



CARIBAVIA 2022 - AVIATION & TOURISM, CLOSER TOGETHER - PROF. GAVIN ECCLES

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After the opening address of the Prime Minister, CARIBAVIA 2022 started with a very interesting discussion, presented by Prof. Gavin Eccles: Aviation & Tourism closer together.

We all are discovering the Post Covid 19 world, how exactly it is now different for airlines and destinations? Some people were saying the pandemic is a dead for aviation. The reality is quite different. Professor Eccles raised several quite interesting points:

Today, many airlines are looking back on record numbers of 2019, pre covid let's say in order to planify the future. Today, 50-60% of pre covid traffic is back. Do we need to reach numbers of 2019? What should be the structure for the airlift today? How the "home is better" changed the way to travel?

Professor Eccles suggest the new model would be based on demand-built structure. We need to create the intention to be back. There is a difference, between "need to get away" and "plan to trip again".



Interesting point – before Covid19 scheduling for airlines was taking 6 to 8 months. Now the same process takes only 4 to 6 weeks. It means more pressure for airports, but it is obviously great for passengers. Today airports are having issues to assure the existing demand. Airlines realized that they must be more flexible. For destinations it means if somebody is not flying there yet, it might happen quite fast.

Was the crisis an opportunity at the end?

Pandemic impacted all airlines, some went bankrupt, some had to merge. Does it mean less of choice, or it means better quality? Low-cost airlines are getting into long-haul segment. Small airports now can attract airlines at new destinations.



One more point highlighted by Professor – new aircraft on the market – Airbus A321XLR – offering amazing opportunities to fly further. This plane could put airlines destinations and tour operator together around one table to decide what would be new destinations to offer within 3 to 5 years.



As it was stated previously, Caribavia is not a sit and listen event. Prof. Gavin Eccles proposed a workshop: Bringing Tourism Boards & Airports Closer Together. It was very interesting quality time when airport and tourism offices were interacting in live discussions. It might look a bit as question which came first, the chicken or the egg. Workshop participant were looking for an answer from professor - who should suggest a destination to open - airline, destination's tourism office, what is the role of the airports, both departure and destination, in that process.

After 3 very busy days we had the opportunity to catch up with Professor and discuss his first time at Caribbean Summit & Retreat.

CLICK on the PHOTO and enjoy the video interview!

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