



TRAVEL INDUSTRY'S FIRST GLOBAL ALLIANCES HERALD THEIR "COMING OF AGE"

**STAR ALLIANCE AND GLOBAL HOTEL ALLIANCE SAY RECENT SUCCESS REFLECTS NOT JUST
BUSINESS NECESSITY, BUT GROWING CUSTOMER LOYALTY TO ALLIANCES**

Berlin, 10th March 2010. Giving a unique insight into what is driving the success of the travel industry's most experienced alliances, Jaan Albrecht, CEO Star Alliance, and Christopher Hartley, CEO of Global Hotel Alliance, took the stage together at Hotel Adlon during ITB in Berlin – Europe's largest travel show. Both CEOs used the opportunity to talk about how their respective alliances have now "come of age" and how they believe that a new era is being entered, with customers now not only understanding the value of alliances, but beginning to demonstrate tangible loyalty.

Star Alliance was created in 1997 with five airlines and has to date grown into the longest-serving airline alliance, now encompassing 26 airlines. Jaan Albrecht explained that: "Star Alliance has created a global airline network, offering customers seamless travel as well as status and recognition on all member airlines. Additionally, through Star Alliance the member airlines have the opportunity to increase revenues on the one hand and to explore a wider range of cost saving opportunities on the other. These benefits are again helping our member carriers through the current challenging market conditions, while our global network is continuing to attract a growing loyal customer base."

Global Hotel Alliance is the younger of the two, founded in 2004 and now with 12 member hotels brands, but Chris Hartley believes that the same principles apply on the hotel side. "Already six years ago, we saw the growing success of Star Alliance, and realised hotel companies could do the same thing. Moreover, our empty beds are airline's empty seats, and therefore there are natural synergies between our organisations, as well as a largely common customer base. Our collaborative approach is helping our members not just survive through these tough times, but hopefully thrive in the future, as hotel customers start to seek a more authentic local experience when they travel.

Both Albrecht and Hartley believe that alliances in general are heading into a promising era. "The travel industry is generally not known for generating big profit margins, but rather for key differentiators, such as service, safety and comfort, areas in which you can't cut corners", said

Albrecht. “And that means efficient distribution, powerful technology and effective sales and marketing can be the difference between financial success and failure: and that’s where alliances bring so much value”, he added.

“In a highly cyclical industry, alliances are providing some welcome stability for their members, combined with more choice and value for customers. That’s a pretty good indication of how far we’ve come in the last few years, and a pretty compelling reason to be part of an alliance. We’re now an integral part of the travel industry and we’re here to stay,” concluded Hartley.

About Star Alliance

The Star Alliance network was established in 1997 as the first truly global airline alliance to offer worldwide reach, recognition and seamless service to the international traveller. Its acceptance by the market has been recognised by numerous awards, including the Air Transport World Market Leadership Award, Best Airline Alliance by both Business Traveller Magazine and Skytrax. The member airlines are: Adria Airways, Air Canada, Air China, Air New Zealand, ANA, Asiana Airlines, Austrian, Blue1, bmi, Brussels Airlines, Continental Airlines, Croatia Airlines, EGYPTAIR, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Shanghai Airlines, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, Spanair, SWISS, TAP Portugal, Turkish Airlines, THAI, United and US Airways. Aegean Airlines, Air India, and TAM have been announced as future members. Overall, the Star Alliance network offers 19,700 daily flights to 1,077 airports in 175 countries.

Star Alliance Press Office

Tel: +49 69 96375 183; Fax: +49 69 96375 683

Email: mediarelations@staralliance.com www.staralliance.com

About Global Hotel Alliance

Global Hotel Alliance is the world’s largest alliance of independent hotel brands. It uses a common technology platform to drive incremental revenues and create cost savings for its members, while offering enhanced recognition and service to customers across all brands. GHA currently comprises of Anantara, First, Kempinski, Leela, Mirvac, Marco Polo, Omni, Pan Pacific, PARKROYAL, Shaza, The Doyle Collection and Tivoli, encompassing nearly 300 upscale and luxury hotels with over 65,000 rooms across 48 different countries.

For further information, please contact:

Irina Zakharova, Global Hotel Alliance, Geneva

irina.zakharova@gha.com www.gha.com