

ACI EUROPE

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Airports support EU coordinated response on Ebola

For immediate release

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Brussels, 14 October 2014: In the midst of the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa, rising public concerns about its potential spread and an evolving array of national responses in Europe, the European airport trade association ACI EUROPE, today underlined its support for urgent coordination between Health authorities at EU level.

Such coordination should involve clear and unequivocal communication of risk assessment as regards the possible spread of the virus in Europe. This is what the public - in particular air passengers - expect. This is also what is needed to allay any unreasonable fear and avoid inefficient measures.

In this regard, ACI EUROPE notes that the **WHO** (World Health Organisation) and the **ECDC** (European Centre for Disease Prevention & Control) have expressed reservations about the effectiveness of temperature screening of passengers on arrival - which has been implemented in the US & Canada and is apparently being contemplated by some EU countries. Conversely, both organisations support exit screening of departing passengers - which began at airports in the three main affected African countries, in the last two months.*

Olivier Jankovec, Director General, ACI EUROPE commented "*Health security is paramount and we trust that in their meeting later this week, Health ministers will ensure that actions are properly thought through and fully coordinated across Europe and beyond. Otherwise, we risk ending up with an inefficient patchwork of measures, with negative implications for passengers and airport operations - for an unspecified period of time and with no guarantee of success.*"

He added "*A clear, efficient and fully coordinated response at EU level is the way forward. Europe's airports support a dual approach - 1. Supporting efforts to contain & eradicate the virus at source and 2. Communicating effectively to the public the measures that are being put in place and what they need to do, to play their part and stay safe.*"

ENDS

*More than 36,000 people have been subject to exit screening. 77 were denied boarding because of health concerns. None of them had Ebola.

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ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents more than 450 airports in 45 European countries. Member airports handle 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe, welcoming over 1.7 billion passengers each year.

EVERY FLIGHT BEGINS AT THE AIRPORT.