



WORLD ROUTES 2016 TO TAKE PLACE IN CHENGDU, CHINA

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As another successful World Routes draws to a close on the African continent, the Province of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa, has officially handed the event over to Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport in Chengdu, China for 2016.

Speaking at the close of the 21st World Route Development Forum in Durban today, Mr Huang Ping, Minister of Chengdu Municipal Government, says: "Hosting World Routes in Chengdu gives us the opportunity to demonstrate, on a global stage, our success in building a national-level aviation hub serving international and domestic airlines. New routes to coastal China, as well as the rest of the world, means Chengdu is now firmly established as Western China's centre of commerce. In addition to advancing transport, technology, manufacturing and finance sectors, Chengdu also has some of the richest tourism resources in the world. We look forward to welcoming delegates and guests to World Routes next year to experience Chengdu's history, culture and renowned Sichuan cuisine."

Katie Bland, Director of Routes, says: "Chengdu is the perfect host for World Routes 2016 as they already have experience of hosting a successful Routes Asia in 2012. Air capacity from the city's Shuangliu International Airport has risen 24.5 percent from just over 18.7 million seats in 2012 to a forecasted 23.3 million for this year, based on published schedules. New arrivals include a direct British Airways link to London Heathrow and a Qatar Airways link to Doha, which have helped boost passenger numbers beyond 37 million, pushing the airport into the world's top 40 by traffic demand."

"Over the past two years new entrants to the Chengdu market have included JinAir, SriLankan Airlines, Thai AirAsia and Tianjin Airlines in 2014, while Air Mauritius, Lao Airlines, Nok Air, Orient Thai Airlines and Sky Angkor Airlines introduced flights this year. The construction of a second airport will see capacity rise from 42 million passengers in 2015 to over 62 million passengers in the next five years. World Routes 2016 will unite over 3000 air service development leaders in one

of the fastest growing aviation markets and cities in the world".

China already has the second largest aviation system in the world and the State Council believe that developing the aviation industry is a national strategy, fundamental to the economic development of China's society. Hosting World Routes will help keep Chengdu in the leading position to support the development of Western China.

The city has retained double-digit growth in Gross Domestic Product every year over the last 20 years and ranks first in Forbes' global list of the fastest-developing cities in the next 10 years. Chengdu is also regarded as one of the top historical and cultural cities in China, with over 2,300 years of Chinese heritage.

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