



# INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATIONS

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## - PRESS RELEASE -

**IFATCA urges the European Commission, its institutions and all stakeholders to focus on developing trust and collaboration, through dialogue, among all the involved parties.**

Air traffic in Europe once again faces capacity constraints and increasing delays. The European aviation system/infrastructure is understaffed, top-down led and extremely complex. This makes it difficult to install quick fixes. The European Commission set out goals to solve these issues in the beginning of the new millennium, but these have yet to result in structural improvements.

Discussions are currently dominated by a blame game where all stakeholders demand everyone else to try harder. Suggestions rarely consider the responsibilities of the stakeholder publishing the statement. It is IFATCA's view that the intense discussions have to vanish in favour of dialogue, to generate solutions to the growing problems.

Over the past decades, Europe's aviation infrastructure has continuously improved through relatively minor adaptations and tweaks. Radically overhauling something while this is running at the limits of its performance is not an easy task and come at a greater cost than starting from scratch...

Some stakeholders are focusing on SESAR as the saviour and main enabler to solve the capacity shortages. Whereas IFATCA is convinced that the SESAR solutions will contribute, we also submit that technical solutions alone will not be enough. Additional initiatives and innovative solutions are necessary to get ahead of the curve of ever-increasing traffic demand within the European aviation system. IFATCA argues that such solutions are not possible in an environment of distrust, blame and ever-tighter regulation.

Mutual understanding, trust and collaboration are the ways forward to solve problems. Consequently, IFATCA urges the European Commission, its institutions and all stakeholders to focus on developing trust and collaboration, through dialogue, among all the involved parties. This way there is a chance to create a European aviation infrastructure that is able to cope with increasing capacity and demands.

IFATCA warns that there will be a considerable cost for such substantial improvements: Air Traffic Management needs adequate technology, staffing and structural changes to achieve the envisioned performance. The return of investment for building a stable, solid and capable European Air Transport System is worth the cost and effort however. In that sense, we urge all stakeholders to recognise this and adopt a realistic approach that does not only focus on reducing costs, but supports investments where these are needed, including in front-end operators, i.e. Air Traffic Services staff.

IFATCA is willing to work together with all aviation stakeholders in finding solutions to overcome the current situation and is looking forward to actively participate in open, unbiased and multilateral dialogue for the benefit of the European aviation infrastructure.

**- More than 50 Years of Professional Involvement -**  
**IFATCA has been representing air traffic controllers since 1961,**  
**with more than 50,000 members in over 130 countries.**