

## PRESS RELEASE

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Flight Safety

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### **AAPA WELCOMES EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE SHARING OF INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION AFFECTING FLIGHT SAFETY OVER CONFLICT ZONES**

**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia** – Aviation industry leaders meeting with ICAO in Montreal, 29 July 2014 expressed their strong condemnation of the misuse of military weapons targeting civil aviation. ICAO with the support of its industry partners has agreed to establish immediately a senior-level Task Force to determine how the right information and intelligence on potential threats to flight safety can be collected and disseminated more effectively. The findings of this Task Force will then be submitted to a Special Meeting of the ICAO Council for consideration and further action as necessary.

Commenting on the outcome of the high level meeting of aviation leaders in Montreal, Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) Director General, Mr. Andrew Herdman said, “We strongly support the views expressed in the joint statement made by ICAO and industry leaders on measures addressing risks to civil aviation arising from conflict zones.”

Herdman continued, “Although the loss of MH17 remains a terrible tragedy, and is deeply unsettling, we need to maintain a proper sense of perspective. With around 100,000 flights operating safely on a daily basis the complex systems of air traffic management developed through the close collaboration of governments and industry are working effectively. However, this tragedy has demonstrated there are still some gaps in the overall management of airspace, particularly regarding risk assessments for flights operating in the vicinity of identified conflict zones, which point towards the need for additional measures to improve the sharing of accurate information and intelligence.”

Herdman noted, “ICAO has, in its recent State Letter, helpfully clarified the existing roles and responsibilities of all sovereign States in providing the necessary information and updates on airspace affected by conflict. We therefore look to governments to further improve efforts in the sharing of accurate intelligence and information, so that airlines and air navigation service providers can plan the most appropriate flight routings, consistent with maintaining the highest levels of safety and security for the travelling public.”

Herdman stressed, “Without prejudging the outcome of the MH17 investigation, there is already overwhelming evidence that the aircraft was brought down by an unprovoked attack. Clearly this was the result of a military failure: failure to control access to powerful surface-to-air weapons, failure to design such systems to distinguish accurately between military and civilian targets, and failure to properly train those operating such weapons. Therefore, if we are to address root causes with the aim of further reducing the risks of such events in the future, the international community also needs to focus on reviewing the relevant international laws and conventions governing usage of such military weapons.”

Herdman concluded, “Throughout the aviation industry, safety is always our first priority. AAPA and its member airlines will be working closely with our colleagues in IATA to strongly support this important initiative. We look forward to progressing the work of the senior-level Task Force, which should identify the lessons that can be learned from the downing of MH17 and provide practical recommendations for further actioning by governments and industry as appropriate.”

**ENDS**

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

The AAPA is the trade association for 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 region’s airlines carry 1,012 million passengers and 19 million tonnes of cargo, representing one-third of global passenger traffic and two fifths of global air cargo traffic respectively, and thus play a critically important role in the ongoing development of global aviation.

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