

May 31, 2013

Tony Tyler
Director General & CEO
International Air Transport Association
Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Tyler:

As you recently said: “No industry has a long-term future if it is not sustainable. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that, for aviation, achieving our environment targets is a key element of our license to grow.”¹ Urgent action on climate change is needed now to live up to this strong sentiment. On behalf of our millions of members and activists throughout the world, we, the undersigned representatives of environment, development, community and science groups strongly urge the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and its member airlines to endorse a meaningful global market-based measure to address aviation’s contribution to climate change at your upcoming Annual General Meeting and actively encourage government representatives to agree on such a measure at this year’s International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Assembly to be implemented by the time of the next Assembly.

Now is the time for action. Aviation accounts for five percent of human-caused global warming effects and these emissions are set to continue to grow significantly. This growth will endanger our chances of limiting global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels, which would lead to devastating consequences for humanity. We strongly support efforts to reduce emissions through technical and operational measures but these measures will not be sufficient to address the aviation sector’s fair share of necessary global emissions reductions.² Your organization has regularly supported a global market-based measure to address aviation’s contribution to climate change as recognized in your recent speech where you stated: “in the short-term we will also need access to positive market-based-measures (MBMs)”.

To be credible, such measures must include targets compatible with climate science, strong provisions to ensure the environmental credibility of the traded units, limited access to offsets and strict provisions to ensure compliance.

International efforts to address aviation’s contribution to climate change are at a cross-road. Airlines can help countries secure agreement this year to implement a global market-based measure to significantly cut aviation’s greenhouse gas pollution or they can choose to let others act domestically to control aviation’s pollution. A fragmented market with a patchwork of domestic policy measures and voluntary

¹ Remarks by Tony Tyler at the ATAG Environment Workshop: <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/speeches/Pages/2013-05-13-01.aspx>.

² As documented in a recent study by researchers at Manchester Metropolitan University, see: <http://www.cate.mmu.ac.uk/projects/bridging-the-aviation-co2-emissions-gap-why-emissions-trading-is-needed/>

industry commitments will not be sufficient to achieve environmental targets consistent with science, and hence halt aviation's license to grow. Inaction isn't a choice.

At the Climate Summit in Copenhagen IATA already called for a global sectoral approach that ensures that airlines cover the environmental cost of their emissions. Four years later there can be no room for further delay. We urge IATA to use its annual meeting in Cape Town, South Africa to send a resounding signal that it wants an agreement this year to implement a global market-based measure that significantly addresses aviation's pollution.

On behalf of:

Aviation Environment Federation
Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
Carbon Market Watch
Environmental Defense Fund
National Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Defense Council
Nature Code – Centre of Development and Environment
Sierra Club
Transport & Environment
Union of Concerned Scientists
World Wildlife Fund