

AAPA 61<sup>st</sup> Assembly of Presidents

25 October 2017

Taipei



**OPENING SPEECH OF MR. ANDREW HERDMAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ASIA PACIFIC AIRLINES**

- Ms Chu-Lan Yeh, Chairwoman, Taiwan Visitors Association
- Ms Yu-Yen Chien, Commissioner, Department of Information & Tourism, Taipei City Government
- Mr Nuan-Hsuan Ho, Chairman, China Airlines
- Mr Su-Chien Hsieh, President, China Airlines
- Mr Alexandre de Juniac, Director General of IATA
- Members of the AAPA Executive Committee and Member Airlines
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to AAPA's 61<sup>st</sup> Assembly of Presidents here in Taipei at the kind invitation of China Airlines, our warm and generous hosts.

Arriving a few days ago at the very busy Taoyuan International Airport was a reminder of the sheer numbers of people travelling by air these days. We all welcome this because more passengers means more business for airlines. More importantly, this scene, repeated in countless other airports around the region, underscores the important contribution of the aviation industry to the economy. The vibrant airline sector here, booming tourism levels and rapidly growing passenger traffic, reflects the energy and long term optimism that surrounds the Asia Pacific aviation industry.

Aviation is recognized as a key contributor to social and economic development. It brings people together, connects products with markets worldwide, and is a cornerstone of commerce and tourism. Cross border travel and interactions help to foster friendships, reinforce ties and facilitate greater understanding amongst different cultures.

The transformation of the aviation industry during our lifetimes could not have been more dramatic. Forty years ago, the industry carried 500 million air passengers, mostly from North America and Europe, and air travel was still an unimaginable luxury for many. This year, more than four billion passengers are expected to travel by air. Air travel is now a globally available mode of transport, and part of everyday modern life. Such spectacular growth has been driven by a combination of factors, including a growing middle class, rising disposable incomes and affordable airfares. Looking to the future, IATA has forecast that up to half of the growth in passenger traffic over the next 20 years will be in the Asia Pacific region.

Such growth is exciting, but it also brings challenges.

To move such large numbers of travelers efficiently, we need to put in place the necessary facilities and infrastructure capacity. At the same time, we must constantly think of new ways to move people in the most efficient, secure and cost effective manner, whilst smoothing the flow and improving the overall travel experience. Additionally, we should be looking at how we can reduce barriers to cross border travel, including making use of new technologies. The expansion of the sector means that manpower needs will also increase. Close coordination with governments on all these fronts will be needed. Together with other important issues affecting the airline industry, these will be discussed by Asian airline heads at this Assembly.

As the trade association of the region's airlines, AAPA's mission is to articulate to the world at large the perspectives of Asia Pacific airlines. With your support, we will continue to engage with governments and regulators around the world on issues that affect us all, and contribute to the continued long term success of the air transport industry here in the Asia Pacific region. As airlines, although we all compete against one another, we also recognize that on many issues of common interest, we are stronger together as an industry and as a community.

Before I end, I would like to thank Ms Chu-Lan Yeh, Chairwoman of the Taiwan Visitors Association, for officiating at the opening ceremony of this event. Your presence highlights the important relationship between the aviation industry and the tourism sector, and underscores the key contribution of aviation to economic and social development.

Finally, I'd like to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr Hsieh Su Chien, President of China Airlines, for their leadership as Chairman of AAPA this past year. China Airlines has been an energetic supporter of the Association's activities over the years and we deeply appreciate your efforts. I would also like to thank the China Airlines organising teams, for all their hard work, and warm hospitality in organising this year's superb event here in Taipei. And let me

say how grateful we are to our many sponsors for their generosity and their wider support of the Association's activities.

Asia Pacific airlines are committed to playing an important role in shaping the future of this always dynamic global industry. Working together, we can continue to contribute significantly to wider social and economic development, providing regional and global connectivity.

Once again, a warm welcome to Taipei and I wish you all a memorable and enjoyable Assembly!

Thank you.

Andrew Herdman  
Director General  
Association of Asia Pacific Airlines

AAPA 61<sup>st</sup> Assembly of Presidents  
25 October 2017