



**“No strike” provision for ATC: letter from the Director General of IATA to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland, Mr Brian Cowen, TD**

Geneva, 10 February 2010

Dear Taoiseach,

I am writing to you to fully support the initiative proposed by Mr. Noel Dempsey TD, Minister for Transport, to consider the feasibility of introducing a “no strike” provision for essential services including air traffic control service provision.

The closure of Irish airspace on the 21 January 2010 due to ATCO strike action caused very considerable inconvenience and financial expense to airlines and their customers, as well as significant damage to the Irish economy. This is totally unacceptable and we believe that strike action that can cause such damage should be prohibited.

As well as providing vital transport links for passengers and air freight, civil aviation is a major catalyst for economic development. To that end, the supply of air traffic control services is undoubtedly an essential service and should not be interrupted under any circumstances.

IATA member airlines lost over \$11 billion in 2009 and expect to incur further substantial losses during 2010. In light of this unprecedented crisis for our industry, we fully support the efforts of the Irish Aviation Authority to reduce costs and improve cost efficiency. In this context, it is vital to resist the wholly unreasonable claims by Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCOs) for a 6% pay increase and their objections to making a contribution to their pension scheme.

I therefore request your Government as a matter of urgency to introduce the appropriate measures to prevent such strike action from recurring.

Sincerely,

Giovanni Bisignani  
Director General and CEO  
IATA – International Air Transport Association  
Montreal – Geneva