President’s welcoming Speech at Madeira – Funchal

2018

I have the immense pleasure, on behalf of the WACA council to welcome you at the 51st Annual General Assembly of the World Airlines Clubs Association, held in Madeira island one of the most popular island destinations for vacations.

We are proud to be able to be the guests of our hosting club the interline Club of Portugal and with the support of various stakeholders in Madeira.

Traveling and having vacations is part and parcel of our DNA and through these kinds of events that you discover new things, appreciate nature, learn from others the culture, relax your mind and re-energize your soul, participate in the economy of the hosting country or city and giving ourselves the opportunity to contribute to good causes.

Our Association WACA which has been in existence for the past 52 years is doing all its best to ensure that, what I just mentioned, are met for the benefits of all which leads us to the main objective of WACA i.e.

* To provide social and economic causes to the benefit of the airline industry and the community in general.

In addition to the Social and Economic Causes, Environmental Concerns are occupying a major part in our actions. We reckon that the three fields of interventions are very vast, but we at WACA with our limited resources we are contributing to the best of our ability to the benefits of the society and the planet earth.

We are proud to say that WACA fully supports the initiatives of world organisations of the industry, be it, IATA, ICAO or the WTO. Right from combating human trafficking on one side and on the other hand protecting the environment by having a better cabin waste management performance for example.

By Human trafficking which is also referred as trafficking in persons, we are happy to put in place a program called “**WACA Change Can Help**” which we introduced in 2015 when we were in Vietnam.

It’s worth mentioning that we are supporting three children in Vietnam in their education through an NGO called Blue Dragon. These children could have been exploited by perpetrators and become victims of the society. The more so, these offenders will use the commercial flights to commit their crimes. We as responsible organization composed of responsible members like you in the audience, we cannot close our eyes or just watch… we need to raise the awareness and participate in this fight.

I am pleased also to inform you that not later than this year in June at the IATA Annual General Assembly, it has been resolved and it was approved unanimously and each airline members of IATA took a pledge to participate in the fight against Human Trafficking including sexual exploitation of children in the supply chain. WACA is conscious that poverty and education could be one of the main causes. Through our **WACA Relief Fund** and the **WACA Change Can Help program** we are able to bring our little contribution to eradicate the problem.

I am pleased to inform you that one of the “**take away**” of this event in Madeira , we will be able to initiate another sustainable project here in the island of Madeira to put in place a collection box at the Airport of Madeira and inviting travelling passengers to donate all their unused coins to support the vulnerable children of the Island in their education through the identified NGOs of the Island. WACA is very grateful to the Management of the Airport of Madeira to accede to our request and to work together on this project.

Another aspect that WACA is aiming at, is in the awareness campaign towards the protection of the sea and the ocean which unfortunately is being disturbed in an unsustainable manner, where tons are garbage including plastics are being dumped in the sea thus creating a dis-balance in the eco-system to the detriment of world population at large.

WACA being part of the Airline Industry is working with academics from Universities- (*Salute the presence of our two academics from University of Kassel , Germany*) and other partners to raise awareness of the danger and to bring its contribution to mitigate the situation, like proper inflight cabin waste management among other initiatives. A survey has been carried by the university, and we will be pleased to take cognizance of the results during the plenary session of our assembly. Those non delegates are mostly welcome to attend .

I am so pleased to have the presence of the representative of the Mayor / Administration of the Island tonight and we will be pleased to discuss with you on how WACA as part of the airline industry can contribute to the social and environmental causes and contribute to the initiative of the UN Sustainable Development Goals as well.

Well ladies and gentleman these are the leading themes of our AGA this year. We believe in :

**Travel with an opportunity to make a difference**

whilst uniting all the members/ participants present  in friendship, good fellowship and mutual understanding as one family and in a WACA Spirit.

We will be together for this week , let us experience the natural beauty of Madeira island with all its authenticity of the people and the community at large.

I wish to place on record once again, the good work performed by organizing committee – the Interline Club Portugal and also to congratulate the Club for celebrating its 40 years anniversary this year. Well done Interline of Portugal.

Thank you for your kind attention.

God bless you all..