

2008 Berlin Summit

Declaration Air Transport of the Future

Monday, 26th May and
Tuesday, 27th May 2008

Schloss Steinhöfel
Berlin (Germany)



The Forth Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has stirred an intensive public debate on future aeronautical research challenges and policies. A Summit was held as a response, in Berlin by a group of key international leaders in aeronautical research to address the question of the Air Transport of the Future in the context of climate change. In this regard, the conference participants agreed that any research and strategy contributing to new solutions will have to reconcile the increasing need for international mobility in a globalized, work-sharing economy with the challenge of simultaneously developing new solutions to balance the climate effects of the accompanying world-wide growth in air traffic.

The IPCC report identifies aviation to contribute 2–3 percent of today's total global anthropogenic CO₂ emissions. This prompted the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to set the long term challenge of Zero Emission Aviation by 2050 and emphasised the importance of addressing these challenges on a global level. Using the IPCC report and the latest research results on climate change as a basis, the participants acknowledged the need for new solutions addressing both mid-term as well as long-term perspectives. Some solutions, such as the enhanced efficiency of aircraft and air traffic management systems have already resulted in major technological advancements and increased operational capabilities. Nonetheless, as air transport faces increasing demands, these topics remain to be core areas of aeronautical research. Accordingly, international research establishments are key actors, particularly in approaching the long-term and, thus, pre-industrial questions of research and development.

Furthermore, the participants welcomed the Berlin Summit as a unique international forum to enhance discussion of the strategic challenges in aeronautical research. They agreed to establish the Berlin Summit as an international platform for such a dialogue to coincide with the International Berlin Airshow (ILA), with additional meetings to be held in the interim outside of Europe.

The general aim of this forum is to:

- take up the challenges identified by the IPCC report and by IATA,
- present potential solutions for ecologically and economically efficient flight,
- specifically identify how the total fuel consumption can remain constant while accommodating for the annual five percent growth in the passenger transport capacity.

Regarding these aims the participants of The Berlin Summit have agreed:

- to intensify their research collaboration in identifying the exact composition and amount of emissions by air transport and its impact on the atmosphere,
- to develop an international research agenda specifically addressing the most important questions regarding the global air transport system's efficiency and atmospheric impact,
- to invest in research of alternative fuels and revolutionary propulsion concepts.

All participants agreed to combine their efforts to encourage other leading aeronautical research establishments to participate in The Berlin Summit. Finally, they agreed to report this declaration to their national and regional networks to inspire further discussion on the possible implementation of the agreed objectives.