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## Press release

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### **World airline CEOs support pre-check-in screening of passengers**

World airline CEOs, members of a special committee of IATA's Board of Governors, met in London yesterday to discuss SARS impact and evaluate the measures being taken. They endorsed the idea of a standardized pre-check-in screening of air passengers in countries affected by the SARS outbreak.

International health authorities consider screening an efficient way of keeping potentially infectious passengers from entering the passenger handling system in order to minimize points of contacts with fellow travellers.

"If we can keep passengers displaying SARS symptoms from entering the airport environment we will achieve the three main goals of passenger screening: preventing the virus from travelling, protecting passengers and workers and rebuilding passenger confidence," said IATA Director General & CEO Giovanni Bisignani.

Since the beginning of March, the world airlines have flown over 200 million passengers, a third of them in Asia. Since the beginning of April, six flights carried known SARS suspect cases on board, but no cases of inflight transmission occurred. No cases of SARS onboard have occurred since screening measures were introduced. Based on this information, the World Health Organisation (WHO) believes that the risk of transmission onboard an aircraft is very low.

Commercial aircraft are equipped with highly efficient air re-circulation systems fed with outside air. Cabin air is constantly filtered and of the same quality as a hospital operating theatre. WHO considers that aircraft have adequate ventilation.

The impact on economies has been enormous. In these difficult times, we look to governments, airports and ATS providers to respond to this crisis period by reducing or freezing their charges.

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