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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **IFATCA Calls for Immediate Action to Protect Yemen Air Traffic Controllers**

The International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA) expresses its deep concern and unwavering solidarity with Yemen air traffic controllers following the recent airstrikes that devastated the Sana'a Control Tower and left two controllers injured. This alarming attack underscores the profound risks faced by safety-critical personnel, who continue to work under perilous conditions to ensure the safety of aviation operations.

This tragic event highlights an urgent and pressing issue: the protection of air traffic controllers and the infrastructure essential for safe aviation. These professionals operate as neutral actors, delivering critical safety-of-life services under international law. Targeting them or the infrastructure they depend on not only endangers lives but also violates established global norms.

International protocols, including ICAO's Annex 17, UN Security Council Resolution 2286, and Article 52 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, mandate the protection of civilian personnel and infrastructure critical to public safety. These frameworks explicitly mandate the protection of civilian personnel and critical infrastructure in conflict zones by collectively emphasizing the responsibility of all parties in a conflict to respect civilian infrastructure and personnel essential for public safety, such as air traffic controllers.

Despite the destruction and imminent danger, the injured controllers at Sana'a Control Tower demonstrated remarkable bravery by continuing to provide essential air traffic control services to an arriving aircraft. Their commitment underscores the vital role air traffic controllers play in preserving lives and ensuring the integrity of aviation operations, even amidst crisis.

IFATCA stands firmly with its Member Association, the Yemen Air Traffic Controllers Association (YATCA), and urges all parties involved in the conflict to adhere to international legal obligations and protect civilian infrastructure and personnel. Additionally, the International Community, the United Nations, ICAO, and other global entities must take decisive and immediate action to prevent further violations and ensure the safety and well-being of air traffic controllers.

Our thoughts are with the injured controllers and their families, as well as all those affected by this tragic incident. IFATCA reaffirms its dedication to advocating for the safety, security, and well-being of air traffic controllers globally. We remain steadfast in our commitment to upholding the principles of safety and neutrality that underpin the critical work of air traffic controllers everywhere.

This incident serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for concerted action to protect those who ensure the safety of aviation, even in the most challenging circumstances.



Helena Sjöström Falk  
President and CEO  
IFATCA



Ahmad Abba  
Executive Vice President Africa Middle East  
IFATCA