

Aviation industry warns of cargo capacity shortfall

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The global aviation industry warned Tuesday of a severe cargo capacity shortage as airlines around the world slash jobs and suffer plunges in profits due to the coronavirus crisis.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) said the March air cargo data showed a sharp [capacity](#) shortfall, with volumes down 15 percent but capacity down by more than a fifth.

IATA said [global demand](#), measured in cargo tonne kilometres (CTKs), fell by 15.2 percent in March compared to 12 months previously, while global capacity, in available CTKs, shrank by 22.7 percent.

"At present, we don't have enough capacity to meet the remaining demand for air cargo," IATA chief executive Alexandre de Juniac said in a statement.

"The gap must be addressed quickly because vital supplies must get to where they are needed most."

He said there had been a doubling of demand for pharmaceutical shipments during the pandemics, but most of the passenger fleet was sitting idle.

Juniac urged governments to cut red tape to ensure the safe and efficient operation of special flights.

The IATA announcement came as British Airways said it would slash up to 12,000 jobs and Scandinavian airline SAS said it would lay off up to 5,000 employees, both warning that it will take years for the industry to return to normal.

Geneva-based IATA represents some 290 airlines comprising 82 percent of global air traffic.

Juniac said the [airline industry](#) was in "extreme financial difficulty".

IATA meanwhile announced that its 76th annual general meeting had

been rescheduled to November 23-24 in Amsterdam to rake over the damage and plot the recovery.

It said it hoped that by then, [travel restrictions](#) will have been lifted and large gatherings permitted.

"In the post-pandemic world, a viable air transport industry will be critical, ... but we will be a changed industry," said Juniac.

"We will gather the world's airlines to look ahead together as we address the biggest challenges we have ever faced."

The new coronavirus has killed more than 210,000 people worldwide, while more than three million people have tested positive for the virus.

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