PASSENGER DEPARTURES REACH 3.8 BILLION IN 2016

Using the latest data from IATA’s Pax-IS database, there were an estimated 3.8 billion air passenger departures globally in 2016; a strong increase over the 3½ billion departures in 2015. Of these, almost 50% (some 1.9 billion) were domestic departures, 35% (1.3 billion) were international departures and the remaining 16% (604 million) were connecting departures. As always, the mix of Domestic vs International vs Connecting departures varies substantially from country to country, reflecting factors including network structure and geography.

The top three markets were unchanged again in 2016, with the United States clearly ahead of the pack, accounting for around 815 million (or just over one-fifth) of the total number of global departures. China and Japan are ranked #2 and #3, with 490 million and 141 million passenger departures, respectively. The number of passenger departures in China increased by a strong 10.3% in 2016.

The big movers on this year’s rankings are the key emerging markets of India and Indonesia. India has jumped up two places to the #4 ranking with 131 million departures in 2016 and, with stellar growth of 20.0% yoy, continues to close in fast on Japan. Just three years ago India held the #8 ranking. Indonesia also moved up two positions this year, to #6, with 116 million passenger departures and a double-digit annual growth rate of 12.9%.

In contrast, Brazil slipped four rankings down the list in 2016, to #9, with the severe economic recession and political and social turmoil taking its impact on air passenger demand. The number of passenger departures fell by 10.4% over the past year, but even so, Brazil still recorded just over 100 million departures in 2016.