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# Airports urge liberalisation push between EU & Latin America

For immediate release

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**Brussels & Sao Paulo, 25 May 2010:** As the 1<sup>st</sup> EU-Latin America Aviation Summit kicks off today in Rio de Janeiro, airports on both sides were quick to herald the benefits of opening aviation markets between Europe and Latin America.

European airport trade body, ACI EUROPE and its sister organisation, ACI LAC (Latin America & Caribbean) expressed strong hopes that the summit will pave the way for aviation negotiations to progress quickly and decisively between the European Union and Latin American countries.

Capacity for air services between Europe and Latin America has already grown by nearly 40% over the last 10 years. Strong cultural and business ties between the two regions coupled with the dynamism of leading South American economies mean that the potential for further development is very significant – indeed, demand could nearly triple over the next 20 years. However, this opportunity requires a move from antiquated and inflexible bilateral agreements between individual countries to a new, fully open and liberalised model.

**Olivier Jankovec, Director General ACI EUROPE** commented, "Europe's airports are fully behind the European Commission's efforts to open aviation markets with the EU's main trading partners, in particular with Brazil. Experience gained with North America and also with neighbouring countries like Morocco, shows that consumers are the biggest winners from aviation liberalisation and that there are other far-reaching benefits. For Europe's airports, this is about unleashing their potential to act as engines of economic growth for the communities they serve – something not to be overlooked given the urgency of securing economic growth."

**Miguel Southwell, President ACI LAC** said "While experiencing steady increases, growth of the passenger and air cargo traffic in the LAC-EU corridor, still lags behind that of Europe and North America, to Africa and Asia respectively. Trade regulations, as well as air service regulatory constraints, continue to suppress the true potential of LAC-EU air commerce. This EU-Latin America Summit is therefore a key step towards markedly reducing these impediments and further strengthening the economic and cultural ties between both world regions."

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ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 400 airports in 46 European countries. Member airports handle 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe, welcoming more than 1.5 billion passengers each year.

Press release

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*ACI-LAC is the Latin America and Caribbean region of Airports Council International (ACI), the non-profit international organization of the worlds' airports. Its prime purpose is to advance the interests of airports (Public and Private operated) as well as promoting professional excellence in airport management and operations. ACI-LAC has over 65 members operating over 200 airports in 35 countries and territories of Latin America and the Caribbean Region.*