



NEWSBRIEF

IATA Wings of Change Conference sets scene for Sustainable Aviation across the Americas

08 April 2022 (Santiago de Chile) – The International Air Transport Association (IATA) successfully brought together more than 300 representatives of the aviation community from across the Americas at its 12th edition of the [Wings of Change Americas Conference](#). The two-day event held in Santiago de Chile on 6 and 7 April 2022, provided a platform for the various stakeholders in the aviation value chain to set the scene and parameters on how the industry can be reshaped into a more sustainable future as it emerges from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In his [opening remarks](#), Peter Cerdá, IATA's Regional Vice President for the Americas, touched on the key items which need to be considered in moving the industry forward following the worst crisis in its history: working in a collaborative manner with governments, providing fit-for-purpose and efficient infrastructure, creating a competitive cost base, enacting an internationally aligned regulatory framework based on best practices and last but not least, moving forward with the industry's NetZero by 2050 commitment on environmental sustainability.

Providing perspective from the host country's government, Chile's newly appointed Minister for Transport and Telecommunications - Juan Carlos Muñoz - welcomed the participants to country and the event. During his first ever speech addressing the airline industry he highlighted the importance of the sector for a country with a geography like Chile: "aviation connects the various cities and regions of our country and links us with the rest of the world."

Fabio Rabbani, Regional Director for South America of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) said that national air navigation plans should be regionally coordinated to allow greater efficiency to be achieved through an interoperable airspace. He also called for collaborative actions between states to facilitate the flow of passengers and goods: "as we rebuild a better world after the pandemic and face the challenges that arise at every moment, we are reminded that the old ways of doing business must also change."

The first CEO panel featured the CEO's of Aerolíneas Argentinas - Pablo Ceriani, Avianca - Adrian Neuhauser and LATAM - Roberto Alvo, who provided their overall industry perspectives, pointing out that while there was cautious optimism among the industry across the region being on a good path to recovery, one needs to be mindful of the external influences that have affected aviation, such as pandemics, war and the price of oil. They also shared their thoughts on the importance of adapting to change, being flexible, embracing new technologies and above all sustainability for the future of aviation.



All three highlighted the resilience the industry had shown over the past years and the importance of air transport for people and countries, something that has become very evident during this crisis.

Complementing this, the panel on Industry Collaboration to Advance Air Transport in the Americas brought together the CEO of JetSmart – Estuardo Ortiz, Chile’s Subsecretary of Tourism – Veronica Kunze, the CEO of Nuevo Pudahuel Airport (Santiago) - Xavier Lortat-Jacob and President & CEO of Swissport – Warwick Brady. Issues addressed during this panel included measures on how to bring airlines which ceased operations to Chile during the pandemic back to the country and how to attract new ones. From the airlines’ perspective it was made clear that taxes and fees levied on the industry across the continent needed to be addressed in order to stimulate traffic.

Rounding out the two CEO panels, Iberia’s CEO - Javier Sánchez Prieto, talked about the strategic importance of Latin America to a Spanish airline.

The two sustainability panels focused on ways to achieve Net-Zero carbon emissions by 2050 and driving innovation for a sustainable future along the aviation value chain. One issue highlighted was the need for governments across Latin America and the Caribbean to incentivize the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF). The vast majority of the countries in the region have the capability to become SAF producers, but the framework to attract investment – both national and foreign – must be created.

Other topics which were discussed were the adherence to global best practices on the regulatory side as well as aviation safety, ranging from 5G to cybersecurity.

Under the heading “Breaking the Airline Industry’s Glass Ceiling” the topic of gender diversity was discussed. Azul and GOL used the occasion to sign up to the [25by2025 initiative](#), joining the more than 20 airlines in the Americas who had already signed up and renewed their pledge.

“Bringing together industry representatives from across the Americas and beyond for an in-person event was an important part in exchanging ideas and setting priorities for the post COVID-19 recovery. The aviation value chain is an important contributor to the socio-economic development across the Americas, hence cooperation and collaboration with the various players in this field is essential. It was good to see that sustainability is a topic on everyone’s mind and hopefully governments will create the right regulatory framework and incentives for attracting investments in Sustainable Aviation Fuels. And that governments can listen was demonstrated by the fact that the Chilean administration seem to have taken our words to heart and is planning to announce further easing of travel restrictions next week,” Cerdá said.

- IATA -

[For more information, please contact:](#)

Corporate Communications – Latin America & Caribbean

Tel: +1 – 438 – 258 3155

Email: ruedigerm@iata.org



Notes for Editors:

- IATA (International Air Transport Association) represents some 290 airlines comprising 83% of global air traffic.
- You can follow us at twitter.com/iata for announcements, policy positions, and other useful industry information.
- [Fly Net Zero](#)
- Convening the air transport industry to share best practices and address critical issues is fundamental to IATA's mission. Prior to COVID-19, IATA hosted on average 16 executive events annually, each attended by an average 1,000 participants. As face-to-face events become possible again IATA is ramping up its conference activity. In 2022 IATA is planning to hold at least 16 in person or hybrid [events](#) across all continents. Full details can be found on [IATA's Event Website](#).