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Aviation/Environment Summit

**Association of Asia Pacific Airlines**

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### **AAPA Calls for Global Leadership on Environment**

#### **Industry experts gather in Geneva to address key aviation environmental issues**

Senior representatives of the global aviation industry, regulators, environmental groups and other stakeholders met in Geneva, Switzerland on 31 March and 1 April for the 4th Aviation and Environment Summit. The conference, organised by the Air Transport Action Group, attracted 380 participants, and aims to address the challenges of moving the industry towards its committed objective of carbon-neutral growth, whilst aspiring to a carbon-free future.

Commenting on the Summit, Mr Andrew Herdman, Director General of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) said, "Good progress is being made through the industry's agreed four pillar strategy: ongoing investments in technology, infrastructure, and operational improvements are delivering annual gains in fuel efficiency, and reduced emissions, of around 2% p.a."

In other recent developments, a number of flight trials have highlighted the potential of alternative fuels, including biofuels. "Nevertheless," Mr. Herdman cautioned, "there are many unanswered questions about the commercial viability and long term scalability of biofuels in aviation. From an airline perspective, we have to face the economic reality that biofuels may well turn out, at best, to be cost-neutral when compared to conventional jet fuel, even taking into account the benefit of a lower carbon footprint."

Emphasising the importance of the fourth pillar, Mr. Herdman said, "Overall, if the industry is to achieve its goal of carbon-neutral growth, whilst meeting the expected future increase in demand for air travel, these efforts will have to be complemented by appropriate economic measures. But a messy patchwork of arbitrary taxes on air travel does absolutely nothing for the environment."

Mr. Herdman stressed, "Aviation needs a harmonized global approach on climate change. Parallel efforts are underway in ICAO addressing aviation's environmental impact, whilst the UNFCCC moves towards the COP15 meeting in Copenhagen in December this year. We need an injection of fresh thinking from governments to overcome the current political impasse. The challenge is how to reconcile the conflicting demands of non-discrimination embodied in the Chicago Convention governing international aviation, with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol.

Looking ahead, Mr. Herdman said, "We strongly urge the member states represented in the ICAO Group on International Aviation and Climate Change (GIACC) to focus on a sectoral approach towards international aviation. At the same time, we call upon ICAO members to strengthen collaboration with their counterparts in the UNFCCC process, with the aim of reaching a mutually acceptable consensus on meaningful actions."

Speaking on behalf of the region's leading carriers, he concluded that, "Even in the current economic downturn, Asia Pacific carriers are still committed to playing a full part in efforts to address the environmental challenge."

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#### **Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA)**

The AAPA is the trade association of major scheduled international airlines based in the Asia-Pacific region. The AAPA permanent secretariat is headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with international representation in Brussels and Washington, D.C. Collectively, the 17 AAPA member airlines carry 290 million passengers and 10 million tonnes of cargo representing approximately one-fifth of global passenger traffic and one-third of global air cargo traffic respectively, and thus play a critically important role in the ongoing development of global aviation.

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