



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATIONS

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PRESS RELEASE

The International Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), representing over 50,000 professional air traffic controllers in 131 countries, wishes to acknowledge the incredible efforts achieved by the Nepalese air traffic controllers in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes in Nepal.

Despite a number of the controllers having their own houses damaged or even destroyed, the controllers did their utmost to keep the vital ATC infrastructure fully operational, facilitating the urgently needed relief efforts, including the safe provision of search and rescue flights. Kathmandu international airport, which normally closes each night, was kept open 24 hours a day, handling a vastly increased number of flights, to ensure that international assistance and relief flights could take place as expeditiously as possible. The Nepalese air traffic controllers did this unquestioningly and ensure uninterrupted ATC service, placing the need to maintain the ATC service above the needs of their own families. Most controllers were recommended to not return to their homes due to the ongoing threat of aftershocks. IFATCA was informed that requested assistance in the form of temporary tents as accommodation has not yet been provided.

"IFATCA calls upon the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of their professional air traffic controllers and to provide material assistance allowing their controllers to continue assisting the aviation authorities in providing an outstanding service during the relief operations" said Mr. Patrik Peters, IFATCA President and CEO.

"Sadly, the earthquakes have again highlighted concerns IFATCA has previously expressed. The lack of numbers of qualified air traffic controllers, the lack of full training for the controllers on the radar system as a control tool, and the failure to implement improvements in safety through available automation systems," continued Mr. Peters. "Making best use of the existing technical facilities is achievable with commitment from CAAN and I hereby call on them to ensure full training is provided to their controllers to use the radar and automation system, and to commit to increasing staffing numbers to ensure a world class ATC service is provided in Nepal. I also appeal CAAN to publically acknowledge the outstanding efforts of their air traffic controllers in the aftermath of this tragic catastrophe".

"On behalf of the international air traffic control community I would like to express our sincere respect and gratitude to the air traffic controllers of Nepal for the remarkable professionalism and dedication they have displayed in ensuring a safe and efficient ATC service during the rescue and relief responses to the devastating earthquakes. You are true professionals and we are proud to count you as members of the global controller family," concluded Mr. Peters.

- 50 Years of Professional Involvement -
IFATCA has been representing air traffic controllers since 1961,
with more than 50.000 members in over 125 countries.