

## **CANSO STATEMENT REGARDING CONCLUSIONS OF ICAO FFIT REPORT ON RYANAIR FLIGHT FR4978**

**Montreal, 20 July 2022** - As the global voice of the air traffic management (ATM) industry, CANSO has expressed concern regarding the political use of air traffic controllers.

Based on the facts outlined in a recent report of the ICAO Fact Finding Investigation Team (FFIT), the ICAO Council has condemned the Government of the Republic of Belarus for transmitting a false bomb threat to Ryanair Flight FR4978, resulting in the diversion of a flight to Minsk Airport in the Republic of Belarus in May 2021. The Council concluded that the bomb threat was deliberately false and was communicated to the flight crew upon the instructions of senior government officials of Belarus.

The ICAO Council concluded that the Republic of Belarus, an ICAO Member State, committed an offence under the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal Convention) and contravened the spirit of the Chicago Convention and its Annexes.

The report highlights the circumstances under which an air traffic controller from the Minsk Area Control Centre (ACC) who was responsible for controlling FR4978, was instructed by a government official to communicate the false bomb threat and to manage the event to ensure the aircraft diverted to Minsk rather than other options. The report outlines how the air traffic controller and the air navigation service provider was used as a tool by the Government of the Republic of Belarus to commit this act of unlawful interference.

Simon Hocquard, Director General of CANSO commented: "The provision of air traffic control is vital for the safe coordination of aviation activity and the trust between air traffic controllers and pilots is essential to an effective air traffic control function. Actions like those detailed in this report will undermine that trust."

[ICAO press release](#)

[ICAO Fact Finding Investigation Report into Ryanair Flight FR4978](#)

**ENDS**

---

### **About CANSO**

The Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO) is the global voice of air traffic management worldwide. CANSO Members support almost 90 percent of world air traffic. Members share information and develop new policies, with the ultimate aim of improving air navigation services on the ground and in the air. CANSO represents its Members' views in major regulatory and industry forums, including at ICAO, where it has official Observer status. CANSO has an extensive network of Associate Members drawn from across the aviation industry. For more, visit [canso.org](http://canso.org).

**For more information, please contact:**

**DEBORAH SEYMOUR**

*Communications Director, CANSO*

+31 (0)63 047 5595

[deborah.seymour@canso.org](mailto:deborah.seymour@canso.org)

**Angy Odysseos**

*Media Relations Manager, CANSO, CANSO*

+31 625 18 3795

[angy.odysseos@canso.org](mailto:angy.odysseos@canso.org)