

## **OPENING THE SKIES: THE ETIHAD AIRWAYS PERSPECTIVE**

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GOOD MORNING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I AM SPEAKING AT AN EVENT IN WASHINGTON DC SINCE WE STARTED SERVICE HERE IN APRIL 2013. IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE WITH ALL OF YOU.

WE'VE BEEN DELIGHTED WITH THE SUCCESS OF OUR WASHINGTON SERVICE. SINCE WE STARTED, WE'VE CARRIED AROUND 300,000 GUESTS TO AND FROM THIS CITY, MANY OF THEM NEW TRAVELLERS. OUR PRESENCE AS A NEW ENTRANT HAS HELPED TO GROW THE MARKET.

AND AIR TRAVEL DOES OFFER TREMENDOUS GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES.

FIRST, BECAUSE THE WORLD IS CHANGING. TRADE AND TRAVEL PATTERNS HAVE SHIFTED, AND AS THE POWERHOUSE ECONOMIES OF INDIA AND THE FAR EAST GROW, ALONG WITH STRONG GROWTH IN AFRICA AND THE GULF, WE ARE SEEING THE CREATION OF A NEW 'SILK ROAD' BETWEEN EAST AND WEST ACROSS THE HUBS OF THE MIDDLE EAST.

THE GROWING MIDDLE CLASS IN MANY OF THESE ECONOMIES IS ALSO HELPING TO RESHAPE TRAVEL TRENDS. TO GIVE JUST TWO EXAMPLES:

- INDIA'S MIDDLE CLASS, AROUND 50 MILLION TODAY, IS PREDICTED TO GROW TO 200 MILLION BY 2020. ITS AIR TRAVEL MARKET WILL RISE FROM NINTH LARGEST IN THE WORLD TODAY, TO THIRD LARGEST WITHIN 20 YEARS.
- BY 2023, FOREIGN TRIPS BY CHINESE TOURISTS WILL HAVE INCREASED BY 30 MILLION A YEAR COMPARED TO TODAY. WITH AN INCREASING PROPORTION OF THOSE BEING LONG HAUL TRIPS, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT CHINESE TOURISTS WILL SPEND 50 BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR IN THEIR TOP 25 LONG HAUL DESTINATION CITIES ALONE.

AND AIRCRAFT TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE POSSIBILITIES FOR THOSE TRAVELLERS, ALLOWING ONE-STOP CONNECTIVITY TO ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD THROUGH THE GULF HUBS.

SECOND, LIBERALISATION HAS ACTED, AND CONTINUES TO ACT, AS A SPUR FOR GROWTH. IN THE UAE, WE FOLLOW AN OPEN SKIES PHILOSOPHY, ENCOURAGING THE REMOVAL OF BARRIERS. PARTLY, THAT HAS BEEN INSPIRED BY US OPEN SKIES WHICH HAS BEEN A FORWARD-THINKING MODEL OF SUCCESS, GENERATING ENORMOUS BENEFITS FOR TRAVELLERS AND FOR AIRLINES IN THE US, THE UAE AND AROUND THE WORLD.

THERE IS A PRETTY SIMPLE EQUATION IN AIR TRAVEL. LIBERALISATION ENCOURAGES NEW MARKET ENTRANTS. NEW MARKET ENTRANTS ACT AS CATALYSTS FOR GROWTH. CONSUMERS SEE MORE CHOICE; THE INDUSTRY SEES MORE CUSTOMERS; ECONOMIES BENEFIT FROM TRADE AND TOURISM. IT'S A WIN-WIN-WIN.

ABU DHABI, THE CAPITAL OF THE UAE, WITHOUT ITS OWN AIRLINE UNTIL 2003, SAW THE OPPORTUNITIES OF THAT GROWING MARKET – AND PARTICULARLY, THE OPPORTUNITIES FROM ITS GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION AT THE MIDDLE OF THAT NEW SILK ROAD.

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES IS A CENTRE POINT FOR THOSE GLOBAL TRADE ROUTES – AN OPEN, TOLERANT SOCIETY, BUILT ON A TRADING HERITAGE. IT IS ALSO THE TRADE, FINANCIAL AND CULTURAL HUB OF THE MIDDLE EAST. OF ITS 9.2 MILLION RESIDENTS, 85 PER CENT ARE EXPATRIATES – SO WE ALL TRAVEL, AND MANY TRAVEL TO COME AND VISIT US.

YOU COULD EVEN SAY THE UAE IS, IN FACT, QUITE SIMILAR TO THE US - A COUNTRY MADE UP OF PEOPLE WHO CAME TOGETHER FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO CREATE ONE GREAT NATION. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BEING ONE OF SCALE.

ETIHAD ITSELF IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF THIS DIVERSITY, WITH MORE THAN 140 NATIONALITIES WORKING FOR US. BUT GOING BACK TO THE UAE, THE HIGH NUMBERS OF EXPATS HAVE MEANT THE UAE IS OPEN TO EXTERNAL IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES. IT IS A MARKET WHICH EMBRACES THE BEST EXPERTISE FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THE US-UAE RELATIONSHIP AS AN EXAMPLE, THERE ARE AROUND 60,000 US CITIZENS LIVING AND WORKING IN THE UAE. THEY WORK ACROSS THE MANY DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES WHICH ARE SHAPING THE UAE'S NEW DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY.

NO WONDER TRADE IS SO STRONG BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES – WITH THE UAE DELIVERING A 20 BILLION DOLLAR TRADE SURPLUS FOR AMERICA. A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF THAT, AS I WILL COME ON TO EXPLAIN, COMES FROM THE AVIATION SECTOR.

THIS IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE. THE UAE SHARES STRONG TRADE AND COMMERCE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ECONOMIES AROUND THE WORLD. THAT IS A KEY REASON, ALSO, WHY IT HAS BECOME SUCH A NATURAL HUB FOR AIR TRAVEL.

SO, YOU CAN SEE THERE IS GREAT OPPORTUNITY IN OUR INDUSTRY, AND PARTICULARLY THERE IS GREAT OPPORTUNITY WHERE THE UAE SITS, GEOGRAPHICALLY.

IT IS *NOT* ALL EASY FLYING, HOWEVER. OPEN SKIES HAS BEEN A SUCCESS BUT THE INDUSTRY REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST REGULATED AND CLOSED ON EARTH.

THE WORLD'S TWO LARGEST AIRLINE MARKETS, THE UNITED STATES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION, ARE CLOSED, GIVING THEIR OWN AIRLINES A HUGE ADVANTAGE IN SCALE AND IN SCOPE.

CONSOLIDATION, INTERNATIONALLY, IS VERY DIFFICULT, THANKS TO THE DECADES-OLD SYSTEM OF BILATERAL REGULATION. SO INVESTMENT IS RESTRICTED IN A WAY THAT WOULD BE DEEMED BIZARRE IN MANY OTHER INDUSTRIES.

AND IT IS ALSO A STRANGE INDUSTRY WHEN IT COMES TO THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SO-CALLED COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES AND THEIR NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS.

AIRLINES WORLDWIDE HAVE BENEFITTED FROM YEARS – FROM *DECADES* – OF INFRASTRUCTURE BEING CREATED FOR AND AROUND THEM. MANY AIRLINES HAVE BENEFITTED FROM PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT WHEN IT COMES TO MARKET ACCESS OR AIRPORT FACILITIES.

AND MANY, MANY AIRLINES HAVE BENEFITTED FROM YEARS OF GOVERNMENT BAILOUTS, WRITE-OFFS AND LOANS – EVERYTHING FROM BANKRUPTCY PROTECTION, TO COVERING PENSION FUND OBLIGATIONS, TO FINANCIAL PAYMENTS, TO BREAKS ON FUEL TAXES. THERE IS ALSO ANTITRUST IMMUNITY TO COORDINATE PRICES AND SERVICES WITH PARTNERS IN AN OPEN SKIES ENVIRONMENT.

THIS PRESENTS A GOOD TRANSITION TO ADDRESS SOME OF THE SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED BY THE US CARRIERS IN THEIR CAMPAIGN REGARDING OPEN SKIES.

I'VE SAID VERY LITTLE UNTIL NOW BECAUSE THE US GROUPS WITH THE MOST AT STAKE – AIRPORTS, CARGO CARRIERS, BUSINESS TRAVELLERS, THE HOSPITALITY INTERESTS AND OTHERS – HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN OUT VERY FORCEFULLY IN SUPPORT OF OPEN SKIES.

ALSO, THE MAJOR CARRIERS SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN KEEN TO SHARE THEIR REPORT WITH EVERYONE, INCLUDING THOSE IN THIS ROOM, CONGRESS, THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION, THE MEDIA – IN FACT NEARLY EVERYONE EXCEPT THE GULF CARRIERS WHOM THEY ACCUSE OF MASSIVE SUBSIDIES AND UNFAIR ADVANTAGE.

NOW THAT WE'VE HEARD FROM THE US SUPPORTERS AND HAD THE CHANCE TO FINALLY SEE THIS REPORT, I THINK THIS IS THE RIGHT TIME, THIS IS THE RIGHT FORUM AND THIS IS THE RIGHT AUDIENCE TO CLEAR THE AIR.

TODAY, I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU THE ETIHAD AIRWAYS SIDE TO THE STORY AND SHARE 10 KEY FACTS ABOUT ETIHAD AIRWAYS.

I'M NOT HERE TO TALK ABOUT 'GULF CARRIERS'; JUST ABOUT ETIHAD AIRWAYS.

AND THAT'S THE FIRST FACT.

WE *ARE* SEPARATE. WE ARE VERY DIFFERENT. WE EACH HAVE OUR OWN BUSINESS MODEL, OUR OWN STRATEGY AND OUR OWN ISSUES. WE DON'T WORK TOGETHER. WE DON'T LOBBY TOGETHER. MY FIERCEST COMPETITOR IS EMIRATES; BEHIND THEM IS QATAR.

THE SECOND FACT IS THAT ETIHAD AIRWAYS IS A YOUNG BUSINESS.

THE ABU DHABI GOVERNMENT TOOK THE DECISION TO SET UP ITS OWN AIRLINE IN 2003, TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A NICHE IN THE MARKET AND THE BENEFIT OF LOCATION FOR A GULF HUB, AS A CORE ELEMENT OF ITS LONG TERM ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION PLAN.

AS ONE OF THE NEWEST NATIONAL AIRLINES ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, WE'VE HAD TO CREATE EVERYTHING FROM SCRATCH. EVERYTHING: OUR PRODUCT, OUR OPERATIONS, OUR INFRASTRUCTURE.

WE'RE VERY PROUD OF OUR PROGRESS – LAST YEAR, CARRYING 14.8 MILLION PASSENGERS. IT REPRESENTS OUTSTANDING SUCCESS, BY ANY MEASURE.

BUT WE ARE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT WHERE WE SIT, IN GLOBAL TERMS.

OUR NEAREST AND MOST DIRECT COMPETITOR, EMIRATES, CARRIES THREE TIMES AS MANY PASSENGERS AS WE DO.

THE THREE MAJOR EUROPEAN LEGACY GROUPS CARRY 18 TIMES MORE.

THE THREE BIGGEST US AIRLINES CARRY 34 TIMES MORE.

AND THE GLOBAL ALLIANCES, WHICH THOSE US AND EUROPEAN GIANTS DOMINATE, CARRY 120 TIMES MORE PASSENGERS THAN WE DO.

NO WONDER THEY'RE SO SCARED OF US!



THE THIRD FACT IS THAT ETIHAD IS A DAVID, A DAVID WHO'S BEEN FACING GOLIATHS SINCE 2003, WHEN WE STARTED. IN VIRTUALLY EVERY MARKET WE'VE ENTERED, WE'VE HAD TO FACE EXISTING COMPETITORS, WITH ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES, ESTABLISHED INFRASTRUCTURE, ESTABLISHED SALES AND MARKETING, ESTABLISHED BRANDS, AND ESTABLISHED CUSTOMER BASES.

IN MANY CASES, THESE ESTABLISHED AIRLINES WERE GIFTED AMAZING INFRASTRUCTURE – AIRPORTS, TERMINALS, SLOTS, LANDING RIGHTS, FUEL TAX BREAKS – AND MORE – OVER DECADES.

TO TAKE THEM ON, WE'VE HAD TO WORK HARDER AND WE'VE HAD TO WORK SMARTER. *THAT'S* CALLED COMPETITION.

WE'VE BEEN HELPED BY OUR GEOGRAPHIC POSITION. THE GULF IS AT THE CENTRE OF TODAY'S TRADE AND TRAVEL ROUTES. THAT IS ONE ADVANTAGE ALL THREE 'GULF CARRIERS' SHARE. TODAY'S AIRCRAFT TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHANGING PATTERNS OF WORLD TRADE MEAN WE ARE POSITIONED STRONGLY FOR MANY NEW AND EMERGING MARKETS.

WE'VE BEEN HELPED BY OUR BLANK SHEET OF PAPER – NO LEGACY SYSTEMS, NO LEGACY AIRCRAFT, NO LEGACY *MINDSETS*. AND WE OPERATE FROM ONE HUB.

AND WE'VE BEEN PUSHED HARD BY THE VISION AND AMBITION OF OUR SHAREHOLDER TO CREATE A GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE AIRLINE.

THE FOURTH FACT IS THAT THOSE FACTORS HAVE ALLOWED US TO DEVELOP SOMETHING VERY POWERFUL AND VERY COMPELLING. IT MAY BE OUR SECRET RECIPE FOR SUCCESS. IT'S THIS:

- INCREDIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE, DELIVERED ON MODERN NEW AIRCRAFT, WITH WORLD-LEADING PRODUCTS, AT COMPETITIVE PRICES, ON THE ROUTES PEOPLE WANT TO FLY.

AT ETIHAD AIRWAYS, WE TAKE A VERY COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO BUSINESS, SEEKING TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MANY OTHER AIRLINES.

THE NEXT FACT IS ABOUT THAT APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIP.

IT'S SOMETHING WE DO DIFFERENTLY AT ETIHAD AIRWAYS. I DON'T MIND ADMITTING IT IS PARTLY BECAUSE WE HAVE HAD TO. WHEN I FIRST TOOK OVER AS CEO, WE LOOKED INTO OUR OPTIONS FOR THE GLOBAL ALLIANCES – TO FIND WE HAD NONE. NONE OF THE THREE GLOBAL ALLIANCES, IN WHICH THE THREE BIGGEST US CARRIERS ARE SO EMBEDDED, WANTED A GULF MEMBER AT THAT TIME.

SO WE HAD TO LOOK AT DIFFERENT WAYS OF BUILDING OUR BUSINESS, BUILDING OUR NETWORK. AND THAT WAS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP. WE TOOK AN OPEN APPROACH TO CODESHARES, CREATING INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH, TODAY, 49 AIRLINES. WE DIDN'T CARE IF THEY WERE MEMBERS OF GLOBAL ALLIANCES, AND STILL DON'T.

IF OUR NETWORK AND THEIRS COULD DELIVER CUSTOMER CHOICE AND SMART BUSINESS, THEN WE WOULD WORK TOGETHER.

THAT WAS THE CATALYST FOR OUR EQUITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS. WE SAW MAJOR BENEFITS IN DEVELOPING CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CARRIERS IN KEY MARKETS. OUR INVESTMENTS, 'SKIN IN THE GAME', ENCOURAGED CLOSER WORKING RELATIONSHIPS. WE COULD GO FURTHER IN TERMS OF CODE SHARES, WITH FREQUENT FLIER PROGRAMS, AND JOINT MARKETING.

AND WE COULD GO FURTHER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE EQUATION TOO: ON COSTS.

BECAUSE THAT IS THE SIXTH FACT TODAY. FOR A BUSINESS ALLEGEDLY BASED ON SUBSIDY AND FREE KICKS ALL OVER THE PLACE, WE ARE SURPRISINGLY FOCUSED ON OUR COST BASE.

WE BENCHMARK AGAINST OUR MAJOR COMPETITORS – AND, ACCORDING TO SEABURY, WE ARE IN THE LOWEST QUARTILE FOR COSTS PER AVAILABLE SEAT KILOMETRE.

OUR EQUITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY ACTIVELY SEEKS COST AND OTHER BUSINESS SYNERGIES, SYNERGIES WHICH THE GLOBAL ALLIANCES DO NOT HAVE - OR SIMPLY CAN'T UNLOCK.

WHY ARE WE SO FOCUSED ON COSTS? WELL FACT SEVEN IS THAT ETIHAD AIRWAYS HAS HAD A GREATER FOCUS ON REACHING AND DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE PROFITABILITY – WE THINK – THAN ANY OTHER NATIONAL AIRLINE IN HISTORY. WE SET A TIMETABLE TO BREAK EVEN WITHIN A DECADE AND WE BEAT THAT TARGET. WE'VE DELIVERED A NET PROFIT IN EACH OF THE LAST THREE YEARS.

I SAY 'WE THINK' BECAUSE IT IS SURPRISINGLY HARD TO FIND FINANCIAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FIRST ONE OR TWO DECADES OF NATIONAL AIRLINES AROUND THE WORLD.

WE GET CRITICIZED REGULARLY FOR OUR SO-CALLED LACK OF TRANSPARENCY BUT WE SEE FEW NATIONAL AIRLINES THAT WERE AS OPEN IN THEIR FIRST STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT, AS WE ARE BEING IN OURS.

AND LET ME ALSO SAY THIS. WE ARE NOT A PUBLIC COMPANY BUT WE ARE FULLY COMPLIANT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS. WE ARE AUDITED BY KPMG AND WE PROVIDE FULL TRANSPARENCY TO THE 76 FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS WHICH PROVIDE US WITH MORE THAN 10.5 BILLION DOLLARS IN LOANS.

AND THAT LEADS ME INTO NUMBER EIGHT. WE ARE A NATIONAL AIRLINE, WHICH MEANS THAT WE ARE OWNED BY OUR GOVERNMENT. THAT DOES NOT MAKE US UNIQUE. OUTSIDE OF THE US, THAT'S HOW MOST AIRLINES STARTED AND HOW MANY AIRLINES STILL OPERATE TODAY.

OUR SHAREHOLDER PUT INITIAL EQUITY INVESTMENT INTO THE COMPANY, AND THEY HAVE COMMITTED SHAREHOLDER LOANS. WE HAVE ALWAYS MADE THAT CLEAR.

AND THAT'S A REALLY IMPORTANT POINT. THE US CARRIERS' INVESTIGATORS UNCOVERED ALL THEIR INCREDIBLE REVELATIONS FROM INFORMATION WE HAD ALREADY PROVIDED TO EXTERNAL AUDIENCES. MANY OF THEM APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN FROM COMMENTS I'VE MADE IN INTERVIEWS. AS ONE OF OUR RESPECTED LOCAL PUBLICATIONS, ARABIAN BUSINESS, POINTED OUT IN THIS WEEK'S EDITION, THEY SCOOPED MANY OF THE SO-CALLED REVELATIONS IN THE REPORT LAST YEAR BY SIMPLY ASKING ME QUESTIONS IN AN INTERVIEW.

SO YES, OUR SHAREHOLDER *HAS* PROVIDED EQUITY INVESTMENT AND SHAREHOLDER LOANS. THEY'VE INVESTED – AND THEY'VE SEEN SUCCESS; AND THEY'VE INVESTED IN SUCCESS. FRANKLY, THAT'S BUSINESS.

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS HAVE ALSO COMMITTED LOANS – MORE THAN 10.5 BILLION DOLLARS - FOR OUR BUSINESS. NO SOVEREIGN GUARANTEES, AND NO LETTERS OF COMFORT; THEY HAVE COMMITTED LOANS BECAUSE THEY HAVE CONFIDENCE IN US AND BELIEVE IN OUR BUSINESS MODEL AND PLAN.

OUR SHAREHOLDER ALSO BELIEVES IN THAT BUSINESS PLAN. THEY HAVE INCREASED THEIR COMMITMENT AS WE HAVE DEVELOPED – THEY HAVE INVESTED IN SUCCESS.

THEY'VE SEEN THE SUCCESS WE ARE DELIVERING, BOTH AS A BUSINESS IN OUR OWN RIGHT AND AS A CATALYST FOR GROWING OTHER BUSINESSES, TRADE AND TOURISM, IN ABU DHABI AND THE UAE. WE ARE NOW NOT JUST AN AIRLINE BUT A SUCCESSFUL AVIATION GROUP, INCORPORATING HANDLING, MAINTENANCE AND DISTRIBUTION CAPABILITIES.

OUR SHAREHOLDER, LIKE ANY RATIONAL SHAREHOLDER THE WORLD ROUND, HAS MADE THAT COMMITMENT TO US BECAUSE IT EXPECTS, AND IS CONFIDENT OF, A RETURN ON ITS INVESTMENT.

AS IT SEES GREATER SUCCESS FROM OUR BUSINESS, IT SEES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EVEN GREATER RETURNS IN THE FUTURE.

THE KEY WORD IS RETURN.

THE LAST TWO FACTS I WOULD LIKE TO COVER RELATE DIRECTLY TO THE UNITED STATES.

THE FIRST OF THOSE IS THAT WE REGARD OURSELVES AS A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE UNITED STATES. CERTAINLY, THE BONDS BETWEEN THE UAE AND THE USA ARE INCREDIBLY STRONG, AND WE BELIEVE ETIHAD AIRWAYS HAS ALWAYS REFLECTED THAT IN OUR BUSINESS OPERATIONS.

WE ARE MAJOR CUSTOMERS OF BOEING, OF GE, OF SABRE, AND OF MANY OTHER AMERICAN BUSINESSES. WE WORK WITH STRATEGIC AMERICAN PARTNERS – FOR EXAMPLE, WITH ATLAS, ON DEVELOPING AND IMPROVING GLOBAL CARGO OPERATIONS. WE WORK WITH US FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, WITH US TOURIST BOARDS, WITH US AIRPORTS AND WITH BOEING AND HONEYWELL ON BIO FUEL. OUR COMMITMENT TO THE US ECONOMY SUPPORTS MORE THAN 200,000 US JOBS.

THIS WAS ILLUSTRATED VERY CLEARLY THIS WEEK WITH OUR FIRST BOEING 787 DREAMLINER FLIGHT COMING TO THE UNITED STATES, TO THIS VERY CITY. IT IS THE SECOND OF 71 DREAMLINERS COMING INTO OUR FLEET, CREATING THE LARGEST DREAMLINER OPERATION IN THE WORLD. THAT'S COMMITMENT.

WE ALSO WORK WITH US CARRIERS, DELIVERING 180,000 TRAVELLERS ONTO DELTA, UNITED AND AMERICAN AIRLINES, OUR CODESHARE PARTNER, IN 2014, UP 30 PER CENT ON THE YEAR BEFORE. EVERY DAY, WE FILL THE EQUIVALENT OF FIVE BOEING 737-800S WITH PASSENGERS ON THESE THREE US AIRLINE NETWORKS. MORE, IF YOU INCLUDE JETBLUE, WITH WHOM WE ALSO HAVE A CODESHARE AGREEMENT. AS OUR NETWORK GROWS, SO WILL THAT NUMBER.

SO DESPITE CLAIMS THAT WE ARE 'STEALING' PASSENGERS FROM US CARRIERS, THE REALITY IS THAT WE ARE ACTUALLY DELIVERING TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PASSENGERS TO THEM.

AND PASSENGERS BRING ME TO MY LAST FACT.

OPEN SKIES SHOULD BE ABOUT CUSTOMER CHOICE.



CUSTOMERS CHOOSE TO FLY ETIHAD AIRWAYS BECAUSE WE OFFER A GREAT PRODUCT, WITH OUTSTANDING SERVICE, ON ROUTES THEY WANT TO FLY, AT PRICES THAT ARE COMPETITIVE WITHIN THOSE MARKETS.

THEY *CHOOSE* US AGAINST MANY DIFFERENT COMPETITORS, DEPENDING UPON WHICH MARKET WE ARE IN. BUT QUITE HONESTLY, IT IS VERY RARE THAT US CARRIERS OFFER THOSE ALTERNATIVES AND SERVE THE MARKETS WE SERVE. AS ONE EXAMPLE, NO US CARRIER FLIES INTO ABU DHABI. THERE ARE VERY FEW US CARRIERS OPERATING TO WHERE WE DO IN THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT, IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA, OR IN THE WIDER MIDDLE EAST, OR IN AFRICA.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I WAS DELIGHTED TO ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO SPEAK HERE SOME MONTHS AGO. SINCE THEN, THE WORLD HAS CHANGED! I HOPE THESE FACTS AND OUR PERSPECTIVE HAVE CLARIFIED OUR POSITION AND DEMONSTRATED OUR COMMITMENT TO COMPETITION IN THE INTERESTS OF CONSUMERS AND CONNECTIVITY.

WE MAKE NO APOLOGIES FOR OFFERING NEW COMPETITIVE CHOICE FOR AIR TRAVELLERS. WE HOPE TO CONTINUE TO DO SO AROUND THE WORLD.

WE WILL ALWAYS DO SO UNDER THE DEMAND OF A COMMERCIAL MANDATE. THAT IS ABOUT DELIVERING PROFITABILITY AND A RETURN TO OUR SHAREHOLDER.

WE HOPE WE ALWAYS DO SO TOO, AS A FRIEND TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. WE ARE PLEASED TO BE SUCH A MAJOR SUPPORTER OF YOUR WORLD-LEADING AEROSPACE SECTOR. WE ARE PLEASED TO SUPPORT SO MANY AMERICAN JOBS. AND WE ARE PROUD WE CAN PROVIDE SERVICE THAT DID NOT PREVIOUSLY EXIST BETWEEN ABU DHABI AND SIX OF YOUR GATEWAY CITIES HERE IN THE US, BRINGING TRADE AND TOURISM INTO THOSE MARKETS WE SERVE.

ETIHAD AIRWAYS IS COMMITTED TO WORKING TOGETHER WITH ITS PARTNERS TO BRING NEW COMPETITION AND NEW CHOICE TO TRAVELLERS AROUND THE WORLD.

FINALLY, WE SHOULD NOT ATTACK WHAT WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND. WE SHOULD WORK THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE CHANNELS TO RESOLVE OUR DIFFERENCES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.