

STATEMENT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIR CRASH VICTIMS' FAMILIES – FACILITATION CONFERENCE – DOHA/2025

IMPLEMENTING VICTIMS AND FAMILIES' ASSISTANCE: WITHOUT DELAY

The world has once again witnessed the devastating impact of air accidents that occurred at the end of 2024 and the beginning of 2025, not only for those on board but also for the families left behind. The JEJU Air and Azerbaijan accidents have once again exposed a painful reality: many States are not prepared to assist victims and their families. The absence of structured family assistance policies has caused delays, uncertainty, and additional suffering—a burden no grieving family should have to bear.

Since the 38th ICAO Assembly in 2013, ICAO has had a Policy on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and Their Families, established through Document 9998, which provides States with the foundation to develop their own national policies. In 2015, Recommendation 8.46 was included in Annex 9 as an initial step toward implementation. Thanks to ACVFFI's persistent advocacy, this was finally elevated to Standard 8.47 in November 2022, requiring Member States to adopt national policies that guarantee immediate and appropriate support to affected families, in accordance with Doc 9998.

As of today, and despite these important regulatory advances, inaction continues to cost lives and prolong the suffering of people. It is no longer acceptable for victim assistance to remain a secondary issue. This responsibility does not fall solely on operators—it is a State obligation. The Facilitation framework exists to protect and support passengers and their loved ones—not only in life, but also when tragedy occurs.

At this FALC 2025 Conference, ACVFFI urges all ICAO Member States to:

- Implement as soon as possible Policy 9998 outlined in Standard 8.47 of Annex 9, establishing national family assistance plans for victims and their loved ones.
- Listen to the families of the victims of the mentioned accidents and ensure their real needs are placed at the center of the response.
- Acknowledge family assistance as a fundamental pillar of aviation safety and facilitation in international civil aviation.
- Avoid delays and omissions that only extend the suffering of those who have endured a catastrophe and/or lost loved ones. We cannot wait to act after tragedy strikes.

We must all be prepared and trained—especially States—to respond to an air disaster. **This 2025 Facilitation Conference is a renewed opportunity to act without further delay. Please, let's not waste it.**

Aviation connects the world through people, and lack of humanity is hard to understand. Families who may be affected in the future deserve better than what we have experienced in the past. THE TIME IS NOW. Turning our backs does not exempt anyone from the responsibility we all share.

Thank you.