasting effects on the public and the wider economy. It has now become critical to improve collaboration and cooperation across borders so as to mitigate further damage and jump start recovery efforts. Asia Pacific airlines are firmly committed to working with governments and other stakeholders to rebuild passenger confidence and pave the way for the meaningful recovery of travel and tourism as essential services supporting commerce and livelihoods within the region and across the world."

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Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA)

The AAPA is the trade association for scheduled international airlines based in the Asia-Pacific region. The AAPA permanent secretariat is headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with international representation in Brussels and Washington, D.C. Collectively, the region's airlines carry 1,623 million passengers and 23 million tonnes of cargo, representing over one-third of global passenger and air cargo traffic, and thus play a leading role in the ongoing development of global aviation.

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JOINT DECLARATION OF THE ASIA PACIFIC AVIATION INDUSTRY

WE, the Assembly of Presidents of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA), together with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Airports Council International Asia-Pacific (ACI Asia-Pacific), are deeply concerned by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic crisis that is threatening the health, well-being, and livelihoods of people worldwide.

We have collectively implemented objective risk management measures based on medical advice, to ensure that air travel is safe and trust in air travel is restored. We are firmly committed to adopting and applying the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) guidelines.

We support the establishment of globally accepted, standardised and mutually recognised COVID-19 testing protocols which we view as a critically important additional risk mitigation layer in support of a safe and timely recovery of international air travel.

Recognising that prolonged border closures and other travel restrictions hamper the essential movement of people, we will endeavour to maintain global connectivity and smooth the flow of essential goods, supplies and services, as we have done since the beginning of the crisis.

We acknowledge that containing the spread of COVID-19 and dealing with related socio-economic challenges are priorities for governments. To this end, we urge that related emergency measures be targeted, balanced, transparent and flexible in duration. We are committed to cooperating with the relevant authorities to ease travel restrictions while reinforcing efforts to prevent the spread of the virus.

The air transport sector which accounts for 3.1% of Asia Pacific GDP and supports nearly 50 million jobs, urgently needs regional coordination mechanisms to overcome the unprecedented damage to the travel and tourism sectors, including the widespread loss of livelihoods in many communities across the region.

Recognising the importance of working collectively with all stakeholders in the international community, we express our firm resolve to partner governments as an industry, to harmonise cross-border measures that will ensure safe, smooth and sustainable air transport, as well as quicken the pace of the restart of travel and tourism.

Aware of the transformational changes that will result from the pandemic, we are committed to the sharing of information and best practices, adopting fresh perspectives and embracing innovation to navigate the new realities together.

As one united aviation community, we reaffirm our shared mission to strengthen solidarity and cooperation with governments and other stakeholders, to control and contain the spread of COVID-19, by providing a safe travel environment for our passengers and employees to revive air travel and secure its future.

Dated this 16th day of November 2020



Subhas Menon
Director General
AAPA



Conrad Clifford
Regional Vice President
IATA Asia Pacific



Stefano Baronci
Director General
ACI Asia-Pacific