

Information

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COPENHAGEN CLIMATE CONFERENCE CRITICAL FOR AVIATION'S FUTURE Airlines ready to deliver, but will decision-makers make the right decisions?

As the world travels to Copenhagen for the COP15 Climate Change Conference, the aviation sector once again expects to be a focus of attention as a solution is sought to include airline CO2 emissions in a comprehensive abatement scheme. The industry has always been sensitive to the fact that it fell outside the scope of the Kyoto Agreement, exposing it to misperceptions of its contribution to climate change and its commitment to minimising its impact.

AEA member airlines, comprising Europe's most important network carriers, welcome the opportunity to participate in a genuine, global exercise to arrive at meaningful solutions to climate change. That participation is limited, inasmuch as aviation's contribution to man-made CO2 is limited; nevertheless the airlines take their environmental responsibilities seriously, and come to Copenhagen with truly global aspirations – which is, after all, what the Conference is all about.

Said AEA Secretary General Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus: *"The primary focus of COP15 is on targets, but targets are meaningless if they are unachievable. The airlines' approach is through action and innovation, delivering real, identifiable benefits through short, medium and longer-term timescales. By harnessing operational improvements, infrastructure efficiencies and technological developments, combined with market-based measures, the aviation sector is able to make firm commitments to very substantially reduce its future emissions"*.

A feature of a comprehensive agreement, he said, should be an end to the imposition on aviation of actual or proposed taxes and levies with a nominally environmental purpose. *"What is the purpose of an emissions abatement programme"*, he asked; *"to achieve environmental objectives or to raise tax income? It is not only inconsistent to parallel this process with a separate tax regime, such taxes actively undermine the industry's ability to green itself"*.

- Adria Airways
- Aer Lingus
- AeroSvit
- Air France
- Air Malta
- Alitalia
- Austrian
- bmi
- British Airways
- Brussels Airlines
- Cargolux
- Croatia Airlines
- Cyprus Airways
- Czech Airlines
- DHL
- Finnair
- Iberia
- Icelandair
- Jat Airways
- KLM
- LOT
- Lufthansa
- Luxair
- Malev
- Olympic Airlines
- SAS Scandinavian Airlines
- SWISS
- TAP Portugal
- TAROM
- TNT Airways
- Turkish Airlines
- Ukraine International Airlines
- Virgin Atlantic Airways

Reflecting the global nature of the industry, a global solution was needed, said the AEA Secretary General. *“We have a global representative body – the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) – and they have a strong track record of achieving global standards in areas such as noise, and safety. ICAO is the right body to develop the process of bringing together the world’s airlines in an effective programme to reduce emissions. Regional solutions are distortive and divisive; ICAO has global reach, and access to the industry expertise which will transform the ‘must do’ of the political process into the ‘can do’ of action and achievement”.*

For further information, please contact:

David Henderson
Manager Information
Phone : +32(0) 2 639 89 72
Email: david.henderson@aea.be
www.aea.be

Note to the Editor: The Association of European Airlines (AEA) brings together 33 European established scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 366 million passengers and 7 million tonnes of cargo each year, operating 2,617 aircraft serving 662 destinations in 162 countries with 11,585 flights a day. They provide around 394,200 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €79 billion