

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Sustainable growth of Asia-Pacific economies through air travel

**Geneva, 21 March 2012** – Over 24 million jobs and \$470 billion in GDP in the Asia-Pacific region are supported by aviation, according to a new report released today at the Aviation and Environment Summit in Geneva. The report, *Aviation: benefits beyond borders*, was produced by the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG) and Oxford Economics. It outlines an industry that plays a larger role in both the Asia-Pacific and global economy than many would expect.

“In the Asia-Pacific region alone aviation directly employs over two million people,” says Paul Steele, Executive Director of ATAG, the global association that represents air transport. “If we include indirect employment at suppliers to the industry, induced employment from spending by aviation industry employees and the jobs in tourism that air transport makes possible, this increases the regional figure to 24.1 million jobs. In addition, Asia Pacific economies derive substantial benefits from the spending of tourists travelling by air.

“Of course, aviation’s economic benefits spread far beyond the monetary aspects outlined here. When you take into account the further benefits gained through the speed and reliability of air travel, the businesses that exist because air freight makes them possible and the intrinsic value to the economy of improved connectivity, the economic impact would be several times larger,” adds Steele.

For Asia-Pacific forecasts indicate that passenger numbers are expected to almost triple from 779.6 million in 2010 to over 2.2 billion in 2030. Meanwhile, cargo volumes are projected to rise at a similar rate of 6.3% per annum. The report, available at [www.aviationbenefitsbeyondborders.org](http://www.aviationbenefitsbeyondborders.org), also outlined the role aviation plays at a global level, supporting 56.6 million jobs worldwide and \$2.2 trillion of the world’s GDP. There are some 1,500 commercial airlines using nearly 24,000 aircraft to serve 3,800 airports around the globe.

Andrew Herdman, Director General of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) adds: “Aviation plays a critically important role in fostering successful economic and social development, particularly here in Asia. This report highlights the fact that the Asia-Pacific region already accounts for 34% of passenger traffic worldwide, ahead of both Europe and North America (27% each), led by dynamic growth in the major emerging economies. Looking ahead, the Oxford Economics analysis suggests further growth can provide an additional 1.4 million jobs in aviation across the region by 2030 – and if you include the tourism benefits, up to 4.6 million jobs.”

“While we are now the largest region in the world for passengers, the existing and projected growth in demand for air transport services will require a renewed focus on infrastructure development,” says Patti Chau, Regional Director of Airports Council International Asia-Pacific. “Any development needs to happen in a strategic and sustainable way that benefits the communities we serve, the economy and also ensures limited impact on our precious environment.”

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Martin Craigs, CEO of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) reflects his membership's view: "Travel and Tourism is already the largest employer in the world's fastest-growing region, Asia-Pacific. As this report demonstrates air transport is THE key enabler. Governments in our region recognise that and intelligently nurture air transport. In other parts of the world attempts are being made to restrain air travel. If they succeed, even a single percentage point reduction in demand between 2010 and 2030 could lead to 6.5 million fewer tourism related jobs being created in Asia-Pacific. That is an impact worth getting exercised about."

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