COVID measures for travelers from China signal "knee-jerk" "ineffective" reaction, says IATA

Willie Walsh, Director General at International Air Transport Association

Following the reintroduction of COVID measures, Willie Walsh, Director General at IATA (International Air Transport Association) released the following statement referring to the reintroduction of restrictions for those traveling from China.

“Several countries are introducing COVID-19 testing and other measures for travellers from China, even though the virus is already circulating widely within their borders. It is extremely disappointing to see this knee-jerk reinstatement of measures that have proven ineffective over the last three years.

"Research undertaken around the arrival of the Omicron variant concluded that putting barriers in the way of travel made no difference to the peak spread of infections. At most, restrictions delayed that peak by a few days. If a new variant emerges in any part of the world, the same situation would be expected.

"That’s why governments should listen to the advice of experts, including the WHO, that advise against travel restrictions. We have the tools to manage COVID-19 without resorting to ineffective measures that cut off international connectivity, damage economies and destroy jobs. Governments must base their decisions on ‘science facts’ rather than ‘science politics," says Walsh.

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According to its site, IATA represents some 300 airlines comprising 83% of global air traffic.

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