

**For immediate release, 16 October 2006**

## **EUROCONTROL ADDRESSES REMOVING IMPEDIMENTS TO SAFETY REPORTING**

Brussels, Belgium – For the first time justice, transport, legal and aviation experts have come together to discuss how to promote ‘Just Culture’ - a reporting climate crucial for the promotion of public safety in which people are encouraged to provide essential safety-related information.

The workshop, hosted at EUROCONTROL, comes at a time when there is a growing concern in the aviation world that flight safety is being jeopardised through limited application of what is called a ‘Just Culture’ in the reporting and analysis of aviation safety occurrences. A ‘Just Culture’ is one in which ATM personnel and pilots are not punished for actions, omissions or decisions taken by them that are commensurate with their experience and training, but where gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated. Application of a ‘Just Culture’ allows those working in aviation to learn the lessons from incidents or accidents in order to ensure that they can not reoccur.

“EUROCONTROL has established from extensive research and interviews that legal structures and procedures can be contributing factors in delaying the application of a ‘Just Culture’,” said Roderick van Dam, Head of EUROCONTROL’s Legal Service. “For the first time, the workshop has allowed us to come together to explore the sometimes complex legal issues related to ‘Just Culture’ and to discuss how we can work together to promote its application.”

The ‘Just Culture’ concept is part of EUROCONTROL’s European Safety Programme for Air Traffic Management (ESP). It is a proactive but challenging programme that considers what safety actions are needed to ensure that the Single European Sky is implemented in a safe environment. Air travel is the safest means of transportation. However the increasing traffic predicted by 2020 may lead to much higher risks in the air as well as at airports if no appropriate measures are taken. The objective of the ESP is, therefore, to focus safety enhancements into areas where the greatest benefits will be gained by the end of 2008.

“We know that we can make a substantial improvement in safety both in the short and medium-term by the implementation of a ‘Just Culture’,” said Dr Erik Merckx, Deputy Director of ATM Programmes at EUROCONTROL. “The challenge is to develop structures and procedures that will encourage reporting of incidents while at the same time being very clear about what behaviour and acts are unacceptable. The workshop today has taken the first major steps in this direction, and we will be following it up with guidelines and recommendations to our Stakeholders on how to move forward in this area.”

European  
Organisation for the  
Safety of  
Air Navigation

Organisation  
européenne pour la  
sécurité de la  
navigation aérienne

Rue de la Fusée, 96  
B-1130 Bruxelles  
Tel: +32.2.729.90.11  
Fax: +32.2.729.90.44

## COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE

**Note to Editors:**

*EUROCONTROL, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, has as its primary objective to develop a seamless, pan-European air traffic management (ATM) system that fully copes with the growth in air traffic, while maintaining a high level of safety, reducing costs and respecting the environment.*

*EUROCONTROL has 37 Member States: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.*

*On 8 October 2002, the Member States and the European Community signed a Protocol on the Accession of the European Community to the revised EUROCONTROL Convention. Pending its entry into force after ratification by all Parties, certain provisions of the Protocol are already being provisionally applied.*

**For further information, please contact:**

Kyla Evans or Lucia Pasquini,

Tel.: +32 2 729 50 95 / +32 2 729 34 20

Email: [press@eurocontrol.int](mailto:press@eurocontrol.int)

Or visit the website: [www.eurocontrol.int](http://www.eurocontrol.int)