

Video message

IATA General Meeting - International Air Transport Association (IATA)

24 November 2020

Distinguished colleagues and guests,

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on lives, livelihoods, families, societies, economies and industries – including the air transport industry.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, WHO has worked closely with the International Air Transport Association, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and other members of the travel sector to manage risk and plan for the safe resumption of international travel.

Currently, countries are implementing many different measures to reduce risk for international travellers before they travel.

Such measures should not be unnecessarily invasive or intrusive, should be based on a scientific risk-assessment, and should be reviewed regularly as the situation evolves.

There is no zero risk and no one-size-fits-all approach for international travel, because every country has a unique situation.

If a country decides to include travellers in its national testing strategy, it should do a risk-benefit analysis to avoid diverting already-scarce testing resources from where they are needed most.

WHO is developing a risk-assessment and management framework to advise countries on travel measures, including the appropriate use of testing, taking into account the epidemiological situation and health system capacities in the countries of departure and arrival.

WHO is developing a risk-assessment and management framework to advise countries on appropriate measures to reduce travel-related risk, including testing, taking into account the epidemiological situation and health system capacities in the countries of departure and arrival.

WHO and our partners are also working on solutions that could be used for a digitally enhanced International Certificate of Vaccination and Prophylaxis, if COVID-19 is recognized as a disease for which vaccination is required for travelers under the International Health Regulations

WHO recommends that essential travel always be prioritized, which includes emergency responders, public health experts, and diplomatic officers, as well as essential supplies such as food, medicines, and fuel.

Thank you for your support and collaboration – we look forward to continuing to work with you to keep the world moving, and to keep the world safe.

I thank you.