

Opening Remarks – Peter Cerdá

Ladies, Gentlemen and distinguished guests, welcome to Aviation Day Argentina!

I would like to extend a special welcome to the Secretary of Transport Dr. Franco Mogetta and the Secretary of Tourism, Environment and Sports, Daniel Scioli as well as representatives of the national government, members of the diplomatic corps, and all the participants who are joining us.

The Importance of Air Transportation:

In Argentina, flying is not a luxury, it is a necessity:

- the size of Argentina, from north to south, covers the equivalent distance from Lisbon to Moscow.
- Railways are not a viable alternative, and traveling by road would take several days.
- Aviation connects destinations, people, dreams, and opportunities.
- Aviation is a pillar of great importance to the economy, a catalyst for innovation and a bridge to the world.

Some key figures:

The contribution of air transport and tourism to GDP in 2023 is estimated at more than US\$55 billion, or 8.9% of the country's total product.

In jobs, this translates into 1.47 million jobs, or equivalent to 11.3% of the country's total.

In the first half of 2024, international travelers spent more than US\$1.5 billion in the country.

This contributed the entire value chain: cab drivers, hotel staff, tour guides, restaurant waiters, store clerks, business owners, etc.

Every meeting, convention, cultural or sporting event contributes to the economy.

In terms of connectivity, the number of international routes grew by 4.5% compared to the same period in 2023.

International frequencies increased by 14.9%. Seats offered rose by 17.3% in the same period.

International connectivity also allows more cargo to be exported and imported.

During 2023, more than 98 thousand tons of cargo were exported from the EZE Cargo Terminal, directly supporting several sectors of the national economy.

For example, blueberries: About 68% are exported.

And without air transport, this fruit would not reach the consumer in the United States, Europe or China with the speed needed.

Positive Actions:

The timing of this event could not have been better.

Today is a great opportunity to discuss all the initiatives that have been launched by the new government, enabling more Argentine citizens to travel by air and to make the country an attractive destination for foreigners.

The recent measures adopted by the Government through Decrees 599 and 639 mark an important change for air transportation in the country.

These new policies include, among others:

- Access to markets: the government opens its domestic and international routes for passenger and cargo flights, guaranteeing free access to new operators.
- Deregulation of airport and ground handling services.
- Allocation of airport capacity using international standards (WASG).
- Simplification of aircraft registration.
- New bilateral agreements between Argentina and Brazil, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

This new framework is based on the pillars of transparent competition, deregulation of tariffs and a strong focus on safety.

I would like to recognize and congratulate the authorities for their proactive measures that place safety and security at the forefront in all our operations.

In this sense, today we will sign an agreement between ANAC and IATA, with the objective of joining efforts to identify areas for improvement and the incorporation of best practices and incorporating the best practices of IATA's safety programs.

These measures support air transport to remain the safest and most reliable mode of transportation.

Conclusion:

So how can we accelerate the industry's growth and ensure it is sustainable?

Aviation needs new measures to be implemented as a matter of urgency.

And we are convinced that the success of that implementation depends to a large extent on our industry's participation in these discussions.

When industry works together and when governments support the conditions for a thriving industry, the economic benefits are felt by all.

We must continue to strengthen this framework of collaboration between industry and government for a better future for the industry, the country and its people.

Argentines currently take only 0.6 airline trips per year, compared to Chileans, who make 1.2 trips, US Americans 2.7 trips, and Spaniards 4.8.

Hence there is undoubtedly a market out there waiting to be served.

In closing, and as pictures speak louder than words, I share with you the power of aviation with this short video.

Thank you for joining us this morning and I wish you all a successful event.