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- Passenger flights powered by biomass grown in Africa

- Southern Africa Sustainable Fuels Initiative launched to ensure sustainable aviation biofuel supply

JOHANNESBURG, July 15, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Boeing [NYSE: BA], South African Airways (SAA) and low-cost carrier Mango today celebrated Africa's first passenger flights with sustainable aviation biofuel. The flights coincided with Boeing's 100th anniversary and centennial celebrations worldwide.

The SAA and Mango flights carried 300 passengers from Johannesburg to Cape Town on Boeing 737-800s using a blend of 30 percent aviation biofuel produced from Sunchem's nicotine-free tobacco plant Solaris, refined by AltAir Fuels and supplied by SkyNRG.

"SAA is committed to a sustainable future and this flight highlights the bold steps we are taking to protect and preserve our environment while creating opportunities for the economic development of our people," said Musa Zwane, acting CEO of SAA. "We are pleased to join the ranks of global airlines who have made a commitment to a better and cleaner way of flying."

"It is fitting that on our 100 year anniversary we are flying on fuels that not only power the flight, but ensure a sustainable future for our industry," said Miguel Santos, managing director for Africa, Boeing International. "This project is a great example of environmental stewardship that delivers economic and health benefits to South Africa."

In 2013, Boeing and SAA launched their sustainable aviation fuels collaboration and in 2014, Project Solaris became the first focus project that converted oil from the Solaris plant seed into bio-jet fuel. In 2015, farms in Limpopo Province of South Africa, from which the biofuel for today's flights was sourced, achieved certification from the Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB), one of the strongest sustainability standards in the world. RSB certification provides a model for expansion of Project Solaris to larger scale production. The initiative also focuses on South Africa's goals for public health, rural development and economic and employment opportunities for farmers by increasing production of Solaris and other feedstocks on under-utilized land.

The partners today also launched a stakeholder and sustainability plan called the *Southern Africa Sustainable Fuel Initiative (SASFI)* to ensure a long-term domestic fuel supply for SAA and other regional fuel users. The goal is to scale-up over the next several years to gain additional biofuel capacity. If successful, farmers will be able to tap into local and global demand for certified feedstock without adverse impact to food supplies, fresh water or land use.

Studies have shown that sustainably produced aviation biofuel emits 50 to 80 percent lower carbon emissions through its life cycle than fossil jet fuel. Airlines around the world have conducted more than 2,500 passenger flights using various forms of aviation biofuel since it was approved for commercial use in 2011.

Boeing is the industry leader in global efforts to develop and commercialize sustainable aviation biofuel. In addition to its collaboration in Southern Africa, Boeing has active biofuel development projects in the United States, Middle East, Europe, China, Japan, Southeast Asia, Brazil and Australia. For more information, visit www.boeing.com/environment.

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