

ECAC NEWS POINT

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COVID-19

In the face of the COVID-19 outbreak, we are confronted with exceptional circumstances calling on the global community to cooperate and act rapidly, efficiently and flexibly to unfolding developments. News Point asked **ECAC President Ingrid Cherfils** a few questions about how the organisation is responding to this unprecedented crisis.

INTERVIEW WITH INGRID CHERFILS



ECAC - What challenges do ECAC Member States face due to the COVID-19 crisis?

Europe, like the rest of the world, is at a

complete standstill with almost no traffic except for cargo, repatriation and medical flights. The entire aviation system is deeply impacted by the crisis with layoffs and unemployment increasing day by day.

The main challenge is to keep the aviation system afloat and enable the sector to survive the crisis; we need to provide relief measures to alleviate the urgent liquidity

problem the industry is facing, through state aids, loans, support to unemployment schemes and other measures, as well as through initiatives to reduce costs across the board. The air transport sector has proven to be resilient to major crises, 9/11 being an example of this. So I am confident of the sector's ability to get through the worst crisis it has had to face yet, thanks to the combined efforts and engagement of public and private entities.

ECAC - What is ECAC doing to support its Member States?

ECAC is bringing together all 44 Member States, industry and organisations to share detailed information, experiences and good practices and to discuss the actions needed to facilitate the necessary operations, remove obstacles and prepare for the future. More than ever we must cooperate between ECAC

Member States, and coordinate our efforts within Europe as well as at the global level.

ECAC - What needs to be done now to prepare for the recovery of the industry after the crisis?

The progressive reduction and cessation of operations in most of the sector has proved extremely challenging. However, re-establishing operations will prove equally challenging when the evolution of the pandemic allows traffic to resume. This will take time but it needs to be organised now.

ECAC's objective is to promote the continued development of a safe, efficient and sustainable European air transport system. We need actions in each domain - safety, ATM, security, facilitation, etc. - to meet those objectives and in the medium- and long-term. And we need to ensure that similar solutions are provided at a global level.