



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION of CIVIL AVIATION CHAPLAINS

Statement regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and global crisis

The COVID-19 outbreak is a global tragedy. Described by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a pandemic since 11 March, not only has it affected more than 180,000 people worldwide and killed more than 7,000 (at the time this statement was written) but it is drastically affecting the economy and specifically the global aviation economy. Tens of thousands of flights are being cancelled and planes grounded. Airports have closed terminals in an effort to adapt and reduce their costs and some airports have even temporarily cancelled all operations. Chapels and prayer rooms are also being closed on several airports.

On March 5 IATA estimated the financial loss for airlines between 63 and 113.000.000 USD for 2020. Some airlines will not survive this crisis (some such as the British airline FlyBe have already collapsed). This is an unprecedented crisis in the world of aviation and airport industry. Not even the aftermath of the dramatic 9/11 attacks in New York matches such a disastrous impact.

As a global body of chaplains from a variety of faiths the IACAC wishes to express its solidarity with airlines, airports and the whole aviation industry. Although many countries are taking specific measures to support their economy, the IACAC expresses its concerns that those the most impacted by this crisis will be the lowest incomes and most fragile workers in airports and airlines worldwide.

The IACAC encourages its members and every airport chaplains to continually offer their support to passengers and staff alike, be a kind presence in the midst of this turmoil. We offer our sincere and ongoing prayer for each person affected by the disease and its economic consequences. We particularly ask the Creator of all things for guidance and wisdom for the leaders of our countries, airlines, airports and of the entire aviation industry as they deal with this dramatic crisis.

Pierre de Mareuil
President
Paris-Charles de Gaulle
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Founded in 1967 the International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains (IACAC) is a fellowship of airport chaplains from all world faiths. It promotes an ecumenical and multi-faith communion between chaplains and provides them with training. These chaplains make themselves available for spiritual services and counseling for passengers and airport personnel.

IACAC provides a continuing exchange of experience and insights to enhance the fulfillment of their task. The international association contributes to the theological and sociological understanding of civil aviation. It organizes annual conferences, represents its members and informs them as well as the public.

For all enquires contact our Media Officer Stephan Pfeninger (Zurich):
media@iacac.aero +41 76 306 45 89