



IATA: Costa Rica to See Passenger Demand Double by 2030

19 September 2023 (San Jose, Costa Rica) - The International Air Transport Association (IATA) released data showing the doubling of passenger volumes in Costa Rica by 2030 during its Aviation Day which was held in the country's capital, San Jose, today. The event brought together some 300 participants, including high-level representatives of the Costa Rican government, the diplomatic corps and other important stakeholders.

Approximately four million passengers travel by air to, from and within the country per year, a figure that is expected to increase to between 10 and 12 million in the next seven years. To accommodate this future demand, it is critical that Costa Rican authorities continue to work closely with the air transport industry to ensure that the country is adequately prepared to handle projected passenger growth.

Air transport is an essential means of transport that brings people together and allows them to discover new destinations. Costa Rica, with its rich biodiversity and tourist attractions, benefits greatly from this global network. Ninety percent of tourists arrive in the country by air, making it a key driver of tourism and the country's economy.

"The Costa Rican government has created a positive business framework for aviation by maintaining competitive taxes and fees. We look forward to further cooperation to ensure that more people can access this mode of transport and Costa Ricans can continue to benefit from the social connectivity it provides, sustaining the development of tourism, trade and the competitiveness for the country," said Peter Cerdá, IATA's Regional Vice President for the Americas.

According to data from the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, travel and tourism contributed 10.8% to Costa Rica's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and generated 11% of all jobs. The country is recovering rapidly and in the first quarter of 2023 alone, travel and tourism created nearly 160,000 direct jobs. According to June 2023 IATA data, Costa Rica registered a 15.5% passenger growth as compared to June 2022, attracting new routes such as Austin, San Francisco and Zurich from Liberia, and Cartagena and Medellin from San Jose.

"Costa Ricans like to travel, something that is demonstrated by the air travel per capita in the country, showing that on average Costa Ricans take 1.3 trips by air per year," said Cerdá. He added that this figure is above the regional average of 0.45 trips per year but indicated that there is always room for growth: "If we look further north, US Americans take 2.6 trips by air per year and in Europe, Spaniards take 4.4. Our goal should be to make air travel as accessible as possible for all Costa Ricans and thus boost economic development."

On the subject of aviation safety, a memorandum of understanding was signed between IATA and Costa Rica, through the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, which foresees the incorporation of IATA's safety programs and best practices - [IOSA](#) (IATA Operational Safety Audit), [ISSA](#) (IATA Standard Safety Assessment) and [ISAGO](#) (IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operations) - into the State's aviation safety program. Costa Rica thus becomes the first country in Central America to adopt these standards, thus strengthening its aviation safety regulatory framework.

Furthermore, IATA reiterated that sustainability remains a priority for the industry and asked the Government of Costa Rica for its support to develop and accelerate efforts to decarbonize aviation. This challenge requires

the collaboration of all actors in the sector, with public policies and incentives for the production and distribution of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) - a key to reducing the environmental impact of flying.

"Costa Rica has a great opportunity to take a leading role in the production of SAFs, supporting the industry's goal towards net zero aviation by 2050 and enabling more tourists to be transported to Costa Rica in a sustainable manner," Cerdá concluded.

[Aviation Day Costa Rica - Opening Remarks by Peter Cerdá](#)

[Aviation Day Costa Rica: Presentation by Peter Cerdá](#)

[Aviation Day Costa Rica: Peter Cerdá Presentation \(with speaking notes\)](#)

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Notes to editors:

- IATA (International Air Transport Association) represents around 300 airlines that make up 83% of global air traffic.
- Find all the latest information - releases, policy positions and other useful information - at <http://twitter.com/iata>