

09 January 2014

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **«Air Connectivity Development for Cyprus through change, cooperation and innovation»**

The first Aviation & Tourism Conference on the subject of “Air Connectivity Development for Cyprus through Change, Cooperation and Innovation” was successfully organised by Hermes Airports at the Filoxenia Conference Centre in Nicosia.

The initiative was undertaken with the primary objective of increasing awareness amongst all stakeholders of the importance of air connectivity and current developments in the industry, and to offer expert insight into initiatives that led to growth. The conference, which was held under the auspices of the Minister of Communications and Works, Mr Tasos Mitsopoulos, also offered the opportunity for a constructive interaction between all participants-stakeholders and the speakers.

In his speech, Tasos Mitsopoulos, Minister of Communications and Works highlighted that “Cyprus, despite the financial crisis it faces, continues to offer high quality tourism and a remarkable experience to millions of visitors. Today, our effort is to work together productively with all stakeholders and our partners in order to further strengthen our tourism industry. Our vision and mission is to guide Cyprus to enrich and truly develop its tourism product. We are ready to listen and speak, we are ready to act. We are determined to act and to refocus our efforts towards a new, comprehensive strategy which will be based on contemporary ideas for the development of the tourist industry and will meet both the demands as well as the expectations of the tourists choosing to visit Cyprus over the next years”.

Wes Porter, Chief Executive Officer of Hermes Airports, stated that “following the financial shock of 2013, Cyprus is now regrouping its powers. Hermes Airports, as the operator of the two international airports of the country, is considered to be a valuable partner in Cyprus’ tourism value chain. We are here to contribute to the efforts for the development of the tourism industry of this country. We are here to shape a common strategy, to assist and facilitate communication, coordination and

fruitful dialogue amongst all the involved stakeholders. We are here to encourage everyone to share our vision, to see all the tourism partners of this country working together within the framework of a strategic business plan towards a unique goal: to bring more tourists to Cyprus, to bring more money to local businesses, communities and the public coffers. Although we have many challenges yet to overcome, there is no doubt that by having a mutually agreed goal, through cooperation, innovation and change where needed, we will make aviation and tourism one of the driving forces for the recovery of the Cyprus economy. We are confident that we can get there together”.

Their presence to Hermes Airports’ conference gave a number of notable and well-known pioneers of world’s tourism industry such as:

- **Jean-Claude Baumgarten**  
Chairman & CEO CREWE Associates  
(Former President of World Travel & Tourism Council)
- **Kate Burgess-Craddy**  
Founder & Chairman KBC PR & Marketing  
Chair of Visit USA Association UK
- **Vernice J. Walkine**  
President & CEO Nassau Airport Development Company
- **Michael Burns**  
Partner Corporate Finance Aviation Leader PwC
- **Philippe Wilmart**  
Global Airlines Director voyageprive.com
- **Gudny Maria Johannsdottir**  
Manager Business & Route development Isavia Ltd
- **Lee Lipton**  
Director Air Services and Cargo Development, Vantage Airport Group
- **Peter Greenberg**  
Travel Editor CBS News

During the conference, the participants had the opportunity to be advised of a project for the development of tourism industry of Cyprus. The project was the outcome of a collective effort carried out by the local industry’s stakeholders, such as the Cyprus Hotel Association, ACTA, ACTE and the Regional Boards of Tourism.



Through their valuable intercessions all the speakers have contributed to the production of useful conclusions which will be the basis for further discussions by all the partners of the tourism industry of Cyprus.

-----