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AVIATION SECURITY

Better, smarter, more innovative



Aviation Security: the time is now

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Has aviation security been given sufficient attention and the level of political priority it deserves over the last years? Most probably not, not yet... despite several terrorist attacks and plots in different regions of the world. Aviation security usually hits the newspaper headlines and grabs political attention when there is a crisis, such as long queues at screening checkpoints at the start of the summer holidays or a terrorist attack at a large international airport. At that time, there is a consensus that aviation security represents an essential component of the country's national security and that all the necessary resources should be immediately allocated to protect the citizens. However, as time passes, aviation security gets lower on the political agenda and its importance and contribution to the air transport sector and the economy at large become less prominent.

Terrorist attacks against civil aviation can typically be considered as "black swans", as they lie outside the realm of regular expectations, remain rare, have major consequences, and are often explained a posteriori ("retrospective predictability"). Giving aviation security a higher priority would strengthen our ability to handle black swans, but also show our collective commitment to better and smarter security:

- Better security in terms of the effective implementation of baseline security measures in all regions of the world and the definition of measures based on true risk assessments. And also better security in terms of the system's efficiency to address the constant evolution of the threats.
- Smarter security in terms of designing and implementing security systems that will enable the air transport sector to continue to grow in a sustainable manner. Smarter security in a way that improves the passenger's experience when using our airport infrastructures and our airlines. But also smarter security in terms of enhanced cooperation between States to define a global system where gaps cannot be exploited and the stack of measures does not lead to inconsistencies, overall damaging our objective of protecting aviation.

This edition of ECAC news brings together the perspectives of several European States and international partners of ECAC on some of the most current topics of discussion in aviation security, such as innovation, occurrence reporting, security culture and capacity building. Our international partners' contributions do enrich our reflection on the necessary evolution of aviation security in the year to come and contribute to the dialogue that ECAC has always been keen on promoting and supporting. I hope you will find this edition stimulating, in the weeks leading to the High-level Conference on Aviation Security, where I am convinced several of these topics will be addressed.