



OPEN LETTER

Brussels, 15th of July 2026

To the Director General of EUROCONTROL and the Permanent Representatives of the EUROCONTROL Member States

Subject: Safeguarding the Integrity of the European Route Charges System and the Continuity of Air Navigation Services

Air navigation services constitute an essential public service provided under the responsibility of States in accordance with the Chicago Convention. Their uninterrupted provision depends upon a stable, predictable and internationally recognised financing mechanism established through the EUROCONTROL Route Charges System. The integrity of that mechanism is fundamental not only to the functioning of individual Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs), but also to the safety, resilience and efficiency of the European Air Traffic Management Network.

The Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination (ATCEUC), together with the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), wish to express their profound concern regarding the recent judicial attachment measures affecting route charge revenues intended to finance the operational activities of ROMATSA and PANSA.

ATCEUC and IFATCA take no position on the underlying judicial proceedings or on the obligations arising from judgments rendered against sovereign States. Respect for the rule of law is a fundamental principle shared by all EUROCONTROL Member States and all the stakeholders involved in aviation. At the same time, ATCEUC and IFATCA wish to express their full appreciation for the professionalism and high-quality work carried out by the EUROCONTROL Central Route Charges Office (CRCO) in ensuring the efficient and reliable operation of the European Route Charges System.

Our concern is of a different nature.

Following the recent situations involving Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, the latest attachment measures have shown that revenues collected through the EUROCONTROL Central Route Charges Office (CRCO) to finance air navigation services are becoming increasingly exposed to judicial enforcement actions arising from disputes unrelated to the provision of those services.



This matter extends well beyond the circumstances of any individual State or judicial proceeding. It concerns the integrity of the financing mechanism upon which the European Air Traffic Management Network depends.

The European Route Charges System was established to ensure that revenues collected from airspace users are dedicated primarily to the safe, efficient and continuous provision of air navigation services. The predictability and stability of this mechanism are essential for maintaining operational capability, staffing, technical infrastructure, system maintenance, resilience and the long-term investment necessary to sustain Europe's aviation network.

Any disruption to this financial chain inevitably creates operational uncertainty. Although the immediate effects may be borne by an individual ANSP, the consequences of reduced operational resilience do not stop at national borders. They have the potential to affect network capacity, delay performance, operational planning and the overall robustness of the European ATM Network.

With the recent developments, the risk of several Member States being impacted simultaneously, previously considered only a potential scenario, is now becoming a reality. ATCEUC and IFATCA sincerely hope that the potential consequences for the wider European aviation system and, ultimately, the millions of passengers who depend upon it every day will not become the next concern to materialise.

ATCEUC and IFATCA recognise the efforts undertaken by EUROCONTROL and by the Belgian authorities in addressing this situation and encourage all Contracting States to actively continue to support initiatives aimed at protecting the integrity of the Route Charges System.

The revenues collected by the CRCO do not constitute general State revenues. They are collected from airspace users exclusively for the provision of air navigation services and are redistributed to the relevant Air Navigation Service Providers under a long-established multinational mechanism. Their diversion or immobilisation therefore affects not only the beneficiary concerned but also the confidence, predictability and proper functioning of the entire European Route Charges System.

In this context, ATCEUC and IFATCA respectfully call upon EUROCONTROL and its Member States to:

- continue strengthening the legal protection of the European Route Charges System and the revenues collected through the CRCO for the exclusive purpose of financing air navigation services;
- pursue a coordinated institutional approach aimed at preserving the stability, predictability and legal certainty of the Route Charges System;
- support the rapid implementation of all appropriate legal instruments capable of reinforcing the protection of the Route Charges System against future challenges;



- work collectively to ensure that judicial enforcement actions unrelated to the provision of air navigation services cannot compromise the continuity, resilience and financial sustainability of Europe's ATM Network.

In parallel, ATCEUC and IFATCA call upon EUROCONTROL and its Member States to develop a more resilient CRCO financial architecture, including appropriate treasury and banking arrangements, to complement the existing legal protections by introducing operational safeguards that prevent judicial enforcement actions in one jurisdiction from compromising route charge revenues collected on behalf of other Member States.

The issue before us is the preservation of a financing mechanism established to support an essential public service upon which millions of European and Pan-European citizens depend every day.

Protecting the integrity of the European Route Charges System ultimately means protecting the safety, continuity and resilience of European air navigation services.

ATCEUC and IFATCA stand ready to contribute, together with EUROCONTROL, the Member States and all aviation stakeholders, to identifying durable legal solutions and innovative financial engineering approaches that safeguard the long-term stability of the European Air Traffic Management Network.

Yours sincerely,

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IFATCA – Executive Vice President Europe

Benjamin Fichtner