



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' ASSOCIATIONS

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IFATCA Renews Calls for Immediate Cessation of Attacks on Civilian Aviation Infrastructure

The International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA) expresses its deep alarm at the continued targeting of civilian aviation infrastructure, most recently evidenced by a second attack on Sanaa Tower in Yemen, on the night of May 6th. This follows the initial December 2024 strike on the same facility and the May 5th missile strike near Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv.

These repeated attacks endanger the lives of civilian personnel who are performing safety-critical, neutral functions under international law. In all three cases, air traffic controllers—dedicated professionals committed to public safety—were forced to work under direct threat to their lives. This is unacceptable.

Air traffic controllers are not combatants. They provide essential services to keep civil aviation safe, even during times of war. Targeting them or the infrastructure they depend on not only violates international legal norms but undermines the fundamental principles of humanitarian protection in armed conflict.

Relevant legal frameworks, including ICAO's Annex 17, UN Security Council Resolution 2286, and Article 52 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, are clear: civilian infrastructure and personnel must be protected. These protections are not optional; they are binding obligations on all parties to a conflict.

IFATCA stands in full solidarity with our ATC colleagues in Yemen and Israel. We call upon all parties involved in conflict to respect international humanitarian law and cease any actions that put civilian aviation systems and personnel at risk.

We further urge the international community, including the United Nations, ICAO, and regional actors, to take immediate and decisive steps to prevent further violations and to protect those who make aviation safe for everyone, even in the most challenging circumstances.

These incidents are not isolated—they are part of a deeply concerning pattern. IFATCA will continue to speak out until the world recognizes that air traffic controllers must be allowed to do their jobs safely, free from threat, intimidation, or violence.

Our thoughts are with the air traffic controllers in Sana'a and Tel Aviv, and with all those who risk their lives every day to keep our skies safe. IFATCA remains unwavering in its mission to defend the safety, security, and dignity of air traffic controllers worldwide.