TURKISH AIRLINES   **PRESS RELEASE**

TURKISH AIRLINES LAUNCHES DURBAN / ISTANBUL ROUTE

Xx November 2015: Due to the increased demand for international travellers to travel to Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, Turkish Airlines launched its third South African route between Durban and Istanbul on the 5ᵗʰ of November this year.

This is according to Muhammed Mehdi Tunc, General Manager of the Turkish Airlines Johannesburg branch, who says that the flight will be taking off four times per week on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. "Currently the Johannesburg / Istanbul route will branch out into two routes - Durban and Maputo - with plans to depart daily from Durban in the near future."

Phillip Sithole, Head of Durban Tourism, says that he is confident that the confirmation of more direct international flights will inject a lucrative boost for tourism for the City. "Turkish Airlines in particular targets our key source markets and we are pleased that our travellers from Europe, Africa, Asia and America can now have a convenient and affordable option to fly directly to the city of Durban. Direct connectivity has been a long term setback for the destination and the direct flights will definitely make Durban a more attractive and competitive destination for leisure travellers and business tourism."

Tunc points to tourism statistics release by eThekwini Municipality in February this year, which indicated that 2014 was a very successful year for tourism in Durban, with an increase of 12.8% from 2013. The statistics indicate that 7.4 million visitors travelled to the destination, with a total direct spend of R19.2 billion resulting from tourism.

"We are confident that the direct flight will adress a growing need among international travellers to fly to Durban," says Tunc.

He notes that 2015 is marked as the 'year of Africa' for the airline and says that the airline has grown its footprint on the continent significantly with several flight launches including Bamako in Mali, Maputo in Mozambique and a direct flight between Cape Town and Istanbul. "Just ten years ago we flew to only 10 destinations in Africa, now we fly to 44 destinations on the continent - more than any other airline - and we aim to fly to 50 destinations in Africa by 2017."

The Provincial Minister of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs KZN, Mr Michael Mabuyakhulu, says that KwaZulu-Natal has been largely relying on indirect connectivity to access international markets. "In this regard, limited connectivity to international markets hampers efficient movement of tourists and goods from our region and therefore retards economic growth and job creation. We are confident that Turkish

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Airlines will act as a catalyst for advancing KwaZulu-Natal gateway status and economic integration with global markets. The impact of the aviation industry on sectors like tourism and cargo freight makes the development of aviation facilities a key success factor for economic development on the continent. KwaZulu-Natal's diverse economic sectors stand to benefit immensely from the integrated world market."

The Premier of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr ES Mchunu says that this inaugural route represents a huge milestone in creating closer links between Turkey and the province of KwaZulu-Natal strengthening the province as a gateway into Southern Africa. "The new route will work towards strengthening economic ties between our two countries, building on the work already done by the collaborative bilateral efforts like the Turkey-South Africa Joint Economic Commission, which promote trade, investment and economic co-operation between our two nations. But moreover this new route opens access to a number of key destinations, throughout Europe, the Middle East and the Far East."

South African citizens wanting to travel to Turkey can simply visit https://www.evisa.gov.tr/en/ to attain a hassle free e-visa.

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Turkish Airlines, Inc.
Media Relations

About Turkish Airlines:
Established in 1933 with a fleet of five aircraft, Star Alliance member Turkish Airlines is a 4-star airline today with a fleet of 297(passenger and cargo) aircraft flying to 280 destinations worldwide with 232 international and 48 domestic. According to Skytrax survey of 2015, Turkish Airlines was chosen **"Europe's Best Airline"** for the fifth and **"Best Airline in Southern Europe"** for the seventh consecutive time. Having won in 2010 the world's **"Best Economy Catering Service",** in 2013 the world's **"Best Business Catering Service"**, and in 2014 **"Best Business Catering Service"** awards**,** Turkish Airlines was this year awarded the world's **"Best Business Class Lounge Dining"** and **"Best Business Airline Lounge"** prizes in the Skytrax survey. More information about Turkish Airlines can be found on www.turkishairlines.com.

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 recognized by numerous awards, including the Air Transport World Market Leadership Award and Best Airline Alliance by both Business Traveller Magazine and Skytrax. The member airlines are: Adria Airways, Aegean Airlines, Air Canada, Air China, Air India, Air New Zealand, ANA, Asiana Airlines, Austrian, Avianca, Brussels Airlines, Copa Airlines, Croatia Airlines, EGYPTAIR, Ethiopian Airlines, EVA Air, LOT Polish Airlines, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Shenzhen Airlines,

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Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, SWISS, TAP Portugal, Turkish Airlines, THAI and United. The integration of Avianca Brasil is currently in progress. Overall, the Star Alliance network currently offers more than 18,500 daily flights to 1,321 airports in 193 countries For additional information visit www.staralliance.com and/or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube or LinkedIn.

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