



ATAG

33 route de l'Aéroport
1215 Geneva 15
Switzerland
www.atag.org

Joint ACI EUROPE, ATAG, EUROCONTROL press release

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Capacity improvements required to keep pace with demand

From the joint ACI EUROPE, ATAG, EUROCONTROL and IATA Airport Operations Conference, European Parliament, Brussels, 27-29 October

European Parliament, Brussels, 28 October 2004: With demand for air travel set to double by 2020, airport and airspace capacity will face growing pressures. The need for urgent infrastructure enhancements was a major theme on the second day of the 'Airport Operations Conference' held at the European Parliament in Brussels. The conference identified congestion and the lack of sufficient airport capacity as the main obstacles to air transport's future growth.

According to Philippe Rochat, Executive Director of the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG): "Significant capacity improvements are essential to accommodate predicted growth and to respond to increasing demand for air travel from consumers. Even in times of reduced traffic, major air routes and airports still operate at their very limit, which, in turn has a negative impact on the whole system and its efficiency."

Airports are faced with the need to adapt capacity to market demand, and opening new terminal facilities and runways is an indispensable part of the process.

European airspace is also constrained: The *Single European Sky* initiative has the potential to deliver substantive capacity enhancements, provided it is based on closer cooperation between States towards the achievement of functional blocks of airspace, more dynamic civil-military arrangements and interoperability of air traffic control systems. The application of Reduced Vertical Separation Minima (RVSM) managed by EUROCONTROL has already increased European airspace capacity, while also reducing airline fuel use, thereby achieving meaningful environmental benefits.

Mr Rochat continued: "A "laissez-faire" attitude is simply not an option: all aviation community players including airports, airlines and air navigation services providers must work together as equal partners to identify solutions to the capacity challenges and to agree on the best way forward. This will require proper planning – whilst taking due account of safety, security and environmental requirements."

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Note to Editors:

Joint ACI EUROPE, ATAG, EUROCONTROL, European Commission and IATA conference

Entitled 'Partnership for Change' this high-level conference - taking place at the European Parliament Chamber, Brussels, Belgium, from 27-29 October 2004 - brings together all senior managers and decision makers involved in

European airport airside operations to share objectives, problems and experiences - and collectively agree the best way forward.

*For more information on this free event, please contact Elisabeth Beheydt:
tel.: +32-2-729.31.44, fax: +32-2-729.90.08 or e-mail:
airport.conference@eurocontrol.int*

For more information, contact **Anna Patient**, Communications Manager,
ATAG: e-mail: patienta@atag.org, tel: +41 22 770 2097

The Air Transport Action Group (ATAG) is an independent coalition of organisations throughout the air transport industry that have united to support aviation infrastructure development and capacity improvements in an environmentally-responsible manner. Its members include airports, airlines, manufacturers, air navigation services, airline pilot and air traffic controller unions, chambers of commerce, travel and tourism organisations, ground transportation and communications providers. Its funding members are ACI, Airbus, Boeing, CFM, IATA and Rolls-Royce.