



For immediate release

EUROPEAN AVIATION INDUSTRY STRESSES IMPORTANCE OF SESAR IN THE EU BUDGET DECISION

Brussels, 22 November 2012: Today and tomorrow during the EU summit, Member States will negotiate about the EU budget for 2014-2020. These discussions will include a decision on the **Connecting Europe Facility**, which earmarks a budget up to €50bn specifically designated to promote growth, jobs and competitiveness through targeted infrastructure investment at European level in the fields of transport, energy, and broadband digital services. The sum for transport proposed by the European Commission is €31.8 billion.

Air transport is a key enabler of growth and a major contributor to economic prosperity in Europe. In order to preserve its sustainability and to meet future capacity and flight-efficiency needs, the EU must ensure sufficient budget contribution. Aviation stakeholders are working hard to implement the EU flagship's aviation initiative, the Single European Sky, which can result in efficiency in terms of safety, cost and fuel-consumption, improvement in socio-economic and environmental impact.

The technological arm of the Single European Sky is the so-called **SESAR** (Single European Sky Air Traffic Management Research) which will bring the European aviation system into the 21st century through state-of-the-art and innovative technology. The timely and synchronised deployment of SESAR requires at least €3bn provided by the Connecting Europe Facility. As a public-private partnership, public funds are of paramount importance to achieving the expected benefits of SESAR.

The success of SESAR relies on the provision of sufficient and flexible public funding through the Connecting Europe Facility framework to all stakeholders involved, therefore the aviation industry is calling upon EU Member States to recognise the added-value of aviation in Europe and vote in favour of the allocation of the €31.8bn for transport.

Athar Husain Khan, acting Secretary General of the Association of European Airlines, **AEA** says *"The achievements of SESAR would bring €400bn to the European GDP, creating 328,000 jobs and would result in significant CO₂ reduction. In the current turbulent economic environment we need buy-in from Member States, a failure on agreement about the budget would put into risk the realisation of the projected benefits of a seamless European airspace."*

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of European airports trade body, **ACI EUROPE** commented *"EU Member States should not see the Connecting Europe Facility as just another budget line, in their negotiations with the EU. No other programme matters more in bringing the people of Europe together and connecting them to the real wider world. Every day, we read about the growing*

importance of trade with Asia and Latin America - for which aviation is THE strategic bridge. To cast aside continued investment in Europe's aviation system would be a grave mistake."

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Notes to Editors:

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International, 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 over 1.5 billion passengers, 18 million tonnes of freight and more than 20 million aircraft movements each year.

www.aci-europe.org

The **Association of European Airlines (AEA)** brings together 33 European established scheduled network carriers. These collectively carry 400 million passengers and 6 million tonnes of cargo each year, operating 2,600 aircraft serving 640 destinations in 170 countries with 11,000 flights a day. They provide around 390,000 jobs directly, and generate a total turnover of €93 billion.

www.aea.be

For more information on the SESAR Joint Undertaking, go to **www.sesarju.eu**