

## Europe's airports announce bold ambitions towards carbon neutrality

For immediate release

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**PARIS, 19 June 2008** – European airports gathering in Paris this week, for the 18<sup>th</sup> ACI EUROPE Annual Assembly, Congress and Exhibition, have committed to a landmark environmental resolution as a further indication of how they wish to play their part in lowering aviation's impact on climate change.

The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) has calculated that aviation's total CO<sup>2</sup> emissions account for 2% of global emissions' impact on climate change. Of that figure, airports' own operations only account for up to 5%, but European airports are keen to tackle their greenhouse gas emissions – several individual airports operators having already committed to becoming carbon neutral in the past few years with some having already achieved this.

Today's resolution by ACI EUROPE (Airports Council International - Europe) and all of its members builds on the recent summit declaration of ATAG (Air Transport Action Group) last April, which committed all aviation stakeholders (airports, airlines, aircraft manufacturers and engine manufacturers) to working towards carbon neutral growth. Furthermore, last November, a resolution calling for a series of environmental commitments for the world's airports was also announced at the annual assembly of ACI WORLD.

ACI EUROPE and its 440 member airports, spanning 45 European countries and accounting for 90% of European commercial air traffic, have today taken these environmental commitments to the next level.

The annual Assembly of Europe's airports has not only committed to reduce carbon emissions from airports' own operations with the ultimate goal of becoming carbon neutral, it has set out a roadmap for implementation with ACI EUROPE to establish, within a year, a European wide accreditation scheme allowing airports to achieve this commitment.

### Background

It is no exaggeration to say that Europe's airport operators have been mindful of the need for environmental responsibility in their work, voluntarily initiating environmental management programmes as early as the 1970's in some cases. Activities such as noise mitigation, monitoring of air quality, innovative water management and biodiversity strategies are now widespread practises across airports in Europe.

The design and communication of these environmental management programmes has invariably been locally-focussed in the past. However, the issue of climate change has ushered in a new dynamic – as European citizens are becoming increasingly conscious of their personal carbon footprint.

ACI EUROPE, in its role as the voice of Europe's airports, recognises that collective action is the only way forward.

## **Roadmap to Carbon Neutral Airports**

Key to the resolution announced today is ACI EUROPE's commitment to launch an environmental accreditation scheme before next year's annual congress. The accreditation scheme, already in development, will allow all member airports to follow on a voluntary basis a common framework for the measuring, reporting and reduction of carbon emissions with the possibility of becoming carbon neutral.

Newly re-elected **President of ACI EUROPE** and **CEO of Athens International Airport, Dr Yiannis Paraschis** commented "The decades-old approach of airports focussing exclusively on local environmental initiatives is over and the genuine desire among European airports to collectively advance on this issue should not be regarded lightly, especially in view of current economic conditions. For airports, committing to carbon reduction with the ultimate goal of becoming carbon neutral is about looking to the future, setting a vision and continuing to earn their licence to grow."

**ACI EUROPE Director General Olivier Jankovec added** "ACI EUROPE is looking at this issue in a very concrete way. This means that in addition to the industry commitment towards carbon neutrality, we are actually going to provide our members within the next 12 months with a tool to make it happen. This is going to be a huge collective effort considering the extreme diversity among European airports, but we are building on existing far reaching initiatives already underway at many airports."

**ENDS**

**The full text of the ACI EUROPE environmental resolution is detailed in the pages that follow.**

For more information, please contact **Robert O'Meara**,  
Communications Manager,  
ACI EUROPE (Airports Council International)  
E-mail: [robert.omeara@aci-europe.org](mailto:robert.omeara@aci-europe.org)  
Mobile: +32 (0)486 54 14 71 or Tel: +32 (0)2 552 09 82.

*Airports Council International (ACI) is the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents some 440 airports in 45 European countries. Member airports handle 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe, welcoming over a billion passengers each year.*

## **18TH ACI EUROPE ASSEMBLY (Paris, 19 June 2008)**

### **RESOLUTION**

#### **EUROPEAN AIRPORTS JOINING FORCES TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE**

The eighteenth ACI EUROPE Annual General Assembly,

*Noting* that air transport is essential for the mobility of European citizens and the competitiveness of the European economy, thus playing a key contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy;

*Noting* that Europe is facing an airport capacity crunch over the next 20 years and that airport capacity development needs to be granted at least as high a priority as ATM capacity development to ensure the overall efficiency of the aviation network, taking environmental issues into consideration;

*Noting* that, over the past decades, European airports have built a strong environmental record at local level, taking proactive and far reaching steps to minimise the impact of their activities on the environment and ensure their sustainable development;

*Noting* that a growing number of individual European airports are taking steps to reduce carbon emissions generated by airport operations, which can account for up to 5% of total emissions from aviation, and that some of them have already achieved carbon neutrality for operations fully within their own control;

*Noting and supporting* the Resolution of the 16<sup>TH</sup> ACI WORLD Assembly adopted in Buenos Aires on 6 November 2007 and the Aviation Industry Commitment to Action on Climate Change signed in Geneva on 22 April 2008;

*Recognising* the leadership of the European Union in the global fight against Climate change and the need to work towards a global, equitable and stable emissions management framework;

*Recognising* the critical need for European airports to collectively address current and projected environmental impacts not only locally but also globally, through the application of the principles of sustainability;

*Recognising* in particular the need for European airports to develop and operate their infrastructure and services in a way that allows them to effectively participate to the reduction of the growing contribution of aviation to climate change,

*Resolves that:*

1. ACI EUROPE calls upon the European Union to pursue a clear and sound policy reconciling aviation growth with ambitious environmental objectives, in particular in relation to climate change;
2. ACI EUROPE and its members commit to reduce carbon emissions from airport operations fully within their own control with the ultimate target to become carbon neutral;
3. ACI EUROPE commits to establish and operate at the latest by the 2009 General Assembly (June 2009) a European wide scheme allowing airports to follow a common framework for the measurement, reporting and reduction of carbon emissions with the possibility of becoming carbon neutral.