ACI EUROPE
Boulevard du Régent 37-40 (5th floor),
1000 Brussels,
Belgium
www.aci-europe.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

European airports set out new strategy as hybrid threats intensify

Brussels, 12 November 2026: Against the backdrop of an intensifying wave of security threats affecting European aviation, including recent bomb threats, drone incursions and cyberattacks, ACI EUROPE has unveiled a new *Strategy Paper on Hybrid Threats and Airport Resilience*, setting out a coordinated approach and related key asks to strengthening the sector's preparedness and response.

The strategy recognises airports as **critical infrastructure**, whose role extends far beyond air transport. Airports underpin European connectivity, economic activity, essential supply chains, emergency response and even military mobility. Protecting their ability to maintain these vital societal functions is therefore a matter of European security and resilience.

European airports are already taking proactive steps to address the evolving threat landscape, investing in cybersecurity, crisis management and operational resilience. However, the increasingly complex, interconnected and unpredictable nature of hybrid threats requires a step change in cooperation between airport operators, airlines, all other operational partners involved, national security authorities, governments and European institutions.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE, said: *"Hybrid threats can no longer be treated as a narrow specialist issue. They should be understood as a growing and critical strategic challenge to Europe's wider critical infrastructure ecosystem and as a core resilience issue for European security. European airports are already actively strengthening their resilience. But airports cannot confront threats of this nature alone and our conventional security rule book and cooperation mechanisms clearly need to be reconsidered. The recent intensification of incidents makes rapid intelligence-sharing, clear responsibilities and seamless cooperation between the industry and local, national and European authorities an absolute prerequisite for the EU's security agenda."*

The new Strategy Paper sets out a roadmap for moving from fragmented, largely reactive responses to a more integrated and forward-looking approach to airport resilience. It advocates for hybrid threats to be addressed across aviation security, cybersecurity, operational continuity and crisis management, rather than through separate structures operating in isolation. It also identifies critical gaps in existing European and national frameworks, which often fail to reflect the complexity of airport operations and the full scale of their dependencies on external infrastructure. Notably, the strategy calls for a clearer division of responsibilities between airports and competent authorities, including on threat detection and response, alongside dedicated funding mechanisms to ensure that resilience capabilities can be developed and maintained across the European airport network.

Jankovec concluded: *"We must also recognise that the objective of hybrid threats is not always to inflict maximum physical damage. Repeated disruption, uncertainty and fear can be equally effective weapons, designed to exhaust our resources and undermine public confidence. We must not allow those seeking to destabilise our societies to succeed. Our collective response must be one of enhanced preparedness, coordination and resilience."*

The *ACI EUROPE Strategy Paper on Hybrid Threats and Airport Resilience* is available here.

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For more information, contact:

Agata Lyznik
Director of Communications, Media & Events
Tel: +32 2 552 09 89
Email: agata.lyznik@aci-europe.org

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 600 airports in 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 95% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Airports and air connectivity support 14 million jobs, generating €851 billion in European economic activity (5% of GDP). In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions for operations under their control by 2050, without offsetting.