



## TURKISH AIRLINES TO JOIN STAR ALLIANCE

### Star Alliance Chief Executive Board approves membership application

**ISTANBUL, Turkey - December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006** – The Chief Executive Board of Star Alliance, the airline network for Earth™, has today voted to accept the membership application of Turkish Airlines. This now clears the way for Turkish Airlines to begin the integration process which will subsequently see the airline become the alliance's 21st member carrier.

With its fleet of 101 aircraft and network covering destinations in the USA, Europe, Asia and Africa, Turkish Airlines will allow the Star Alliance network to offer customers more than 17,500\* daily flights serving 927\* airports in 162\* countries. Turkish Airlines' home base, Istanbul, will in future become Star Alliance's foremost hub at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and act as gateway to various new destinations in Turkey and new connections especially to Central Asia and the Middle East.

"With Turkish Airlines joining Star Alliance, we can offer our customers a wider choice of flight options while at the same time expanding our network reach to areas previously not served. Here specifically, Star Alliance will be in a unique position to offer flight connections through, what has historically been, the gateway to both Asia and Europe," said Jaan Albrecht, Star Alliance CEO.

For Turkish Airlines, Star Alliance membership will allow the carrier to expand its customer offer in terms of network coverage, frequent flyer benefits, lounges and alliance fare products. At the same time, Turkish Airlines will participate in all Star Alliance initiatives aimed at reducing costs, while at the same time improving customer service, such as collocation at airports, joint lounges, electronic ticketing or joint media purchasing, to name a few.

Dr. Candan Karlıtekin, Chairman of the Turkish Airlines, stated that becoming a Star Alliance member is one of the most important steps in Turkish Airlines' 73

years long history. Candan Karlıtekin explained that the goal of Turkish Airlines, the rising star in the world aviation sector, is to become more effective in the global market with its vision, experience and service quality.

Candan Karlıtekin said: “Our goal is to become a global brand in the world aviation sector. We believe that we have an important place in the international competition. We are successfully earning a position to compete with the world’s giants. For this reason, being a member of Star Alliance network is a historical milestone for Turkish Airlines. We will add new aircraft to our current fleet of 101. In 2007, we will be the most important brand to represent Turkey in the world.”

Candan Karlıtekin emphasised that the membership of Star Alliance will also add a great value to Istanbul, the home base of Turkish Airlines. Mr. Karlıtekin said “Istanbul, which has been the gateway between Asia and Europe for centuries, now will also be the ‘Bosphorus Bridge of global aviation’. Istanbul’s becoming Star Alliance’s foremost hub at the crossroads of Europe and Asia will contribute greatly to Turkish Airlines and Turkey’s promotion in the world.

Dr. Temel Kotil, the CEO of Turkish Airlines, emphasised that they have shown a much bigger growth than the level of the growth occurred in the aviation sector recently. He stated that Turkish Airlines is the 27<sup>th</sup> airline company in the world in terms of fleet and it is the airline company showing the greatest growth in Europe during the first nine months of 2006. Temel Kotil further explained that Turkish Airlines has increased its global aviation market share from 0.59% to 1.1% in 2006. He said “Turkish Airlines will bring additional value to both the company and the customers by its membership in Star Alliance. Being a member of the alliance, we will provide many opportunities and advantages to our passengers such as wider flight network, special passenger programmes, worldwide utilisation of lounges and participating in the alliance fare products”.

The integration teams at Star Alliance and Turkish Airlines will now begin the integration process, which should be completed within the next 16 months.

\* Note: Figures based on the 18 current member carriers plus future members Air China, Shanghai Airlines and Turkish Airlines.

#### About Star Alliance

The Star Alliance network was established in 1997 as the first truly global airline alliance to offer customers worldwide reach and a smooth travel experience. Star Alliance was voted Best Airline Alliance by Business Traveller Magazine in 2003 and 2006 and by Skytrax in 2003 and 2005. The members are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, ANA, Asiana Airlines, Austrian, bmi, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, Spanair, SWISS, TAP Portugal, THAI, United, US Airways and VARIG Brazilian Airlines. Regional member carriers Adria Airways (Slovenia), Blue1 (Finland) and Croatia Airlines enhance the global network. Air China, Shanghai Airlines and Turkish Airlines have been accepted as future members and are expected to join Star Alliance during the course of the next one to two years. Overall, the Star Alliance network offers more than 16,000 daily flights to 841 destinations in 157 countries.

#### About Turkish Airlines, Inc.

Turkish Airlines has been the national flag carrier since its foundation in 1933. Turkish Airlines, which has established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkish Republic, had a small fleet of 5 airplanes and now it has 101 airplanes. Turkish Airlines now ranks 27th in the world in terms fleet size with 101 planes. Turkish Airlines achieved its first scheduled domestic flight in 1933 and first scheduled international flight in 1947 and has evolved into a hospitable, friendly and reliable brand not only for Turkish society, but also for all citizens of the world who prefer to travel by air. In 2006, nearly 17 million passengers prefer flying with Turkish Airlines. Turkish Airlines travels the skies of four Continents and carries its passengers to 103 destinations abroad and 28 in Turkey, amounting to 131 in total. Turkish Airlines will boast a younger and more modern fleet with the delivery of 59 new planes which were ordered previously and started to join our fleet in early 2005. Having increased its global aviation market share from 0.59% to 1.1% in 2006. Turkish Airlines, which is the most popular representative of traditional Turkish hospitality in the sky, its "Turkish Cargo" services company carries 150,000 tons of cargo a year, providing it with a leading position in Turkey with the highest turnover figures.