

FIATA

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FIATA SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

Corona virus raises tension on shipping line position on container charges

“The recent position of the Chinese government and Provinces to extend the Chinese New year as well as new restrictions on the movement of people in China has a significant downstream effect on the movement of goods which raises issues for international freight forwarders especially noting the position which may be adopted by shipping lines as to their position on container demurrage or detention charges “ said Dr Stephane Graber FIATA Director General.

In relation to the international movement of goods the curtailment of flights to China by airlines will severely impact airfreight importations and exportations as in the main such freight is uplifted as belly hold cargo and this is an issue outside the control of international freight forwarders in meeting client expectations. However, it is in the sea freight environment that FIATA has significant concern as to the position which may be adopted by shipping lines as to containers “captured” in ports or freight depots particularly in China.

In noting shipping line practice on container charges FIATA has a long held position on this aspect which was articulated in its recent submission to the US Federal Maritime Commission Inquiry on container demurrage and detention charges and which is set out in FIATA’s *Best Practice Statement on Container demurrage and detention* . The FIATA position is clear... where events are outside the control of the international freight forwarder (which is happening in China) then shipping lines need to address their position on the levying of such charges.

Dr Graber stated *” The China event should not be seen as an opportunity for shipping lines to make windfall profits to offset other expenses of operation . This is a time for these entities to exercise corporate responsibility which meets community expectations in such difficult circumstances. FIATA, and its members in particular and, the trading community at large, will watch with interest as to how this responsibility is exercised.”*

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About FIATA

FIATA, the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations, was founded in Vienna, Austria on May 31st 1926. It is a non-governmental organisation that today represents an industry covering approximately 40,000 forwarding and logistics firms, employing around 10 million people in some 160 countries. FIATA has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (inter alia ECE, ESCAP, ESCWA, etc.), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) as well as many other UN related bodies, e.g. the World Bank. It is recognised as representing the freight forwarding industry by many other governmental organisations, governmental authorities, private international organisations in the field of transport and logistics, such as the European Commission (through CLECAT), the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Union of Railways (UIC), the

International Road Transport Union (IRU), the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), etc.

For further information, please go to: www.fiata.com

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