

PRESS RELEASE

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Greener Skies 2007

**Association of Asia Pacific Airlines
(Reg.No.587)**

9/F Kompleks Antarabangsa

Jalan Sultan Ismail

50250 Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia

Tel +603 2145 5600

Fax +603 2145 2500

www.aapairlines.org

AAPA Calls For Global Action On Environment

Speaking at the Greener Skies conference* in Hong Kong, Mr Andrew Herdman, Director General of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines presented an insightful analysis, and shared some Asia Pacific perspectives on the global challenge of climate change.

Mr Herdman began by observing: "Asia Pacific is home to two thirds of the world's population, with dynamic economies already generating 26% of global GDP. Economic growth is raising living standards and helping to alleviate poverty, but must also be balanced against environmental priorities. These include the provision of clean water and sanitation, the security of energy supplies and local air quality."

He then went on to say: "Climate change is a global issue. Steadily rising global CO2 emissions reflect the interplay of four key factors: population; income; lifestyle and technology. Rich nations are emitting 10-20 tonnes of CO2 per head, far more than the global average of 4 tonnes CO2 per person. Whilst collective global action is required to reduce emissions, international climate change initiatives must address the legitimate aspirations of developing nations and principles of equity".

Turning to aviation, Mr Herdman noted: "Aviation is widely recognised as a key contributor to successful economic and social development. Air travel is not a major contributor to climate change, accounting for just 2% of global CO2 emissions according to the United Nations.

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“Yet aviation is too often the target of misinformed and alarmist comments in the media. In fact, aviation is already highly efficient, with strong incentives in place to strive for further fuel efficiency. More taxes are certainly not the answer.

“But we also recognise that as a carbon-dependent industry, our “licence to grow” is contingent on continuing public and political support. In the context of growing commitments to reduce overall emissions, aviation needs to be seen to be taking a more proactive stance in helping to address the wider challenges of global climate change. A properly designed emissions trading scheme could form the basis of such an approach.”

“The benefits of including aviation in an open, ideally global, emissions trading scheme would come from funds being channelled to other sectors where there are much greater opportunities to improve energy efficiencies and realistic possibilities of switching to less carbon intensive technologies. In this way, the economic and social benefits of allowing aviation to grow would more than offset the full cost of the environmental impact, whilst contributing significantly to the effort to reduce overall emissions,” explained Herdman.

Mr Herdman concluded his remarks by calling for greater international cooperation, saying: “Asia Pacific airlines take their environmental responsibilities very seriously, and we are committed to playing an active role in developing policies addressing these important issues, strongly favouring global solutions endorsed by ICAO, rather than fragmented regional and national schemes.”

* The Greener Skies conference, organised by Orient Aviation magazine, was held on 29-30 March 2007 in Hong Kong.

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Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA)

The AAPA is the trade association of 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 285 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.

For further information, please contact:

Mr Seelen Sakran

Manager – Corporate Communications

Tel +603 2145 5600 Fax +603 2145 2500

email: seelen@aapa.org.my