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Star Alliance welcomes Asiana, LOT and Spanair- carriers to join over the next 12 months

The Chief Executive Board of Star Alliance, assembled in Shanghai in The People's Republic of China for its ordinary semi-annual CEB meeting, today approved the addition of three new members to the global airline group. Work will commence immediately on the integration of Asiana Airlines of South Korea, LOT Polish Airlines and Spanair of Spain into Star Alliance.

No official date has yet been set for the official entry into Star Alliance of the new member airlines. It is anticipated, however, that they will all become part of the alliance within the next six to 12 months.

" We are proud that Asiana, LOT and Spanair have chose to join Star Alliance," the Chief Executive Board said in a statement. " They will add further strength and quality to our worldwide route network by increasing its global reach and thereby its customer value. With the addition of Asiana, LOT and Spanair we have taken another important step in the development of Star Alliance as the world's premiere airline alliance," the chief executives added.

" Star Alliance has once again showed its strength by attracting three new quality carriers into the Star family. All of them will contribute to the impact of the alliance. From SAS's point of view we are particularly happy that Spanair, a member of the SAS group, is one of the new members," says Joergen Lindegaard CEO and President of Scandinavian Airlines.

Asiana Airlines was established in 1988. It serves 61 destinations in 15 countries, including 14 cities in China, out of Seoul with a modern fleet of 64 aircraft. Asiana carried 12 million passengers last year. The airline employs more than 8, 000 people.

LOT Polish Airlines can look back upon a history that started in 1929. The airline serves 12 domestic and 49 international destinations out of Warsaw with a fleet of 51 aircraft. Some 3.2 million passengers were carried in 2001. LOT Polish Airlines has 4,355 employees.

Spanair was set up in 1986 as a joint venture between Star Alliance Member SAS Scandinavia Airlines and Teinver SA of Spain. The airline operates services to 25 destinations in mainland Spain, the Balearic and Canary Islands as well as internationally with a fleet of 49 aircraft. More than eight million passengers were carried by Spanair in 2001. The airline has 2,750 employees.

Star Alliance was established in May 1997. The members are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, All Nippon Airways- ANA, Austrian Airlines, bmi british midland, Lauda Air, Lufthansa, Mexicana Airlines, SAS, Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways International, Tyrolean Airways, United Airlines and VARIG Brazilian Airlines.

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